A Viscous Law and the Sticky Bodies of Cocoa: For a cosmopoetics of justice

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A Viscous Law and the Sticky Bodies of Cocoa

For a *cosmopoetics* of justice

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Declaration of academic integrity

I declare that all the material contained in this thesis is fruit of my own work.

Abstract

The main objective of this thesis is to investigate the formation of more-than-human collectives able to generate justice for black and indigenous communities and to sustain more ecological, mutually dependent and politically autonomous ways of coexisting in the context of climate changes. The latter is approached under the concept of Anthropocene. The empirical context of the investigation is the southern region of the state of Bahia in Brazil, which concentrates an important part of the cocoa production in that country, and also the place where I come from. I use an autoethnographic approach to explore the history of the formation of my native village – Florestal, district of the city of Jequié – around the production of cocoa and analyse how the modernisation of cocoa agriculture changed the relationship between people and nature and contributed to the erasure of indigenous memory. I approach ethnographically the experiences of the landless workers' movement and indigenous communities that by recovering indigenous ancestry and its cosmological knowledge are also recovering more ecological ways of coexisting with nature. I suggest that these experiences are examples of more-than-human collectives that are important for reinventing societies before the challenges posed by climate change. By observing how these experiences change space, I develop an ecological conception of a viscous law emerging from the composition of human and non-human bodies in space. This thesis contributes to the liberation of the law from its modern, liberal, individualistic, Eurocentric, normative and anthropocentric matrix genealogically rooted in the interiority of the rational subject; and it intends to explore the genesis of the law in the non-determinative self-emergence of bodies composing the space.

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I know the risk of being unfair when quoting names, but I do believe that the friends I made during this journey will be with me for many moments yet and I am also happy about this.

To the people of Florestal

In Bahia, Brazil

It would be more reasonable for me not to go into drastic issues because I am at a disadvantage. I am a totally unknown stranger, I lack authority and my Castillan is a little child who can barely speak. I can't make powerful phrases, or agile, or elegant, or refined, but who knows, this forced diet might not end up being good for your health? Sometimes I would like to send all writers abroad, out of their language and out of all ornament, all verbal filigree, to see what is left of them at the end.

Witold Gombrowicz

We become 'natives' only when we know how to 'change places'.

John Rajchman

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PART I

1. Introduction

1.1. Modernisation versus ecologisation

The main objective of this thesis is to investigate the formation of more-than-human collectives able to generate justice for black and indigenous communities and to sustain more ecological, mutually dependent and politically autonomous ways of coexisting in the context of climate changes. The latter is approached under the concept of Anthropocene.[1] The empirical context of the investigation is the southern region of the state of Bahia in Brazil, which concentrates an important part of the cocoa production in that country, and also the place where I come from. I use an autoethnographic approach to explore the history of the formation of my native village – Florestal, district of the city of Jequié – around the production of cocoa and analyse how the modernisation of cocoa agriculture changed the relationship between people and nature and contributed to the erasure of indigenous memory. I approach ethnographically the experiences of the landless workers' movement and indigenous communities that by recovering indigenous ancestry and its cosmological knowledge are also recovering more ecological ways of coexisting with nature. I suggest that these experiences are examples of more-than-human collectives that are important for reinventing societies before the challenges posed by climate change. By observing how these experiences change space, I develop an ecological conception of a viscous law emerging from the composition of human and non-human bodies in space. This thesis contributes to the liberation of the law from its modern, liberal, individualistic, Eurocentric, normative and anthropocentric matrix genealogically rooted in the interiority of the rational subject; and it intends to explore the genesis of the law in the non-determinative self-emergence of bodies composing the space.

The capitalist exploitation of cocoa and its global trade for the industrial production of chocolate were key elements in the geographical transformation of southern Bahia and the formation of my native village during the twentieth century. It made people emigrate and gather in different locations to work with cocoa, transforming local ecosystems and configuring the geography of cocoa production. It also forced them to make local connections to commercialise

[1] The concept names a new geological era in which humanity became a geological agent able to modify the planetary thermodynamics (Crutzen, 2002). The concept triggers many criticisms around the abstract idea of a homogeneous humanity and this will be further discussed in chapter 5, topic 5.3.

cocoa with middlemen and warehouses liable for selling the cocoa to exporters. My native village was *assembled* around the work with cocoa, which was a *mediator of associations* between humans and non-humans and between local ecologies and global economic relations. The concepts of assemblage, mediation, and association that I borrow mainly from the works of Bruno Latour (2005) and Anna Tsing (2015) are important here to describe two different social formations around cocoa production. One is oriented by modernisation and the expansion of human control over nature and another one resists this process and struggles to create and expand collectives – which include humans and non-humans – around the practices of agroecological cultivation of cocoa in shared lands.

This opposition orients two different vectors of compositions of society and nature, but it does not indicate pure states of reality completely exterior to each other. From this tension, I want to investigate how the ecologisation of collectives can give place to the emergence of a different *lawscape*. This concept refers to the indistinction of law and space, once the law is always realised in a spatial and material ordering of bodies in space and, on the other hand, there is no space completely empty of constraints and conditionings also producing some order (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015). One where the different forms of life and their modes of existence are not subjugated to global capitalism and its monocultures, for which modernisation is the best name. Capitalist modernisation and globalisation are processes of homogenisation of spaces and forms of life (Santos, 2021) that reduces not only biodiversity but also the possibilities of organising collective life in more diverse ways. They subsume different societies to the hegemonic verticalities[2] of global markets (*Ibid.*), which also require the mobilisation of military forces and legal apparatuses by the State to constitute these markets and facilitate their modes of extraction and accumulation (Silva, 2022).

For example, in the empirical context that I approach here, the ethnographic work of Alarcón (2019) brings abundant documentation of how Tupinambá people – one of the indigenous populations occupying the region of cocoa production in southern Bahia – suffer a long history of violence from cocoa farmers who intend to remove them from their native lands to expand cocoa agriculture. This history of violence is inseparable from the industrialisation of chocolate that began in England in the nineteenth century (Off, 2007), which created a massive demand for cocoa exportation. Unfortunately, this is just another example of the usual history of all indigenous populations in Brazil since the first colonial invasions by the

[2] This concept was created by Geographer Milton Santos to describe how the intervention of global capital in local contexts transforms the space by imposing its hegemonic technical systems and structures to organise the means of production, labour relations and the logistics of distribution of merchandise (Santos, 2021).

Portuguese. Under the rule of modern law, violence against racialised bodies could happen without constituting an ethical violation (Silva, 2007; 2022). Alarcón also documented how Tupinambá people were violated directly by the police when struggling to recover their ancestor lands since the first *retomada* (retaking of land) in 2004 (Alarcón, 2019). Besides tolerating the violence against indigenous people, the apparatuses of modern law also recognises the making of property from these stolen lands (Bhandar, 2018),[3] as it was the case of the Law of Lands in Brazil in 1850, which was one of the first laws enacted in the country after its independence in 1822. The unbridled brutality against indigenous people is also part of the production of a modernised society, from which these people are excluded and displaced as unbecoming.

To oppose these forms of dispossession, the process of ecologisation that I am interested in here is the one that is inseparable from the struggle for land and territory for black and indigenous communities. Ecologising cannot be just an epistemological change that opens space for the description and explanation of associations between humans and non-humans without tensioning the limits of how these associations are also exploited, having their vital energy converted into capitalist wealth (Silva, 2022). The works of Yusoff (2018) and Povinelli (2016) show how capitalist forms of extraction and governing function without separating life and non-life, human and non-human bodies. Instead, racialised human bodies are inhumanly instrumentalised in forms of extraction, exposed to precarious conditions of working, and their vital energy is corporeally invested to extract what is produced from the vital energy of plants and lands. In opposition to this, I am interested here in how struggles for land can realise some form of *spatial justice* that reorients the lawscape of global capitalist extractions and redistributes the bodies in the space in a way that reconduct these flows of vital energy into more vital conditions for those racialised bodies. Thus, making emerge a different lawscape liberated from capitalist subjugation. This form of justice will be elaborated through a *cosmopoetics* that draws from indigenous forms of knowledge and their cosmological conceptions of land.

Although I take the concept of ecologisation also from Latour (2018), I intend to use it beyond the Eurocentric delimitation that Latour himself gave to his theoretical concerns (*Ibid.*) and pay attention to the realities of the place from where I came. Latour's work gave me theoretical tools to approach the relationship between nature and society and understand how

[3] Although Bhandar's work is more focused on the context of British colonialism, her theorisation is very pertinent to approach the conversion of indigenous lands into property by modern law in other contexts.

the association processes unfold without this separation. But I need to stress the limitations of his work to attend to the political concerns of my research. In 2019, when I was preparing my research project for my PhD, two very different authors were fundamental in my project: Latour and Silva. The former is because of his theorisation of nature, the latter because of her theorisation of race. These two topics became unavoidable in my own theorisation and this thesis was deeply influenced by these two authors. Their works are very different from each other, but my elaboration traverses this difference and explores the possibilities they can give in the theorisation of the politics of nature in a context where about 80% of the population is black (*negra*)[4], as it is the case of the state of Bahia.

For Latour, ecologisation has to do with bringing into view the variety of agents making the different worlds with which we are associated (Latour, 2012; 2018). Ecologising means multiplying the agencies, their network of causal chains making the world (a specific one since there are many at stake) and composing with them. In ecology, the human is no longer the only protagonist of history but a co-participant together with other forms of life and non-life able to trigger unpredictable causal chains. Something that is not new for indigenous people, for whom the world is always populated by different perspectives, as the work of Viveiros de Castro on Amerindian perspectivism shows (Viveiros de Castro, 2002), or as Yanomami shaman Davi Kopenawa also narrates in his shamanic discourse on *The Falling Sky* (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013). Taking it to a context where people come together to struggle for land and resist the forms of dispossession caused by capitalist accumulation, what possibilities does this concept bring up? The opposition between ecologisation and modernisation made by Latour helped me to structure this thesis and address not only the conflict between these two forms of world-making, but also helped me to give an account of my conflicts moving between two very different worlds: my native village, Florestal, and London.

Although the formation of my village began with the presence of indigenous people, including my great-grandfather, the modernisation of agriculture practices to increase cocoa production contributed to the erasure of indigenous memory, the impoverishment of that region and a more technical and distanced relationship to the land. Modernisation implied de-indigenisation. It also implied the development of human projects modifying lands and landscapes, imposing their intentions over the space without concern for other forms of life

[4] According to the criteria used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the category "*negro*" comports blacks (*pretos*) and browns (*pardo*). This data is based on a report produced by the Superintendence of Economic and Social Studies of the State of Bahia, which can be accessed here: https://sei.ba.gov.br/images/publicacoes/download/textos_discussao/texto_discussao_17.pdf

that also inhabit these lands. Modern projects invisibilised other forms of non-human agency. On the other hand, in the last decades, the agroecological practices of new landless workers movements such as *Teia dos Povos* (The Web of the Peoples) and indigenous communities such as Tupinambá people are *assembling* different collective formations around cocoa. By bringing back indigenous ancestry, taking ancestral lands back, and recovering native forests, they are producing more ecological ways of inhabiting the land in collective and autonomous territories. I take it as a concrete practice of decolonisation, which implies re-indigenisation as a way of ecologising, bringing into view a broader plurality of beings that compose our existence and giving room for the plurality of worlds erased by capitalist modernisation.

1.2. Viscous assemblages

With my understanding of the concept of *viscosity*, I seek to develop a form of describing how humans and non-humans hold together in the composition of collective formations that shape the space where they inhabit, generating alternative lawscapes (Saldanha, 2007; Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015). I use this to explore forms of law-making that are not centred on humans but emerge from the interaction between humans and other non-human agents in space. Lawscapes indicate how the law is inseparable from a spatial and material ordering of bodies and, on the other hand, how space in its turn is not indifferent, void, malleable or completely passive to human designs; instead, it conditions and influences how human bodies are distributed on and distribute the space. These assemblages of human and non-human bodies are not static but fluid. They decompose and recompose their forms over time, rearranging the bodies in different positions. But bodies can be resistant to changes, or they can bring marks of previous formations that influence the new relations in which they enter. This is because bodies are sticky and the concept of viscosity allows us to describe the emergence of collective formations and their lawscapes without ignoring how these bodies bring marks that blur the temporal boundaries of different assemblages, making different times co-penetrate each other and re-actualising memory into new compositions. Going through the lawscape, I elaborate on the viscous law that emerges from the ecologies of cocoa and entangles the ancestral indigenous memories to the present, reactualising a demand for justice that crosses the centuries of colonisation. The cosmopoetics of justice is a discourse of liberation of nature and land from these colonial impositions that are updated in new forms of exploitation of

indigenous lands. This cosmopoetic justice does not disregard the humans who are enmeshed in nature as one of its creatures as well.

Viscosity is conceptualised by Saldanha (2007) in a more negative sense, through the racialised distribution of human bodies in space, forming bubbles of whiteness that exclude non-white bodies. The author develops the concept in a geographical mode through an ethnography of Goa trance parties in India. For him, viscosity has to do with the aggregation of different bodies in the space, configuring relations of inclusion and exclusion in a certain racial circumscription. The concept is mobilised in his work to speak of forms of racial exclusion. As he says, "*from a geographic point of view, viscosity is social differentiation*" (*Ibid.,* p. 48). In a different sense, but reading Saldanha against the grain, I want to take viscosity in a positive sense to describe the emergence of alternative ways of sticking together collectively. A form of viscosity that could be closer to the concept of relation for Glissant (1997). For him, the relation keeps diverse cultures entangled in a global mesh, but it is not a "we". This relation is not voluntary but glues diverse bodies together and puts them in relation regardless of their intentions. Notwithstanding the humanism of Glissant, I would like to take viscosity as a kind of non-human relation. Not by chance, viscosity comes to me from my memory of cocoa's texture and materiality. It is a cocoa's feature, not a human one, but it marks and smells physically and socially the human bodies working with cocoa.

While Saldanha's conceptualisation of viscosity refers to aggregates of bodies on a local scale, this concept is used by Morton (2013) to describe *hyperobjects:* those objects that go far beyond the time and scale of human immediate perception and cannot be grasped in their entirety because they intersect with many other agents, such as geological changes, atmospheric dynamics, climate change and so on. For Morton, hyperobjects are also characterised by their non-locality. They span different spacetime scales but at the same time, they also have a local incidence. For example, the feeling of the sun burning our skin sticks our bodies to a hyperobject such as the sun, the ozone layer and the thermodynamics of the Earth. We cannot move away from hyperobjects because we are viscously attached to them. And even if we could move to another planet in outer space, we would find new giant entities while our damaged blue globe haunts us in our dreams.

Hyperobjects, despite the name, can also be minuscule bodies such as viruses, COVID-19 for example, which can spread through different localities, mutating in unpredictable temporalities and affecting the dynamics of other bodies and systems in different geographical scales. For example, the momentaneous decrease in air pollution and CO2 emissions during

lockdowns because of the reduction of people driving cars in the city.[5] It is important to highlight that hyperobjects intertwine different bodies and systems in complex and non-linear causal chains. They can trigger changes in different times and spaces.

Cocoa is not a hyperobject, but it is a viscous mediator[6] of assemblages and associations that allow me to articulate the local formation of aggregates of human and non-human bodies sustaining a collective with the non-locality of hyper-objects such as the planet and the alterations of its thermodynamics impacting different collectives locally. In southern Bahia, social movements and indigenous communities are acting to come together and compose a different way of interacting and coexisting with nature and its several living species. Their experience with agroecology, chocolate production, and recovery of the native Atlantic rainforest is a point of inflexion in the history of cocoa global trade driven by the impetus of modernisation which still orients the agribusiness of cocoa in that region.

The modernisation of cocoa agriculture was conducted through technical interventions to increase the productivity of cocoa crops with the use of fertilisers and genetically modified species of cocoa and it has also caused the reduction of biodiversity (Babau, 2019; Alarcon, 2019). Cocoa is traditionally planted under the shadow of taller trees, what is called the *cabruca* system, but the use of genetically modified species of cocoa that are more resistant to the sun allowed the farmers to expand the number of trees per area, reducing biodiversity and making the land more vulnerable to climate change (Heming, N. M., Schroth, G., Talora, D. C. *et al.* 2022). These practices are not exclusive of cocoa agriculture; rather, it is a generalised practice of human mastering of nature that is at the core of the anthropogenic causes of climate change (Tsing et al., 2021).[7]

In contrast to this, the collective experiences of struggles for land discussed here, which are deeply inspired by indigenous perspectives on the land, are experimenting with a different way of working with cocoa and coexisting with the forest. I am not taking it as the answer to the complex problems caused by climate change. There are no closed, ready and unique answers for this. It is not a model[8] that should be merely reproduced because each experience

[5] About this, see the results presented by Saha et al. (2022) from research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on air pollution.
[6] Latour distinguishes mediators and intermediaries. While the former is crucial in the formation of networks and collective associations, causing changes and affecting the identities of the agents involved, the latter can just transfer meanings and conduce relations without altering the composition of the parts connected (Latour, 2005).
[7] The website-book *Feral Atlas,* edited by Tsing et al. (2021), collects several fieldwork reports showing how human intervention in natural landscapes, mainly through agriculture and extractive practices, triggered undesigned consequences and disturbed ecosystems. The website-book can be accessed through the link: https://feralatlas.org/
[8] I am using here the opposition between models and examples elaborated by Viveiros de Castro (2019).

and reinvention of the forms of living together will need to be contextualised to the specific geographical conditions where they take place. But it is an example that can inspire and open possibilities of imagination and experimentation of other forms of coexistence no longer oriented for modern horizons of progress and highly dependent on consumerism. Their experience brings about the question of slowing down the ways of living and the challenges and possibilities of living outside big urban centres, breaking with the accelerated path of modernised lifestyles that do not have a material basis to sustain their infinite desires. These reinventions need to happen and they will indeed happen since the atmospheric transformations of the Earth will force us to change. But change in what direction? That is the horizon that these experiences in southern Bahia incites me to question.

The concept of viscosity that I use here is also inspired by the concept of assemblage in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), which refers to heterogeneous compositions between different bodies, either human or non-human, producing different forms of articulating the parts with the whole. But the latter does not form a rigid and perpetual territorialisation and, instead, it is crossed by lines of flights, becomings, and processes of deterritorializations that drive these ongoing formations towards new others. In an assemblage, the parts are articulated in relation to an abstract machine that they make to work together (Sauvagnargues, 2016), but the parts are not stuck to the assemblage. Even though the assemblage conditions and modulates the flows and possibilities of its parts, the parts can also deterritorialise and reterritorialise in new assemblages. In this way, I want to investigate the processes of association happening around cocoa and pursue the traces of a becoming, a possible line of flight deterritorialising what was formed for more than a century of global trade of cocoa and recomposing the relations between the parts composing that context.

In "*The World Cacao Made*" (Mahony, 1996), the concentration of land and the control over nature were features of the power of "cocoa colonels" (*coronéis do cacau),* as mighty landowners used to be called. In this kind of society assembled around cocoa and driven by the international exportation of cocoa, the land and the racialised bodies inhabiting it were subjugated by a form of power that was colonialist, patriarchal, racist, anthropocentric and capitalist. Black bodies were subjected to semi-slavery conditions of working, indigenous lands were brutally invaded, the forest was cleared to expand cocoa crops, and indigenous cultures and forms of knowledge were repressed and extinguished. Yet, this local plantation regime was subordinated to the global trade of cocoa, in which rich global northern countries such as the US and the UK were among the main partners (Graham, 1968; Ramalho & Moreira, 2004).

The struggles for land and territory[9] of new landless workers movement and indigenous communities break with the concentration of land that is the basis for colonialist power and bring black and indigenous men and women as active voices in the organisation of these communities. They take inspiration from indigenous cosmologies to recreate the relationship with nature, plants and other living beings and recover biodiversity. This also gives place to sociodiversity, the possibility of living, working and coexisting differently of the homogeneous forms imposed by capitalism and its Western, Christian, white and patriarchal epistemes (forms of knowing, interacting with and describing the world).

The context of capitalism suffocates the proliferation of other collective formations that challenge its hegemonic order. It produces a "one-world world", as John Law says (2015), and subordinates different territories across the planet to the temporality of modernisation (Santos, 2021). The imposition of capitalist relations does not come alone and also works with what Silva calls a *"cis-heteropatriarchal matrix"* (2022). Its structure of power is also one that privileges heteropatriarchal forms of family, Christian forms of spirituality, legal regimes of private ownership of lands, and monocultural practices of agriculture. It is also inseparable from the brutal police violence against non-white bodies (Bledsoe & Wright, 2019). All forms of life that escape these authoritative forms will be harshly repressed. But these other collectives working with agroecology and for indigenous communities, learn from indigenous cosmologies that every being exists in relation to other beings that mutually sustain the webs of life and shape their modes of existence. Every being is co-dependent and participates in a web of other beings.

Contemporary feminist scholars have also been developing perspectives on human-nature interaction in which every being is materially composed of a variety of other beings that can be alive or not (Haraway, 2016; Povinelli, 2016). When I approach the formation of my native village, I want to emphasise the agency of cocoa in this process. In this thesis, when I discuss the agroecological practices of landless workers and indigenous people, I am interested in understanding their composition with non-human beings that are also co-producing the space where all of them coexist. Non-human beings have always been agents in the making of landscapes and ecosystems, but the anthropocentrism of modern socio-legal-political theories did not pay attention to them.

[9] *Por Terra e Território*, "for land and territory", is the title of a book-manifesto of two activists of the Peoples' Web, Joelson Ferreira and Erahsto Felício (2021).

It is important to say in advance that these people do not figure here as demonstrations for concepts of Western theorists who were not concerned with them to elaborate these concepts. These people have their own conceptions of ecological compositions between different beings making the space where they inhabit, and indigenous knowledge will be discussed here not as data or an object to be explained by Western theories but treated with the same value as these theories. However, I find in some post-human theories of assemblage a way of translating in theoretical and analytical language these forms of knowledge that are from a different order. When I write this work, I am expected to be scientific and Western academia still dictates what is science. Thus, how to translate in scientific terms a form of knowledge that does not depend on any authorisation from the sciences? (Viveiros de Castro, 2014). Fortunately, there is not only one concept of capital 'S' science at stake but many sciences (Stengers, 2015). It is part of my challenge here to develop a theoretical discourse that makes space for these other forms of knowledge; not to merely describe them but to tension and transform the language that should accommodate them (Viveiros de Castro, 2002). This is even more challenging when I am not writing in my first language. Travel and translation between different forms of knowledge is part not only of my method but of my personal experience within Western academia.

Moving back to the concept of assemblage, although it has its main reference in the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987), I am more interested here in how post-human anthropologies developed this concept in social sciences for empirical approaches. In this case, the works of Bruno Latour, Anna Tsing and Tim Ingold were very influential in my approach. Each of them developed methods to describe assemblages, networks, meshworks, and multispecies relations between human and non-human beings. However, their works are limited when taking into account the unfair and violent realities experienced by black and indigenous people and they cannot offer much to address what political practices could change these realities. It is important to understand social processes through non-anthropocentric perspectives that do not have the human as the gravitational centre around which everything orbits and to which everything is oriented. This is a condition for imagining forms of human existence more attuned to the environments where they take place, an urgent demand before climate change. But if we do not consider the asymmetries that distribute human existence in uneven hierarchies, we cannot produce justice for those human beings more exposed to all sorts of violence.

New materialisms – the theoretical trend to which post-human anthropologies are usually linked – is important because it seeks other forms of causality and agency that are not

centred around the human subject, and they open other horizons for thinking ecological crisis by challenging the limits of modern assumptions and logics.[10] Although these theories alone did not pay enough attention to the asymmetries and conflicts experienced by non-white and non-western societies. Because of this, I need to tension the limits of these theories with the perspectives of black and indigenous studies. Some authors have already advanced this engagement between new materialisms and black studies.[11] However, it was mainly in Amerindian cosmologies and struggles that I found a non-anthropocentric way of thinking about nature and ecology that is inseparable from anti-racist and anticolonial struggles. In the latter, racial conflicts are never detached from conflicts for land and for different ways of inhabiting the land. This inseparable relation between ecology, anti-racism and anticolonialism is also present in the case of maroon communities (Ferdinand, 2019; Bispo dos Santos, 2015; Nascimento, 2021). But, as I cannot approach both perspectives in-depth here, I will focus more on indigenous perspectives.

1.3. Not to die for their necessities

After centuries of slave trade across the Atlantic and colonial depletion and exploitation of indigenous lands, black and indigenous populations find themselves now as the most exposed to all sorts of violence and precarious conditions of living. By learning from practices of recovery of indigenous lands and reforestation of damaged lands through agroecological practices by the Web of the People, this thesis develops a conception of viscous law that makes visible how global capitalism and planetary mutations as climatic changes affect these populations. The cosmopoetics of justice emerging from the collaborations between these different collectives and their lands point towards a new political horizon for these people. One which is no longer oriented towards the inclusion of these populations in legal, political and economic structures built through the expropriation of their lands and the violence against their bodies. Otherwise, this cosmopoetics of justice seeks to break with the *"colonial way of inhabiting the Earth"* (Ferdinand, 2019) and through the recreation of our cosmological connection with the planet, it points towards the recomposition of expropriated and depleted lands as new territories for black and indigenous people in the global south.

[10] Gamble et al. (2019).
[11] Yusoff, 2018; Povinelli, 2021; Clark & Szerszynski, 2021; Petersmann, 2023; Puig & Chandler, 2023; Mbembe, 2023.

Also because of this racialised production of the modernised world, which bequeathed to these people the costs and consequences of its uneven development,[12] black and indigenous populations can be more drastically affected by extreme natural events. As argued by Ferdinand (2019), climate change aggravates the vulnerable condition of these people and deepens the inequalities and disadvantages already present in their realities. He shows, for example, the impact of the hurricanes Hugo, Katrina and Matthew in Caribbean countries between 2016 and 2017 and the lack of structure in these countries to support and shelter their populations (Ferdinand, 2019, p. 65). Colonised countries in the global south and their indigenous and black populations were the most damaged by colonialism and now they are the most vulnerable to the consequences of centuries of environmental destruction since the beginning of colonial invasions. They were the most impoverished by the colonial extractivism that gave material and financial conditions for the development of capitalism, industrialisation, modernisation and all their technical infrastructure[13] but now they are the ones most exposed to the ecological disasters caused by these forms of production; mainly those who had their territories drastically destroyed and no longer have the forests that protect them and sustain their livelihoods, as it is the case of the Caribbean countries reported by Ferdinand (2019) or indigenous communities in Midwest Brazil, which is a region largely occupied by agribusiness. Nevertheless, despite all the history of violence and genocide[14] against black and indigenous people, despite all the extreme situations that they still face, maroon communities and indigenous peoples did not accept to follow the capitalist recipe of how to be a society that was globally imposed over the planet. They refused to be modern.

Because the violence these people suffer usually comes directly from the State – which was supposed to grant rights and protections to them – or is tolerated by the State and its legal institutions, this thesis articulates perspectives of the law and justice emerging from autonomous practices of the collectives mentioned above. The production of cocoa in the state of Bahia in Brazil involved since its origin the use of slave labour and most cocoa workers were black people (Walker, 2007; Mahony, 2008). More than a century of cocoa exportation later, what is the situation of the black population in Bahia nowadays? In contrast to the

[12] The works of Andrews (2022) and Hartman (2007) show with an abundance of data the legacies of slavery and colonialism in the present and how these tragedies had lingering effects on current forms of inequality.
[13] The famous doctoral thesis of Eric Williams in economic history at the University of Oxford, published as the book *Slavery and Capitalism,* shows how the owners of the first industries, banks and other capitalist institutions were also owners of slaves and plantations in the colonies (Williams, 1944).
[14] About the characterisation of anti-black violence as a form of genocide, see Vargas (2005), Flauzina (2014) and Rodríguez (2020). Concerning the genocide of indigenous populations in the Americas, see Hinton (2002), Short (2010), Woolford et al. (2014), and Tucci and Rossi (2020).

billionaire global market of cocoa, what wealth did it bequeathed to black and indigenous descendants in Bahia? According to a report released in 2021 by the Network of Observatories of Security in Brazil (Ramos et al., 2021),[15] 98% of the people killed by the police in Bahia were black. In Salvador, the capital of the state, all people killed by the police were black according to this report. These deaths are mostly related to police operations justified by the combat to drug trafficking. Among 607 people killed in police operations in 2020, 595 of them were black. Just to mention the case of other Brazilian states, according to this report, in the same year police killed 1092 people in the state of Rio de Janeiro and 770 people in São Paulo.

Another report[16] from the NGO Amnesty International informed that Brazilian police killed 6,416 people in Brazil in 2020 and half of those people were young black men. Without mentioning that the Brazilian carceral population, the third biggest one in the world, is mostly black.[17] The works of Hartman (2022) and Silva (2022) argue that, although the abolition of slavery happened formally while a juridical institution, the material conditions and the social relations to which black people were submitted remained in place. Silva also argues that the authorisation to violate black bodies changed from the slave owners to the State, which exerts this power through the police (*Ibid.*). This also applies to the social, political and geographical configurations of the present shaped by the history of cocoa production in southern Bahia and how it conditions the experiences and possibilities of people living there today. This shows what kind of society the history of capitalism in Brazil – and the case of this research, the history of cocoa production in Bahia – bequeathed us and what it means to be a black person in that society. Slavery marked social relations and that which happened centuries ago is still occurring in the present.

The annual report of the *Conselho Indigenista Missionário* (CIMI)[18] concerning 2022 gathered data that show the perpetuation of violence against indigenous peoples and their territories in contemporaneity. The report registers thousands of cases of violation of indigenous lands, such as invasions for illegal exploitation of natural resources, and hundreds of cases of violence against people, involving murders, sexual violence, and racial discrimination, among other issues. It is as if the first colonial invasion were still contemporary with us. Time does not unfold as a linear sequence leaving past events behind. Instead, it folds

[15] The report is an electronic book with the title *Pele Alvo: a cor da violência policial* (Target Skin: the colour of police violence). It can be accessed through the link: http://observatorioseguranca.com.br/produtos/relatorios/

[16] The report is available on the Amnesty International website and can be accessed here: https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/americas/south-america/brazil/report-brazil/

[17] According to World Prison Brief database, 811.707 people were imprisoned in Brazil until 31 December 2020: https://www.prisonstudies.org/country/brazil

[18] The report can be accessed in this link: https://cimi.org.br/2023/07/relatorioviolencia2022/

upon itself and surrounds us recombining and recomposing these events in new assemblages. Fortunately, this is also valid to the millenary traditions of indigenous people and the way they persist in their modes of existence.

I have been following this tragic news for years. When I lived in Rio de Janeiro during my master's degree, I lived for a year almost in front of the Mangueira favela, next to the university where I studied, Rio de Janeiro State University. At times, I used to hear gunshots lasting for hours at least three days per week. This terrible reality has always marked my reflection on the law, and the critique that I address of modern law in this work is mainly motivated by these realities in Brazil. My work here is focused on the investigation of alternative practices of activism and collective ways of being together that do not have the State as their centre of articulation, but the land and the creation of autonomous territories where new ways of living can thrive. If on the one hand, the slavery trade caused the forced removal of black people from their native lands, on the other hand, black bodies were not mere manual work in the colonies. They were also active political subjects fleeing from farms and recreating their lives in maroon communities or other forms of fugitive collectivity (Yusoff, 2018; Hartman, 2022). The political struggles for taking ancestral lands back and constituting autonomous territories have always been more-than-human politics for black and indigenous peoples.

In a confrontation with this context, this thesis explores a concept of the law emerging viscously among bodies that stick together in the composition of collectives not guided by a principle of centralised sovereignty. It demands an exercise of thinking free from the logical constraints imposed by necessity and its normative form of thought, which are forms that shape liberal reason and justify its political and economic institutions. As Silva explains: *"Necessity is what establishes a statement as accurate, resolved, or true (scientific), what makes an action worthy or good or not (ethical), the undesirable that drives production/accumulation (economic), and what makes something right or legal (at the juridical level)* (Silva, 2022, p. 51). For Silva, this conjunction between the scientific, the ethical, the economic and the juridical is sustained by necessity in post-enlightenment political architecture. It is what makes the liberal order work. Everything that violates the principle of necessity, either economically or juridically, is taken as incomprehensible, ineffective, unproductive, pointless and worthless. As it happens with indigenous ways of thinking and living that are opposite to the logic of how

the State operates.[19] It is also because of the necessity of sustaining its sovereignty and its economic policies that the State employs total violence against people conceived as exterior to the modern political and legal structure of the State and as an obstacle to the economic order of capitalism, mainly indigenous and black bodies.

In opposition to that, here the law would not impose necessity by force but instead, it would emerge from meshworks of beings that are not ontologically distributed as subjects or objects, distinguished between life and non-life, gathered separately as society or nature. There is no human life possible without non-organic elements such as water, oxygen, light, minerals, and earth, among others that sustain organic life (Povinelli, 2016). There is no human life independent and isolated from other animal, plant, invertebrate, bacterial, and fungi species that make possible the flourishment of life in the environments. In other words, societies are never detached from their environments, instead, they are an environment of many other entangled environments composed of non-human associations involving the human as a part aside other parts, and not above them (Viveiros de Castro, 2002). Moreover, because the collectives are never detached from their territories, the viscous law that I propose here is very concerned with lands. More specifically, indigenous lands have been expropriated for centuries by European colonisation and global capital for the benefit of the global north. The viscous law that I propose emerges from ruptures in the global chains that extract vital energy from lands and human and non-human labour (Silva, 2022). The viscous law emerges from worlds populated by non-human agencies that are also considered in the sharing of lands and with which our lives are deeply implicated.

1.4. Reverting the erasure into becoming

In the picking of cocoa, the fruits are gathered in some spot in the crop, the workers break them to collect their seeds covered by a white gooey membrane, and the cocoa shell is abandoned on the land and served as compost to the crop again. Cocoa seeds, still very humid and gummy, are collected and taken to some deposit where they spend some days in fermentation. Sometimes the liquid dripping from them is collected to be drunk. It is the bitter and dense cocoa honey, which cannot stay so long out of a freezer. After some days of

[19] The ethnographies of Cardoso (2018), Sandroni (2018) and Molina (2017), who worked with different indigenous communities in Brazil, show how the indigenous ways of understanding and managing their territories conflicted with the perspectives and intentions of the State. They describe it mainly when discussing the meetings between indigenous communities and agents of the State to deal with the demarcation of indigenous lands.

fermentation, cocoa seeds are taken to greenhouses to dry, then bagged in 60kg bags, and finally sold to a warehouse that will further sell it to an exporter until it arrives in processing factories. The process of commercialisation is full of middlemen, such as the international market of mushrooms described by Anna Tsing (2015). However, most of the cocoa workers do not know the final destination of their work. I asked my father, who has worked with cocoa for more than fifty years, and he did not know it. Cocoa is deterritorialised geographically in a process of commodification of its seeds, which are commercialised and exported in global networks that link cocoa trees, land, minerals, birds, snakes, sun, water sources, native trees of the Atlantic rainforest, cocoa workers, brush cutters, farmers, herbicides, warehouse owners, exportation companies, roads, trucks, ships, factories, industrial machinery, all put to work across different sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Lastly, cocoa is melted or crushed and transformed into chocolate or other products that keep up their way in global circulation. When industrialised chocolate melts in your mouth, it is a patchwork of the modern world that you chew. The planet is mechanised with global networks of extraction and industrialisation to make you feel that pleasure.

In this research, I pursue these lines of motion that cocoa creates and investigate how that small village where I grew up is connected to global connections that also link it to London. The hierarchisation of places that this connection creates imposes relations of power that people face in southern Bahia and how these people's bodies can be positioned socially in a place such as London. My research requires a study of the local ecologies of cocoa crops in connection to this global arrangement. My life and personal trajectory contaminate my perspectives and this is not only unavoidable but indeed intentional. I am the son of a family and a world that suffered from the impoverishment correlated to the production of wealth in this country, England.[20]

My research intends to make visible and enunciable these cross-boundary lines that produce cocoa's *lawscapes*, which are the spatial assemblages of human and non-human bodies that put at stake an agonist game of visibilisation and invisibilisation of what is allowed or not, what bodies are allowed or not to withdraw from these assemblages, either by explicit constraints or by conditions that disable them to do that (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015).

[20] The history of capitalist accumulation in England and the contribution of British imperialism and colonialism to this has been vastly discussed by historians and economists since Marx's Capital (1990). See for example the important thesis of Williams (1944), who showed in detail how the first owners of industries, banks and other capitalist institutions in England were all owners of plantations and slaves in former colonies. McGowan & Kordan showed how the production of global inequality can be related to the nineteenth century, the period of the Industrial Revolution, and the leading imperialist role of Britain in global capitalism (McGowan & Kordan, 1981). Andrews (2020) brings an updated version of this claim. The nineteenth century was also the period of the industrialisation of chocolate in England, which is also related to the production of cocoa in Brazil, as I will show in Chapter 4. Data on the global trade of cocoa between England and Brazil can be found in Graham (1968).

Withdrawal is understood here as a body's motion towards the outside of an *atmosphere,* which is an enclosure of affects that condition what movements are possible or not inside it (*Ibid,* p. 5). I am using this concept here with the proposal to describe the movement of bodies inward and outward in the atmosphere that cocoa production sets up, distributing bodies spatially and unevenly to different social positions, enabling some of them to circulate across this atmosphere easier than others, and creating different kinds of conditions that force some bodies to remain in their places. These conditions can be economic, geographic, environmental, legal or social.

This global perspective also makes me aware of the geopolitics of knowledge involving this research. As Mbembe says*:* "*The foundation of the modern university itself and the current geopolitics of knowledge at the planetary level rest, to a certain extent, on a Yalta-like division of the world between the global North, where theory is done, and the 'Rest,' which is the kingdom of ethnography"* (Mbembe, 2021, p. 20). Because of this, I avoid approaching the communities of cocoa workers, or indigenous people that also deal with cocoa, as mere objects of description, but instead as subjects of perspectives and knowledge that will also contribute to understanding the ecologies of cocoa. Considering this, I explore in this research how indigenous cosmologies can contribute methodologically to elaborate the way I comprehend and explain the ecology of cocoa. In the last two chapters, I reflect on indigenous conceptions of nature (cosmology) and their practices of multispecies collaboration, through which they negotiate their sharing of lands with other living beings.

Before the violence that indigenous people face in Brazil since Europeans invaded those lands, and the physical and epistemic extermination of these peoples and their traditions, the investigation of how their perspectives can contribute to rethinking ourselves in the face of environmental destruction is important for spreading their thought where it was not supposed to be present: the modern world. This strategy takes the erasure of their presence in reverse. Now, it is important to actualise in different fields where social forms are thought, such as the law, the virtual memory of these ideas, triggering a problematic process of differentiation infused by the anarchic potential that the way of living of these peoples has.

When thinking of an indigenous becoming, I take the concept of becoming in the sense given by Deleuze and Guattari, for whom a becoming is not merely an imitation, but a zone of indistinction and co-habitation of heterogenous forms, where a body or multiple bodies are trespassed by particles, elements, movements of another being without identification with that (Deleuze & Guattari, p. 272, 1980). I do not want to feed an idealistic and romanticised idea of indigenous ways of living that other people would need to reproduce. The forms of indigenous

politics and struggles that I am interested in here are mainly those related to the production of territories liberated from capitalist control. There, the indigenous becoming that I want to pursue is not the one reduced to forms of resilience and survival of indigenous people before colonial and capitalist devastation of their territories. This latter sense was the object of pertinent critique in the book of Chandler and Reid (2019), showing how neoliberal ways of governing work through the regulation and management of risks and freedoms of a society left at its own capacity to adapt to new adverse contexts and find its own solutions. Instead of this, I consider that indigenous forms of knowledge allow for a critical perspective on capitalism that can point towards new modes of existence and struggle not thought of by Western critical theories.

Indigenous cosmologies bring an important contribution to rethinking ourselves in the face of the environmental crisis caused by global warming and the challenges put by what has been called the Anthropocene, a new geological era in which humans became a geological agent and that is transforming deeply the geophysical conditions of the planet. But which humans? The concept of Anthropocene is very criticised for hiding asymmetries among humans and among different social forms (Yusoff, 2018; Ferdinand, 2019; Moore, 2015). But in the proliferation of so many alternative concepts such as *Capitalocene, Negrocene, Cthulhucene, Plantationcene* and so on, I prefer to use the term Anthropocene as it appears in all these different discussions, which is as a trigger of controversies, political disparities and asymmetries that should be put in question.

The contribution of indigenous people was recognised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in a report released in March of 2021,[21] which considered their importance in forest conservation. Indigenous perspectives also converge with scientific reports. For instance, a team of international scientists from the Royal Swedish Academy of Science submitted a report to the upcoming *"Our Planet, Our Future" Nobel Prize Summit* that has as a key point claim that *"humans need to think of ourselves as embedded in the biosphere, rather than being separate from it, and that any societal changes need to bear this in mind".*[22] The website of the United Nations also informs that although indigenous peoples

[21] The FAO's report is available in this link: http://www.fao.org/americas/publicaciones-audio-video/forest-gov-by-indigenous/en/

[22] For more information about this, the report was provided here: https://news.mongabay.com/2021/04/humanitys-dysfunctional-relationship-with-earth-can-still-be-fixed-report-says/

are 5% of the world's population, they are responsible for the conservation of 80% of the world's forests and biodiversity.[23]

Moreover, these indigenous cosmologies also inspire me to approach cocoa considering the non-human agents that participate in the production of history. Amerindian populations are diverse, but they share a perspective on nature that differs deeply from the Western, modern and Christian way of seeing nature as a set of passive and inert matter completely available as resources to human will; ruled by necessary causality that is only described and mastered by the human subject; nature as object and completely diverse from culture and society, which are the human world, the kingdom of freedom, politics, contingency, history.[24]

The modern conception of nature as a passive matter underpins the legal concept of property since land, forests and animals can be appropriated as objects and sources for supplying human needs. This anthropocentric conception of nature also is the basis for the extractive way of production in capitalist societies. Indigenous peoples see what we call nature not as something detached from the composition of society, not as objectified and passive resources, but as a complex web of living beings that are alive, communicating among themselves, endowed with agency, participating in the production of reality.[25] This perspective changes completely the relationship that humans have with non-human beings, and consequently, it gives us other ways of understanding ecology and politics. Besides that, it also provides a cosmological critique of capitalism that goes beyond the questioning of its economic and technical aspects to put into question our ties to nature. The problem is not only about changing the way of organising and controlling production but also changing how we understand ourselves in relationship with other living and non-living beings. Indigenous perspectives allow for moving from the horizon of greedy economic development that commodifies the planet to a cosmopolitical reinvolving with the Earth as a complex living being, as Viveiros de Castro says (2011).

The prevalence of human action modifying the landscape, mainly through the technical development brought about by capitalism that turns the space increasingly artificial (Santos, 2021), triggers the ecological disequilibrium liable to cause problems like global warming, extinction of other species, destruction of liveable habitats and other issues. The understanding

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[23] The information is available at this link: https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/unsung-heroes-conservation-indigenous-people-fight-forests

[24] Concerning this description of nature in modern thought, see mainly Latour (1993; 2004) and Tsing (2015).

[25] About the Amerindian comprehension of nature, see the works by indigenous authors such as Ailton Krenak (2020) and Davi Kopenawa in collaboration with Bruce Albert (2013); and the anthropological studies by Viveiros de Castro (2014; 2015) and Philippe Descola (1994; 1996; 2005).

that human lives are never detached from the lives of other species is an important task to develop new theoretical tools to understand ourselves before these issues. To blur the lines that separate the law from ecology, geography and other disciplines (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2011) is a challenging problem, but it is part of a movement to reshape our epistemological strategies and create new methods of answering unprecedented problems. Exploring contemporary debates on the Anthropocene on one hand and black and indigenous studies on the other, I want to cross the divisions between these fields to investigate a conception of law that can face this planetary conjecture from an indigenous and anticolonial perspective.[26]

From the perspective of those people who refused the modern way of living – I am speaking of those collectives who still insist on living together with the forests and refuse consciously the modern and urban way of living – many necessities imposed by capitalism that seem obvious to us can become contingent and open space to question the configuration of our lives. For example, when indigenous people complain about the need to use the money for everything in the cities, as Kopenawa says in his book: "*Yanomami shamans do not work for money the way white people's doctors do. They simply work so that the sky and forest remain in place, so that we can hunt, plant our gardens, and live in good health. Our ancients did not know of money. Omama did not give them any talk of this kind. Money does not protect us, it does not fill our stomachs, it does not create our joy (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013, p. 150-151).* He is saying that they do not need to pay to live on this planet, to be part of this as much as other living beings that make the Earth liveable and alive. For modern people, well accommodated to the technical and economic facilities of the modern world, his perspective can seem too backward and primitive. How could he deny the blessings of modern life and the easiness provided by its techniques that money can give access to? How could it be possible to live without working and not paying for your needs? Well, the few ones who profit from our day-to-day suffering do not need to worry about these questions. Kopenawa just demands the same freedom to question why his people is obliged to worry about money now. Money would only be a need for them because their forms of life are threatened by the destruction of the forests, moved by the intention of extraction of raw material used to produce merchandise and generate wealth for those rich minorities that throw the planet in an environmental catastrophe. But freedom and wealth for him are qualitatively different and are not realised at the expense of enslaving other people and devouring the planet. As Danowski and Viveiros de Castro argue

[26] This latter has already been discussed by other scholars and the books by Yusoff (2018) and Clark and Szerszynski (2021) are important contributions in this direction.

(2016), indigenous people are not poor, poverty is a capitalist category, but their wealth is qualitatively different from the Capital, which impoverishes them by stealing and destroying their lands, forcing them to move to the edges of the cities. They are then converted into poor.

To resist this conversion, indigenous people want to say that they still have a planet. Or better to say, they still belong to this planet and every person populating it should have this right. The planet gives us the conditions to live on it, but these conditions are threatened by capitalism. The ancestral justice that an indigenous perspective can inform should expose how these conditions are damaged by capitalism.

1.5. Structure and plan of chapters

The thesis is structured in three parts. The first part includes elements that prepare the terrain to expand the topics discussed in the other two parts, which are presented below. These elements are the (a) introduction of the proposal, context and problems elaborated in the thesis, (b) a critique of modern law and its limits to produce justice for black and indigenous people in the context of the Anthropocene and (c) a method section developing what I called a perspectivist autoethnography, which guided the elaboration of this thesis. On the route that brought me here, I found myself as an indigenous descendant and it is from the point of view of my native land that I will develop my approach. With this, I hope to contribute to the reversion of the erasure of indigenous people, turning it into an indigenous becoming of the planet and the viscous law that sticks our bodies together to its surface. This is made mainly through the discussion of indigenous struggles to take back and repair their ancestral lands and the experience of the Web of the People with practices of reforestation using agroecology. These experiences point towards new forms of inhabiting the planet.

Part II

Modernisation on a local scale: The fourth chapter starts from the local but also from a global perspective. It approaches the formation of my native village around the work with cocoa and how the modernisation of cocoa agriculture affected and changed the relationship that people have with the land. This process of modernisation is very connected to transformations that happened on the other side of the Atlantic, such as the creation of the first industrialised chocolate bar in England, which increased the exportation of cocoa in countries such as Brazil.

In this chapter, I try to grasp the socioenvironmental change that modernisation caused locally. Through conversations with cocoa workers over 60 years old, such as my father, I could identify how people used to have a more organic relationship with the land decades ago and how it changed over the years. Technical improvement of agricultural practices, road constructions, access to cities, the arrival of more merchandise and technical objects, all these are important to characterise modernisation, and here the latter is also linked to the erasure of indigenous presence, either symbolic (memory/tradition) or physical. This local transformation, which is just one case of similar processes that happened in different geographical contexts, has global consequences.

Modernisation on a planetary scale: The fifth chapter develops the consequences of modernisation on a global scale and how the technical, industrial and capitalist expansion of human control over nature led to an entropic process which affected us in three interconnected dimensions: psychic, social and environmental. We live in worlds with an increasing number of people suffering from unhealthy mental conditions, such as depression and anxiety. The World Health Organisation estimates that 5% of adults suffer from depression globally.[27] Socially, as I have argued above, there is a context of diffused violence that affects mainly non-white people and characterises a form of power that Achille Mbembe described as necropolitical (Mbembe, 2019). And environmentally, our societies have been already suffering the consequences of climate change with intense floods, wildfires spreading, breaking records of high temperatures, among other catastrophes. I argue that this is the world modernisation made and modernised societies are the conjunctions of these crises. Facing this context, I elaborate on paths of ecological recomposition, which demand a return to the local, but we do not return through the same line. Before that, we should pass by a change of relation to the planet and to nature.

Part III

Ecologisation on a planetary scale: In the sixth chapter, the concept of viscosity already presented above will be further developed and this is my attempt to articulate post-human theories on relationality and entanglement between human and non-human beings, and between

[27] The information can be accessed on the webpage of the World Health Organisation: https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression

humans and the planet, with an anti-colonial perspective on collective formations. As I have already said, the concept of viscosity comes to me from the materiality of cocoa and how it marks the bodies socially. Cocoa here is a hub of connections in different layers and scales: it connects a local ecology to a global trade, and it connects humans to the land and other living beings. With the concept of viscosity, I want to explore how these entangled parts affect each other viscously and not normatively. The viscous law is presented here as the involuntary and contingent (non-determinative) entanglement that puts these parts and scales in relation. Also through viscosity, people can stick together among themselves and with the land to produce a different attachment to the planet. Indigenous conceptions of nature and land will play an important role here. After elaborating on these socio-ecological formations, I can move to the last chapter.

Ecologisation on a local scale: The seventh and last chapter is an engagement with another ethnographic context in southern Bahia, which is the struggles for land and territory of the landless workers' movement and Tupinambá people. More than a case to be described, I am interested in how these collectives elaborate different perspectives on their own formation and through an engagement with these perspectives I want to elaborate on the viscous law of cocoa, or the cocoa's lawscape. Here I return to the local, southern Bahia, to show how the recovery of indigenous ancestral traditions is recreating the relationship of people with the land, or as Tupinambá people call it: a way of healing the land. In these struggles for land around the Atlantic rainforest biome, agroecology is flourishing, and people already managed to recover areas of native forest. In the last two decades in Brazil, Tupinambá people have been struggling for their rights through the practice of what they call *"retomada de terras"* (reappropriation of lands), which consists of reoccupying ancestral lands that were invaded by farmers or other explorers. In the same region, the Terra Vista settlement, first created by the landless workers' movement (MST) in the early 90s' and now organised by the Web of the Peoples, became an important reference in agroecology. Within these processes, there is also a production of another space, another ecology, another relationship to the land. If Carl Schmitt is right when he says that the original movement that makes law arise is the taking of land, which produces an ordering of space and defines borders that establish internal and external relations, what happens when lands are retaken and borders are reshaped? These practices can be a path to investigate how the conditions of existence are produced beyond rights – the normative language of the law that links people to the State – and how more-than-social arrangements bring conceptions of the law rooted in the entanglements of bodies and their territories.

In the end, I am interested in how these struggles can reverse the erasure of indigenous people caused by modernisation into an indigenous becoming. In dialogue with the forms of knowledge that my indigenous ancestry brings, I am interested in how we can find a *cosmopoetics* of justice. One that breaks the image of justice as a contractual agreement between rational subjects and brings into the scene the frictions and viscous assemblages of human and non-human bodies producing liveable territories out of capitalist control.

2. Decomposing the Law

"It is not the slumber of reason that engenders monsters, but vigilant and insomniac rationality".

Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari

"There cannot be a state of savagery until there is a civilization to endow it with knowable existence".

Peter Fitzpatrick

In this chapter, I seek to present how modern legal theory was built around the concepts of norms and normativity and how it sustained law as a social technique that organises the working of public institutions and the ways of mediating conflicts in society. Thereafter, I show how it still orients contemporary elaborations in legal theory even though it has been updated with new epistemologies. Norms and normativity not only organise the modes of managing the law but they also mould a certain relationship with the world to which they are applied. Inspired by the decompositional method of reading elaborated by Silva (2022), I seek to criticise these normative ways of thinking about the law and open ways of reimaging the law out of its normative matrix. Doing this path, I also pass through other critiques of modern law, especially critical legal theory, and I hope to show both their contributions to new critical ways of understanding the law and their limits to address the problems and contexts addressed in this thesis.

2.1. Normativity as technique

Through a liberal approach as the one developed by John Rawls (1971), in order to propose an arrangement of legal and political institutions able to organise the social relations within a complex society, it is necessary to have a theory of justice that conceives principles referring to ways of distributing goods collectively. For Rawls, two principles are very

important mainly: the first principle is that each person has equal rights to the most extensive basic liberties compatible with similar liberties of others; the second principle states that economic inequalities should be arranged in a way that can benefit the least advantaged in society (Rawls, 1971, p. 52). Following these principles, a legal theory is also needed to conceive of ways to solve social conflicts in a way that these principles are respected. These theories must establish a deontological programme of working for these institutions through a set of legal rules that will prescribe the command[28] which regulates the practices in these organisations. What I want to highlight is how normativity and the creation of norms are at the core of liberal ways of structuring societies. The modern legal theory and its theories of justice are forms of knowledge complicit to liberal societies.

The command as a manifestation of the law is just part of a broader rationality that shapes the law. What I intend to argue against here is the understanding of the law as something produced especially by the interaction of human minds, a rational process mediated by discursive communication with a stable semantic transfer of meanings and a form of logical reasoning that intends to be neutral and technical. This way of understanding the making and practice of the law is based on normativity and it is not reduced to legality. Norms can be legal or not. There are also social, religious, moral, and biological norms, among others, and the differentiation of legal norms from other kinds of normativity has been an important concern of legal theory, as a search to define that which would properly pertain to the law (Banakar, 2015). Normativity, in turn, is a structuring feature of a form of thought that is deterministic, causal and guided by norms. A norm is a descriptor that defines a relation of necessity between an event and its consequence. This necessity can be expressed as *ought,* as it is the case of the law, or as regularity or pattern of behaviour, as in social norms (*Ibid.,* p. 2015). This linkage between events sustains logical reasoning in a linear and determinative manner.

The focus on norms has oriented legal theory since the publication of canonical books in legal theory, for example, the *Pure Theory of the Law* by Kelsen, where we can find the following:

> "By defining law as a norm and by limiting the science of law to the cognition and description of legal norms, and to the norm-determined relations between norm-determined facts, the law is delimited against nature, and the science of law as a science of norms is delineated against all other sciences that are directed towards causal cognition of actual happenings" (Kelsen, 1934, p. 75).

[28] This notion of norm as command is developed by Giorgio Agamben in his book *Opus Dei: an archeology of duty* (2013), and it refers to relation between norms and behaviours prescribed by norms, which is a relation of having-to-be. Thus, command is that which is in question in the norm. Before Agamben, Hans Kelsen also discussed about norm as expression of a command in his book *General Theory of Law and State* (2005).

The discourse of modern legal theory is built through this normative way of reasoning and points toward the technical application of legal norms. This happens similarly to other kinds of techniques that base their application on scientific formulations. Science is a descriptor of causal relations between events that make it possible to predict their possible consequences and act in advance of them. In its turn, legal science describes the formulation, interpretation and application of norms of *ought* or *have-to-be.* Either in natural sciences or legal science, this allows for the control of a causal sequence of events, making possible a certain degree of determination of predictable reactions, thus reducing the contingency of the future, as the law is supposed to do according to Luhmann (2008). This scientific model based on causal relations was also a basis for the kind of logical reasoning that still rules liberal institutions in capitalist societies (Silva, 2022).

Normativity is the technical vocabulary of law and the form in which official authorities' decisions are expressed. This defines the parameters through which we mediate conflicts, guide human conduct and establish common expectations of these conducts. Legal normativity is a technique of social regulation (Kelsen, 2005) based on the modern tradition of European thought. It is a set of practices applied based on scientific justifications, and professedly objective; that is to say, it is the application of a theory just like any other type of technique that presupposes a scientific description of its way of working. Hence, we can consider that the concept of normativity is also guided by some idea of effectiveness, which is the main value that orients the technical development according to the French sociologist of technique Jacques Ellul (1964). From a philosophical perspective, effectiveness is also a measure of an efficient causality and its capacity to determine reality.[29] For Kelsen (2005), effectiveness is a condition for the validity of a legal order. If the modern law is a form endowed with efficacy and expressed in norms that determine causalities, then it is also a form that controls time, that is, one that determines what will inevitably happen after a certain event or action (ontological description) or what has to happen after that (deontological prescription). This reasoning also presupposes a subject, since time is determined mentally and rationally in the interiority of the rational subject (Silva, 2022).

[29] Silva claims that "*In sum, determinacy as deployed in Kant's knowledge (scientific) program remains the core of modern thought: it is presupposed in accounts of the juridical and ethical field of statements (such as the human-rights framework) which (a) presume a* universal *that operates as an a priori (formal) determining force (effectivity), and which (b) produce* objects *for which "Truth" refers to how they* relate *to something else—relationships mediated by abstract determinants (laws and rules) that can only be captured by the rational things' (including the human mind/soul) "principles of disposition"* (Silva, 2017).

As a social technique, the law is always in connection to public institutions and technical procedures that organise and mediate social relations. But even before referring to the State machinery that the law put to work – and which also makes the law work since the law is its language –, the rationality of legal theory already works as a security system based on transcendental reason as its police and certainty, norm and logical necessity as its repressive and controlling weapons. The law is obsessed with security and control. It blocks everything exterior to its internal code – as Luhmann describes the operative closure of the legal system (Luhmann, 2008) –, and everything exterior to its code may be epistemologically tamed before it is legally coded. Everything may be mapped and chained to an explicative and scientifically controlled causal chain, which should work as a form of logical prediction, even though it is made through non-linear and complex models of causality, as it has been made in contemporary legal theories.

Two works in contemporary legal theory that show how norms and normativity are at the core of legal science are *Sociology of Law as the Science of Norms* by Håkan Hydén (2021) and *Ecolaw: Legality, Life, and the Normativity of Nature* by Margaret Davies (2022). Hydén expands the studies of legal normativity through an investigation of behavioural and psychological sciences to understand the driving forces behind human actions, where norms are the link between these actions and a broader social system (Hydén, 2022, p. 3). He is also interested in updating the role of norms in the digital era. Davies, in her turn, takes legal theory in a different direction. She demonstrates the intersection of legal normativity with biological, geological and ecological normativities that rule the material world to which humans are physically connected and in relation to which we are conditioned and dependent. She begins her book by saying that we inhabit a normative universe (Davies, 2022, p.1) and she shows *"how positive law is continuous with or situated within the physical world"* (*Ibid.*, p. 5). Davies describes norms being created through the unfolding of life itself, which as she says is teleologically oriented, even though an end is not explicitly given and consciously defined (Davies, 2022, p. 4-5). For her, norms are not so deterministic though. They can be contingent, emerging from deviations that create new norms. Yet, I call attention to the fact that her work is thoroughly focused on norms and normativity. The two authors mentioned above innovate the normative discourse of legal theory, expanding it to new domains, but their works are still concerned with the traditional focus of legal theory: norms. A thought still too obsessed with normativity, which is not only an object of study but also its way of thinking. That is to say, legal theory is still a normative thought.

The authors have different interests and orientations, but what I want to argue that is common to these different authors is how legal theory carries on developing its rationality in a normative and determinative way. Normative not in the sense of differentiating the good from the bad as Hydén refuses (Hydén, 2021, p. 1), but because these new legal theories are obsessed with finding norms everywhere, expanding the normative description of existence to new domains and transforming theory into a big chain of interconnected and layered norms, as though the rigidity of the law in itself was not enough. Even though they insert more complexity with multiple agencies self-emerging and self-organising in the making of the material world, as in Davies' *Ecolaw*, they still think normatively. I understand that she brings more contingency, immanence, decentralisation and differentiation in the making of norms, but it still maintains the place of a reason, a rational subject, turning the cascade of events in existence into an interior and mental ordering of the multiplicity, as in a Kantian synthesis that produces the understanding. This seems to play the main role in Davies' work, without leaving much space to imagine what other forms of existence could emerge from this suffocating cascade of norms.

Their works still operate in a determinative way not in the sense of mechanistic relation of causes-effects as Davies also refuses (Davies, 2022, p. 2).[30] A determinative thought determines logically the necessary sequence of a causal line. In non-linear and complex systems of causality, causes can have several sources, happen simultaneously and their effects can be more undetermined, so contingency is a key concept here. However, it is the role of science to grasp the network of causes and formalise it in descriptive systems. This is also a determinative task of reason which performs a productive power in ordering the existence. These new forms of legal theory developed through non-linear and complex causalities still work in a determinative way and sustain with new tools *"the ordered world of the subject"* (Silva, 2019, p. 43). Every norm, even when used to describe causal lineages (relations of necessity) in non-human worlds, is still a norm for a subject and defines the relation of this latter to the world. Such relation is then based on prediction, control, ordering and security. Even when scientific control is not followed by legal coding, it still works as a form of objectivation of the multiple beings that compose what we call nature, which is a false unity applied to a manifold.

[30] As Davies presents her proposal: *"Ecolaw connects biolaw, geolaw, and indeed human law. It requires a connection of legal theory with the science theory of recent decades. Science theory is in the process of supplementing mechanical laws involving deterministic cause-effect sequences with more probabilistic laws that engage agency, purpose, and constrained choice. These developments make the connection of human law with the laws of nature much more credible, even unavoidable"* (Davies, 2022, pp. 2-3).

Therefore, these new scientific forms also work as a way of turning these multiple forms of existence into objects for a subject, and ultimately, making possible new ways of appropriation, that is, making property. Such science and its mode of apprehending the world is not so far from colonial mentalities that underpin modern law. In these contemporary scientific discourses oriented by complexity, non-linear causality and non-human agencies, a new form of police insinuates, even more perverse than before. Despite the non-intentionality, it sprouts from the ramifications of discourses that intend to scrutinise the existence and stratify its diverse dimensions into normative codes of science and law, because these discourses have already assembled the control apparatuses. If we imagine that new security technologies based on artificial intelligence and quantum computers could easily map and automatise these complex causal chains in new algorithms, our experience before these new forms of control would be turned into hell.

These works bring important contributions expanding the interdisciplinary boundaries of legal theory but when I read them, I go through a deep reasoning process of scrutiny of human behaviour or nature in their intimate details. It is impressive and important, but I need to forget all other sensible dimensions of my body in this process. This normative nature of Davies is not the one where I grew up, where I swam, I got dirty, I ate, I ran.[31] That latter was instead an immeasurable nature, which cannot be exhausted by scientific discourse and normative descriptions. Without my body, I lose all the horizon of lived experience and the possibility of action to find another way of inhabiting this world that already saturates brains and despises the intelligence of other people because of their skin colour or places of origin, as I experienced it myself. I am not pointing out a prejudice in these theories in themselves. What I am concerned about here is that in this game ruled by modern forms of reason (normative and determinative), the losers and winners are established beforehand because this reason has its proper place and subject: the white people from the global north.[32] As a researcher working in

[31] This is also distant from other conceptions such as the "living law" developed by Eugen Ehrlich (Hertog, 2008). I am not speaking of a law apprehended phenomenally that would later become a framework for structuring social relationships. Instead, I am thinking of a form of living and experiencing the world not structured at all, and much less intended to become an institutional law.

[32] In a paper describing empirically some legal cases dealing with situations of racism, Fitzpatrick showed how legal institutions and judges could easily bypass complaints of black people about what they experienced and privilege white defendants (Fitzpatrick, 1987). In another paper, he argues that the indigenous forms of rationality are incommensurable with the rational structure of the law and cannot be welcomed and comprehended by this latter (Fitzpatrick, 1995). About how these forms of rationalism, which are dominant in the law and tend to privilege white people, authors such as Fanon (1986), Kilomba (2016) and McKittrick (2021) approached this problem. Fanon and Kilomba, especially, narrate it happening in their personal experience. Also, in my case, what motivates this claim is the uncountable experiences of intellectual underestimation that I already experienced in my trajectory.

the global north, I also needed to learn this game but at the cost of letting outside all my lived experience while struggling to play it in very diverse conditions. What I would like to show along the pages of this thesis is less about the order of rational proof and authority and more about the lived reasons of a body.

2.2. The critiques of modern law

I discuss in this section some key texts from critical legal scholars that expose the limits of modern legal theory. By doing so, though, I also want to show the limits of these critiques when reading them with a focus on contexts outside of Europe. Although the critique of modern law and modernity has already been developed by Western scholars, the reasons why non-Western scholars criticise modernity can be different, and it is important to explore these differences further.

In the works of Douzinas & Warrington (1991) and Fitzpatrick (2001), there is a common concern with the foundation of law after the dissolution of the pre-modern ordering of the Western world, which had God as its grounding soil. After the announced "death of God" by Nietzsche, the remaining shadow of this transcendent place still haunted society and the void left by God could be replaced by human forms (Fitzpatrick, 2001, p. 54). In this, rests the problem of finding new foundations for the law, when transcendental reason becomes the main ruler of the world and *"there now is nothing ontologically prior to the individual",* who needs to determine their own being (Fitzpatrick, 1992, p. 35): "*It is the individual who now mediates between the transcendent and the real, who now weds truths to times. The displacement of myth is completed when 'man' comes to be subjected to 'the sciences of man and society'* (*Ibid.*). In other words, in modernity, humans become subjected to themselves.

Douzinas & Warrington find in modernity a fracture that makes impossible – or at least much more difficult – the construction of ethical agreements. For them, the Western rule of law was an answer to this but the conditions that led to modernity itself prevented the law from giving what it promised: a neutral and non-subjectivist instance of decision about conflicting values (Douzinas & Warrington, 1991, p. 12). Without a common ground to base the different comprehensions of the world and with the fragmentation of life caused by modernisation,[33] the

[33] In his presentation of law in modern society, Unger discusses the specialisation of different activities that characterise modern liberal societies. With this, the individuals' experiences are composed of different social spheres, where the relations and shared values can vary. Unger develops the implications of this concerning the law in the third chapter of his book (Unger, 1976).

law cannot find a stable ground to determine itself and it puts an unresolvable problem to legal theory and the justification of the law as an institution. The work of Fitzpatrick, specifically, is very concerned with unfolding this problem and its paradoxes. He shows how legal theory sought to solve it by a process of rupture and denigration of the pre-modern past of the law and its mythic narratives. This self-foundation of modern societies as rationalised, self-determined and transparent is also a process of constitution of the identity of European nations in opposition to their 'others'. These latter were those peoples taken as savage and uncivilised that became entrapped in a forced relationship with Europe because of the colonisation. As Fitzpatrick puts it:

> Such an identity is constantly recreated and sustained in opposition to certain 'others' who persist as embodiments of contrary worlds that have gone before. The primitive, to take a figure of the other, is uncontrolled, fickle irresponsible, of nature, and so on. The European is disciplined, constant, self-responsible, of culture, and so on. But the other is not truly other (even assuming such a state was possible). It does not exist primarily or initially apart from its relation to a West which encompasses it. The other, in its uncivilized or pre-modern state, is a construct of the West […] A closure is thus effected. The West creates those others in simple opposition to which it is created (Fitzpatrick, 1992, p. 30).

Douzinas & Warrington, in turn, read the different modern legal theories as efforts to answer the question about what the law is, separating the law from extra-legal domains and giving it its proper object, unity and identity. These theories would aim to define the legality of the law, and the conditions to determine which rules and norms are part of the law and belong to a legal system that should be logically coherent. In the authors' words, modern legal theory intended to determine the law of the law (Douzinas & Warrington, 1991, p. 25). The authors also approach the contrasts between two different ways of thinking about the law: legal positivism and the different studies of law and society or law in context. It is also a common concern shared by these authors the distances and tensions between positivist legal theories, which treat the law as an autonomous phenomenon or epistemological field linked to a technical and institutional practice apart from the social worlds from which the law emerges, and the studies of law in context, law and society or socio-legal theories. They criticise both trends as modernist modes. Either because of the urge to find coherence, unity and permanence in law by positivists or because of the attachment of sociologies of law to modern representation, the intention to find a true correspondence between discourse and reality, or as the authors put it, those theories would still be stuck to the metaphysics of presence (*Ibid.*, p. 25-26). As this latter claim suggests, Douzinas & Warrington follow a Derridean orientation that seeks to deconstruct these supposed coherent constructions of modern legal theory and show their internal plurality, opening it to new forms of reason.

Fitzpatrick concludes the first part of his book – a part where he develops his theory on the law – by stating that the law works through this tension between the determination of its technical and institutional dimension and its responsiveness to social demands and contexts. Without the former, the law can lose itself in vagueness, and without the latter, the law loses its capacity to transform and attend to the demand for justice coming from social contexts (Fitzpatrick, 2001, p. 104). Neither of these parts is enough to the law since the determination of legal decisions and their technical procedures are the means of realisation of what is demanded in contexts beyond the law (*Ibid.*, p. 107).[34] These decisions, however, cannot suffice these demands integrally and these latter will keep alive the need to transform legal institutions. In this last argument, Fitzpatrick is also following Derrida in his well-known text, *Force of Law* (1992).

These critical legal theorists sought to destabilise modern law by opening up the manifold of its semantics, breaking with its transparency and supposed neutral objectivity, showing the foreclosed otherness, the internal conflicts of the law, as well as the racism of liberal legalism. Although pertinent, the critiques of these authors cannot fulfil the epistemological and political demands that my research pursues. Firstly, there is a problem of tradition, or it would be better to say, geopolitics of knowledge. These authors discussed here – Douzinas & Warrington (1991) and Fitzpatrick (2001) – exclusively or mostly discuss European or North American references, who are white males in their majority. By saying this, I do not want to deny the contribution of these people and just tear apart Western tradition. The task of removing this would be far from straightforward. Because, more than a problem of theoretical choice, this tradition shaped the world that we live in, including the violence and negations of other people's lives and other intellectual traditions. But many authors from this tradition also influenced forms of struggle against this violence. Such tradition is not homogeneous and monolithic, and it is full of internal conflicts.

Though my work is also agonistically engaged with Western authors – I will discuss it further in the next chapter –, I want to engage with authors and written and non-written thoughts of other traditions and other peoples such as those from where I came. This is not only because those peoples and traditions were excluded, despised – see for example the forms that Kant and Hegel referred to American Natives and Africans, as discussed by Silva (2007; 2020) and

[34] In the author's words: *"Law, as we have seen, cannot be sustained in the songs of Rousseau's whispering bird or in 'some secret discourse with a divinity'. Law, on the contrary, is always operatively attached to existent situations, even if it cannot be positively rendered in terms of any such situation. It is in the legal decision - the decision of the subject, the judge, the legislator - that law becomes operative"* (Fitzpatrick, 2001, p. 104).

Mbembe (2021) – and forgotten from what is institutionally recognised as knowledge, but mainly because I know from my personal experience what is to pass through this form of underestimation and despise not only in Europe but also in Brazil. Therefore, my work is not only an effort to affirm and uphold non-Western traditions of thought. By doing this, I am also affirming myself and my people and struggling for our space in a global debate. I do not intend this work to be a representation of a heterogeneous multitude of people, but it is my contribution to those people in a global context. And it was in dialogue with these people that I built this work. (Auto)Ethnography here was a tool for this, as it will be presented in Chapter 3. As said at the opening of this section, our reasons – we the non-Westerners – to critique Western modernity are not the same as Western critiques already developed. For us, it is not only a matter of criticising the rationalism or formalism of legal theory. More than a critique of modern reason, it is a plurality of other forms of reason that we want to experiment with. There, where reason can be a whole other thing.

More than this, my concern is not merely about textual and epistemological issues. Or it could be better to say that this textual and epistemological change also brings more than a mere inclusion of marginalised authors and tradition. Together with them, many other forms of imagining and knowing the world take place, and so it is the political proposal of this thesis as well. My proposal is not merely to criticise why black and indigenous people in Brazil were not included in the already given forms of Western modern law exported to post-colonial contexts and in the modern liberal architecture of Western democracy. I am more concerned with how black and indigenous practices with the land point toward other forms of coexistence, not only among humans but also enmeshed with the many forms of life that compose their ecologies and territories. This is another limit of the critical legal thinkers discussed above to develop my horizon of investigation. They did not dare to go beyond the forms of the State to think of other forms of structuring society politically. This is not merely an epistemological limitation of their time but their choices of theorisation. Fitzpatrick, for example, was very engaged with anthropology (Fitzpatrick, 1992), but he did not go further in the investigation of how indigenous politics could allow for social forms not ruled by a sovereign State or other forms of centralised power. This discussion was already available to him, as it had already been discussed in French tradition through the works of Pierre Clastres (1989) and Deleuze and Guattari's elaborations on his works (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Even more problematic here is the need that non-Europeans expressions of thought should have to be first described by Europeans (the role of anthropology or cultural studies) to be taken into consideration. Where could the subaltern have the chance to speak? Would they need to wait for Europeans to be

educated about the worlds beyond their bubbles to finally reclaim their political legitimacy to determine themselves? It cannot be considered a limitation of the legal theory in their times, since their works are proof that they were not reading only legal theory.

The question concerning land is taken into account by Fitzpatrick in the second part of his book (Fitzpatrick, 2001) in a pertinent sense, showing how Western international law worked to erase indigenous humanity and political subjectivity, ignoring their political forms of organisations, taking indigenous lands as unoccupied territories and thus legitimating the colonial occupation of these lands (*Ibid.,* p. 157-158). However, all these different forms of being human, their ways of exercising political subjectivity and organising collectively, and their diverse cosmologies and understanding of what those lands are were not discussed.

In the last decades, the new branch of legal geography brought new methods that renewed the approach of the law. A tension between legal geography and legal theory became clear to me reading these different areas in parallel. The former tends to a variety of different descriptions of how the law works empirically in space, making scholars such as Keenan acknowledge that legal geography did not produce an overarching theory but is developed in multiple paths (Keenan, 2015). The latter very often tends to seek order and unity where there is always dispersion. When the law is described logically and in a more normative and doctrinal way, it seems there is a transcendent reason dissimulated of their body seeking to give order to a unified universe. God did not die for this theory yet. Or as put by Fitzpatrick, he died but his place was kept in place waiting for another content to fulfil it, which could be the modern Reason, as already mentioned above (Fitzpatrick, 2001, p. 54). In legal geography, as legal researchers are more focused on the description of how the law is materialised in the bodies in space, it did not take long to realise that it was not possible to find unity in this pluriverse, since those bodies and their environments are multiple. Considering how the law emerges from spatial orders, within the concrete arrangement of bodies in the space, legal geography – especially the work of Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2015) – brought me a new pathway to think of the making of the law outside the official spaces and the authorised subjects of legal institutions, mostly occupied by white men.

However, most of the works in legal geography that I consulted were focused on Anglophone contexts, except for Braverman's ethnography of Palestinian territories (Braverman, 2009). This is not a critique but a delimitation. Even though these works take into account the indigenous experiences in countries such as Canada or Australia, I was always missing any consideration of experiences in Latin America. I hope my thesis can bring some contribution in relation to this in an Anglophone context. However, I do not consider this

research delimited in the field of legal geography. My method and concerns are focused on anthropological approaches that engage with indigenous forms of knowledge, cocoa workers' experience and their relationship to the land. The context where my research is situated made it difficult to engage more deeply with legal geography. In that context, we do not find volcano larvae changing the space (Marusek, 2021), olive trees delimiting territories in conflict (Braverman, 2009), or native English plants outlining properties (Page & Clark, 2022). I find my context ignored in Anglophone legal scholarship. Even when I was researching works on cocoa agriculture and trade at the British Library, I did not find much on Brazil as I saw about West African contexts.

This problem is not merely empirical but also theoretical. Legal geographers are always engaged with some of the main names of geography. The names of Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Edward Soja and Doreen Massey are largely cited. I would like to call attention to the contribution of Milton Santos, a black Brazilian geographer who was awarded the same prize as all these important names in geography, the Vautrin Lud Prize. However, Santos never appeared in any work that I found studying legal geography, except in the thesis of the Brazilian scholar Júlia Franzoni (2018). I also hope to bring more contributions from Santos's work, mainly in his theorisation of modernisation and globalisation. He studied the processes of urbanisation and modernisation in different countries of the global south such as Tanzania, Venezuela and Brazil. His thought is also inseparable from a critique of how citizenship was mutilated for the poorer and black people in these countries (Santos, 2007). His work makes an important contribution to describing socio-spacial assemblages. As he describes it, space is an integrated system of objects and actions that condition each other (Santos, 2021). This concept of space was key for me to understand how the technical transformation of space in the processes of modernisation of my native region changed the relationship that people have with the land. He also helped me to think of my native village in connection to a global scale.

Moving forward to other critical theories, it has already been demonstrated by the different critical theories exposed above that the legal norm has a transcendent relation with the social facts and the temporality proper to social relations. Most of these scholars, feminist scholars mainly, develop a strong critique of the abstract legal subject and his – literarily his – disembodied reason that dissimulates a position of power in society and hides who is concretely making and deciding the law (Keenan, 2015; Grear, 2022; Hunter, 2013). Such position is demarcated by race, gender, geographic and economic differences, where the white male owner from the global north occupies most of the positions of power in society. Being produced by subjects distanced from the empirical realities of less privileged, racialised and dispossessed

people, legal norms have always been built in a heteronomous way without connection to the concrete necessities and ways people build their forms of life by themselves. Denise Ferreira da Silva makes a remarkable contribution by exposing how such a conception of the law frequently fails when it deals with racialised bodies (Silva, 2007). As Silva argues, the state needs violence to enforce the legal rule that in itself is ineffective (Silva, 2009). Her discussion of violence differs strongly from Derrida's (1992) and Benjamin's (2004) elaborations on the relationship between law and violence. The problem for Silva is not about the metaphysical or mystical foundation of the law and its intimate relationship to violence, but instead about the intimate relationship of the modern legal structures with race as a marker that distinguishes the bodies that do not belong to the rational space of European modernity and its legal and political architecture (Silva, 2007). A topic left aside by Derrida and Benjamin. In this way, making use of total violence against racialised bodies, the unreachable ideal of effectiveness makes the enforcement of legal norms refer to social life always as violence towards life. Mainly in post-colonial contexts, the necessities of social relations and survival produce a local arrangement that cannot be framed by legal norms imposed from the outside and ignore the needs, rhythms, values and will of people living in such contexts. Therefore, when the law produces an ideal order that is unrealisable for people living in these contexts, the law does not do more than criminalise poverty. This is a reality for young black men in poor contexts who face harsh conditions to access education and suffer much discrimination to find jobs. Many of them are co-opted by gangs and they are the main victims of police violence as I argued in the introduction.

The work of Giorgio Agamben also showed how the rule of law, founded on liberal normativity, had always kept a correlation with the state of exception (Agamben, 1998). For Agamben, the law is instituted not only by an imperial "taking of the land" that orders the space and regulates the internal and external relations in a territory (Schmitt, 2006) but also by a "taking of the outside",[35] which is an exception, an implication of exterior and undetermined relations that haunt the norm and suspend its rules of operation. Taking the technical aspect of the law again, we can consider this as the blind spots in the development of a technique that is supposed to solve a singular problem and ends up triggering many other problems. All causal

[35] The concept of *outside* in Agamben's work is influenced by his reading of authors such as Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, and it refers to an ontological dimension that is not codified by language, it is shapeless, marked by contingency, and it is always in relationship with the formalised arrangements that conforms an order of bodies and signs. It is the outside that always deforms the arrangements, triggering a perpetual process of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation.

links around an action or event cannot be thoroughly predictable and controllable. However, the enforcement of legal norms backed by a rational justification of a legal system costs many lives to prove its efficacy.

But how do we handle the reality of legal norms, rights, and institutions without ignoring the problems of violence produced by the law and the State? Surely, it would not mean going back to a reaffirmation of the State, which always presupposes itself as needed to make society possible (Hobbes, 2017), and as the highest stage of social organisation (Hegel, 1991). Instead, we need to question the concept of norm itself as the main feature of the law, since it is always related to the working of reason and an expression of a rational and transcendental subject acting upon the world. This subject reasons logically based on the information available to him or even arbitrarily chosen by him – this abstract rational subject that dissimulates his white male body and his privileged position in society. He makes decisions based on his logical deductions and judges life from a position outside the atmosphere of affects and concrete situations that condition the bodies.

In the book *Towards a Global Idea of Race* (2007), Silva investigates the discourses of modern philosophers to show how, after the proclaimed "death of God" in modernity, the reason became the world ruler coined by modern thought. Considering modernity as the historical moment of colonial enterprise that instituted a space of global and asymmetrical relations between different subjects, she argues that the forging of modern reason implicated in the creation of different kinds of human beings with different positions before the universality that rules modern philosophy. It instituted the rational subject but also his/her others. Here the category of the racial played an important role in this differentiation of human beings. In modernity, reason, an attribute of the human mind, becomes the sovereign ruler of history and science, the privileged forms of knowledge (Silva, 2007).

Modern law and its normative apparatuses also emerged from this same ground. They are rational tools to rule society and deal with contingency, creating ways of predictable consequences for potential events and conflicts. The law is a technique to produce universality. It intends to create rules applicable to all subjects in the same society. But the social matter is always fleeing and leaking the legal forms. To codify and include social differences in legal norms is not enough to capture the manifold of bodies and their contexts. Besides this, the inclusion of human differences into the apparatuses of modern law still presupposes the universality of an ideal of a subject from which all those different subjects were left out, as Silva argues in her critique of the sociology of exclusion (Silva, 2007). Post-human and multispecies perspectives bring even more complexity to this problem, showing how other

species of living beings are active agents producing the environments in different rhythms and times; their activity interferes and disturbs human projects (Tsing, 2015).

The modern law in socio-legal theory or critical legal theory is usually seen as a break with a primitive, savage and pre-modern society that precedes modernity. This break would bring society into a progressive process of rationalisation, complexification of its forms, separation of its different dimensions, and formalisation of its several systems (Unger, 1976). This society that sees itself in transparency would also describe itself as opposed to its 'Others', the non-European and racialised peoples, affectable bodies, whose minds were not able to determine themselves before the world's several constraints (Silva, 2007), peoples without history, as Hegel said about populations in Africa.[36] But what if instead of following this increasing progression of reason improving itself dialectically and actualising itself in new social forms, we break with all this arrangement of history? What if we put in question the barbarism that is foundational for this supposed rationalised society and take into consideration the multiple forms of existence of these Others of Europe? Where could it lead us at last?

2.3. Stepping on the lands barefooted of normative boots

Why dismantle normativity? Because the causal system that sustains it in practice needs the use of force to make it work, more explicitly in the reinforcement of laws and the conservation of the racial and classist order of the liberal State and capitalist society (Silva, 2022); because the normative ideals of the law create promises never fulfilled by the State, transforming basic needs of living in abstract rights (D'Souza, 2018); because of its disenchanted scrutiny of nature that tends to transform its multiple beings in observed objects, separating and classifying them with its taxonomic logic, even creating a taxonomy of forms of normativity as Davies does (Davies, 2022).

Moving away from this kind of approach, the challenge will be to investigate different experiences in which more autonomous, polycentric, diverse, ecological and interspecific collectives emerge, although no longer through the paradigms of order and sovereignty that

[36] See, for example, what Hegel says in his *Philosophy of History*: *"The peculiarly African character is difficult to comprehend, for the very reason that in reference to it, we must quite give up the principle which naturally accompanies all our ideas - the category of Universality. In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence – as for example, God, or Law - in which the interest of man's volition is involved and in which he realizes his own being… The Negro ... exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality - all that we call feeling – if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character"* (Hegel, 1956, p. 93).

invariably implicate spaces of exception[37] marked by racial selectivity and violence.[38] Mainly in post-colonial contexts, the State is not a guarantee of order, but a manager of disorder (Robinson, 2016). It would be more interesting now to adopt as a principle a plural perspective on the diversity of social collectives that develop themselves as *sympoietic systems,*[39] existing in interaction with each other and co-producing themselves through their exchanges and conflicts. A path that has already been pushed forward by Grear (2020) and Petersmann (2021).

The vocabulary that the modern liberal tradition gave us does not stand in relation to the concrete modes of life producing themselves in non-hegemonic territories, those territories where modern capitalist development has prevailed. It is an always verticalised and idealist vocabulary, built by the transcendental subject's reason and entirely based on a detachment between nature and culture. This detachment gave us two different ways of conceiving of norms, being a norm understood here as a descriptor of a causal relation between events or actions that express a relation of ontological necessity or a deontological end (having-to-be).

With the thought left by modern tradition, which Bruno Latour has called *modern constitution* (Latour, 1993), we can talk about universal and descriptive norms that determine the relations of causality present in nature, and that are studied by natural sciences; or contingent and prescriptive norms established by human collectives, that vary according to the diversity of languages and cultures and are studied by human sciences. However, this tradition was not able to describe human collectives and their relations of power always in interaction with objects, techniques, territories, animals and other beings of nature. Its descriptions revolve just around the human subjects and their history. This anthropocentric conception of society, blind and deaf to other forms of life, brought us to the current emergency state of climatic

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[37] This concept comes from the work by Giorgio Agamben (1998) and it refers to those geographical areas where the fundamental rights granted by the rule of law are suspended, such as the concentration camps. Agamben claims that in modern democracies this problem was internalised by the political order, coexisting with a democratic regime without destabilising it. He mentions for instance the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

[38] In this work, I am not following European or American elaborations of anarchism, although the works of authors such as Pierre Clastres (1989) and Deleuze & Guattari (1987) about the politics of indigenous societies were influential for me. But, above all, my political orientation is much more guided by the practices of indigenous communities and social movements that I discuss in this thesis. They have their political elaboration, for example, see Ferreira & Felício (2021). This thesis is indeed an effort to gather concepts from different areas to contribute to their struggles in the theoretical area.

[39] The concept of *sympoietic* systems differs from that of autopoietic systems used by Luhmann to describe the law (Luhmann, 2008). The latter is produced through a self-differentiation from its environment, creating an internal code that decodify the external inputs, liberating outputs as reactions, turning into an autonomous system. Sympoietic systems, in another way, are not closed systems and they produce themselves always in interaction with other systems. Haraway describes it as follows: *"Sympoiesis is a simple word; it means "making-with." Nothing makes itself; nothing is really autopoietic or self-organizing. In the words of the Inupiat computer "world game," earthlings are never alone. That is the radical implication of sympoiesis. Sympoiesis is a word proper to complex, dynamic, responsive, situated, historical systems. It is a word for worlding-with, in company. Sympoiesis enfolds autopoiesis and generatively unfurls and extends it"* (Haraway, 2016, p. 58).

catastrophe. The human subject acting upon nature as though he was the only inhabitant of the Earth ended up putting at risk his own condition of existence. Therefore, we must transform our juridical and political vocabulary including ecological and systemic perspectives that consider not only human relations but also the relations between different species of living beings.

Taking into account the technical aspect of legal norms, the recent research made by Yuk Hui shows us that techniques are not neutral nor universal but informed by some cosmology from which they emerge.[40] Considering this, we can say that normativity is a legal technique which seeks to actualise a determined conception of the world and presupposes a conception of the subject able to determine him/herself and history. The works by Denise Ferreira da Silva on modern philosophy show what implications European metaphysics and cosmology have for colonial violence that crosses legal normativity. This research intends to move from said metaphysical tradition in order to investigate the cosmologies of some indigenous peoples in Brazil. With them, I seek other ways of thinking of social conflicts, through a consideration of the relations between forms of life and the territories they inhabit.

The law is also a social, political, technical and ecological form that organises institutions and procedures to mediate the relationship among people and between people and their territories. Peter Fitzpatrick argues that the forms of modern law are unable to welcome and accommodate indigenous forms of expression and thought, which do not fit in the normative grammar of law (Fitzpatrick, 1995). Also, following Silva, modern law is a facilitator of capitalist accumulation, which places indigenous people outside the limits of what would be proper civilisation (Silva, 2007). This would leave this outer space unprotected and handed over for the unbridled use of violence without constituting an ethical violation in the legal domain. Facing this context, I am interested in how we can think in collaboration with indigenous people about new institutional forms that emerge from their struggles, cosmologies and practices.

Here, the concept of nature cannot be conceived as a passive and formless material that waits to be shaped by the subject's free interest, but as a diversity of beings with which it is needed to compose together. Indigenous territories are alive lands, neither empty spaces nor property and it is my concern here to describe these living territories through the perspectives

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[40] *"Scientific and technical thinking emerges under cosmological conditions that are expressed in the relations between humans and their milieus, which are never static. For this reason, I would like to call this conception of technics cosmotechnics"* (Hui, 2016, p. 18).

elaborated by indigenous people. Social conflicts should not be thought of as detached from interspecific relations between humans and non-humans because the conceptions of nature are central to current political conflicts. Or better said: *cosmopolitics* (Stengers, 2005). Beyond it, the law considered beyond its institutional apparatuses also implicates a territorial and spatial ordering of bodies (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015).

Nevertheless, if we conceive of law in a technical, normative and liberal way, it is always reduced to institutions, and when we do not feel represented by them, we feel without alternative because we only learned to think about politics and power around the State figure. So, it is important to acknowledge legal emergences beyond the State, where the conditions of existence are produced beyond rights and new more-than-social arrangements are generated changing the way we live together. The practices of indigenous people dealing with conflicts, recreating ways of managing the lands and coexisting with other living beings can be an interesting path to investigate how these practices can produce justice spatially in a given territory and bring ideas for the art of living and dying well in a damaged planet (Haraway, 2016).

In contrast to this technical, normative, positivist, modern and liberal conception of the law, what would be a non-modern lawscape not much formalised in norms (an afterwards procedure) but expressed as a force in the moving bodies that constitute that lawscape? A lawscape that reactualises itself perpetually through the agonistic demands for justice manifested in these bodies. Therefore, a law that is always spatialised but also intensive, transforming itself along with the bodies' frictional movements and rearrangements that follow lines of flight, lines of virtualities and spectres of a precarious formation always about to come. Frictions that move according to a certain abstract machine that deterritorialises the bodies from a certain assemblage in direction to new others (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Sauvagnargues, 2016), and in this way reshaping the lawscape. Space and time are inseparable here since space is dynamic and constantly changing. The law would not be a form that would warrant the application of a force, as the latter unfolds immanently and manipulates the legal forms in advance. Instead of this, we could ask what other forces engender other forms. The lawscape is a concept that allows for seeing the law in this reversed perspective, bringing into the scene the material constraints and relations of force the bodies face in the space, which is also made by the proper movement of and relations between these bodies.

Before continuing, it is important to highlight an important difference of theoretical choice. The proposal that I seek to build here does not follow a kind of *a-legality* (Hamzic, 2017) and does not describe an entirely alternative legal system working outside the official

institutions of the State. I do not see it in the contexts I approach here and the way I understand the lawscape is not completely exterior to the relations with the State, neither is the lawscape reduced to it. I want to think of the lawscape working in tension with the State but not having it as the gravitational point that organises all its politics and collective forms around it. The public institutions and their norms are parts among other parts of the lawscape that produce a spatial ordering of bodies. Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos describes the lawscape by saying that the law is intimately implicated in this, *"both as logos and nomos, namely as state law boundaries and nomadic law of passage"* (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 40). The practices of r*etomada* (taking back) of indigenous lands and landless workers' experiences of occupying inactive lands and recovering them with agroecology could be seen as this nomadic law that tensions the State law, exposing how the latter has always worked in favour of colonial white elites. But, at the same time, it also triggers a demand for the transformation of these institutions that shape the forms of collective life. As a form endowed with efficacy, as Silva argues (Silva, 2022), the law is shaped in between these tensions, and it does need to be conceived as exclusively reduced to the form of State law. These struggles in question make the law more fluid, leaking the limits of its traditional forms and norms. There is a point of transmutation here that should be stressed out and these struggles for land in Brazil trespass this point from within and outside the law. We could say, together with Kirsten Anker that:

> It is an approach that takes pluralism – the minimum condition for the 'recognition of difference' – to be not just the co-existence of multiple legal systems, but a plurality in the very nature of law. In contrast to the unity of monism and the objectification of positivism, law can also be seen as inherently partial, fragmented and shifting, its meaning never given but rather derived from an inherently dialogic process (Anker, 2014, p. 5)

Law is not monolithic. It is always political and always in between several disputes and relations of force. A normative form makes use of a certain force, which gives it effectiveness and is produced by several others in dispute. Much of our criticism of the law – mainly those from Agambenian inspiration that have a completely negative position against the law – does not take into account how the law itself is empirically mobilized by indigenous people, maroon communities, and activists in favelas, among other social struggles. And paradoxically, if on the one hand, the law reaffirms the logic of State sovereignty, on the other it also shows that it is not a consistent and dynamic unit. The Hegelian separation between State and society is a fiction, because neither State nor society are closed sets, but are associative processes and relations of force that are formalized in certain identities/institutions that do not contain or stop these processes that pierce and escape them.

2.4. The savage strikes back

My research project began with theoretical interests concerning the cosmological grounds of law, mainly the concept of nature presupposed in modern legal theory. The research project had the following logical assumption: the modern concept of nature as an exterior object and passive matter is the ground where the modern conceptions of law are built, especially property, which was also legally applied to human black bodies turned into things. Although property is one of my targets here, my focus is not on this specifically, as it is already coded and theorised by legal theory. Differently, I seek to question the forms of rationality and colonial understandings of land and nature that make it possible to turn nature and lands into property. This would not be possible in animist worlds where other non-human beings are not inert and inanimate such as in indigenous cosmologies. In these latter, the world is always populated with multiple perspectives from different beings that can also occupy the position of a subject (Viveiros de Castro, 2002). Therefore, what collective assemblages could be derived from these cosmologies and which forms the law would take in these more-than-human compositions?

This problem became more complicated when I sought to situate my research in an empirical context and I chose for this my own native village and its region. After I began the empirical research investigating the formation of my village, I found myself as an indigenous descendant, as are most of the people there. When I read about one of the closest indigenous communities, the Tupinambá people, the similarity of some stories, some objects used in fishing and cooking that my father and relatives also used in the past, the ways of working with cocoa, among other aspects, made my theoretical questions even more complex. Mainly because in my village we do not have any indigenous identity. We lost the link with our ancestry. People hardly know the names of their ancestors and many, such as me, did not have the chance to know their grandfather or grandmother. This context emerges from a long history of dispersion and ethnic mixing and it was also Christianised. But it did not make me abandon my intellectual and political interests in indigenous cosmologies. It made me question how to confront this brutal erasure of our memory, history and ancestry. The problem of how the indigenous identity was despised, denied, and inferiorised is also related to the strong stigmatisation that we suffer for being from a place outside of the urban and modernised spaces. I know what is to suffer it, I know the shame and insecurity that it causes, but I know the strength too when I am also part of a history that has more than ten thousand years and a few

centuries of colonial violence will not erase it. And here I am making this effort to develop a social, political, legal and ecological theorisation of our context that affirms this strength and our place in a global debate.

Rich research has already been published in the Anglophone context developing legal theories from the indigenous perspectives of peoples in Canada and Australia, including works written by indigenous scholars too. For example, the works of Anker (2017), Land (2010) and Watson (1997). Their works develop concepts and reflections from indigenous stories and myths, through which they bring new understandings of nature, the land and the laws ruling the indigenous ways of living. Although these works are pertinent, some differences in the empirical context made me take another route. Firstly, if I want to think about my native context taking into account the indigenous perspectives, it should be to the indigenous people of my native land that I need to turn my attention first. Indigenous knowledge is very related to the territories and ecologies where these people live and our context is very different from those in North America or Oceania.

Besides this, as I have already argued, the context that I am approaching is characterised by the dispersion and erasure of indigenous identities and I cannot use the same methodology as these authors cited above. In this case, I would need to concentrate my fieldwork on learning the stories and myths of indigenous people living near my region, such as the Tupinambá people. But there have been texts written about these people since the first invasion of Portuguese colonisers in 1500, as the Tupinambá had the misfortune to be the first to meet them at the coast and the first letter written by Pero Vaz de Caminha on 1st May of 1500 was about them. The bibliography on Indigenous peoples in Bahia or in Brazil is a very long list, which also includes important and valuable texts written in dialogue and collaboration with indigenous people that confront the colonial gazes on their lives. Some of these texts are also part of my references here, as are other texts written by indigenous authors. But there are no works written yet about the context where I am from, and here, I do not want to merely write *about* this. Instead, I sought to rebuild part of our history in dialogue with some people and reflect on this history theoretically.

Approaching critically the process of modernisation of cocoa agriculture, I sought to show how it contributed to the erasure of indigenous presence and to change how people live on the land. Thereafter, modernisation is taken in a broader context showing its impact on a planetary scale. Before this context described in the second part of this thesis, the third part moves toward the investigation of a conception of the law, or better to say, of the *lawscape* of cocoa and its viscosity, a viscous law. Reflecting on the ecological knowledge and practice of

cocoa workers, indigenous people, and landless workers activists, I sought to develop an understanding of the law through the entanglements of humans with their territories, other species of living beings and non-organic matter. In other words, taking into account our viscous entanglement to the planet and its multiple forms of agencies making life possible. This viscous law would also not be restricted to the control of normative forms of knowledge in science and legal theory, but it should be one in which the knowledge of land workers and indigenous people have a place in its making. The method that I develop in the next chapter paves the way for this.

There are norms and forms of authority in the communities with which I engage in this research, but their norms are not expressed in a deterministic way, especially when thinking about nature. However, I prefer not to focus on the normatisation of their worlds, by approaching every dimension of existence as a source of normative making, as Davies does. Instead, I prefer to focus on what escapes normativity and how to liberate nature from these forms of rationalisation and control through normativity. Nature and its multiple agents can also relate to human groups more attentively and sensibly involved with them, such as the Amerindian peoples, in a contingent interaction that can be joyful, surprising, enchanting, disconcerting or even terrifying. This is different from the incessant rationalisation of nature. For Ailton Krenak, being alive and in relationship with the planet is a cosmic dance (Krenak, 2020), not a constant scrutinising of the complex causal relationships that produce the cosmic order for the rational subject avid to control it.

Legal thinking tends to function as a system of containment, prediction, organisation and control. It is always obsessed with order. However, paradoxically, the more the institutional mechanisms of liberal law and Western democracies developed, the more chaos was produced for the bodies that did not fit in this political architecture. Moreover, all other forms of life are devastated in order to keep the material maintenance of capitalist societies and their ways of living. Davies tries to find a conception of legal genesis that is concomitant with the constitution of life and biological forms, a law in balance to its environment. But, ironically, the more we try to find these socio-ecological forms of conservation, containment and sustenance, the more the entropic energy that deterritorialises the social body seems to escape on all sides while we remain static in a society that we see tearing itself apart. This leads me to question if it would not be more interesting to seek in that which escapes legal forms of control and containment a way to go further in the deterritorialisation of these forms, allowing them to be reconfigured. Fortunately, maybe, where there is order, there is also entropy, which is also constitutive of other forms of order (Prigogine, 1989). Entropic chaos is not only destructive.

It can also be liberating. There is no freedom without risk, without exposure to a dose of chaos. What is outside the modern restricted agency of law-making should find a place in the reinvention of the institutional forms of a collective. Nature and its beings as companion species can be better understood as an excess of life, as a complex and generative network of diverse life forms that recreate our lived experience. The indigenous forms of living, instead of a mere form of conservation stuck in time, could be better seen as excess, enjoyment, enrichment of existential experience, and vital potency. It could also change our forms of struggling against the depletion of the Earth. Better than being enclosed in our bubbles or borders of protection while we have our experience of the world increasingly impoverished and reduced, we could better live a life in its fullness, embracing the multiple forms of life that compose the planet.

It is within that ambivalence of civilisation versus savagery pointed out by Fitzpatrick (2001), where the latter is at the core of the former, and which exposes the failure of modernity in erasing pre-modern worlds, that a resurgence of indigeneity can come and reappear not as a complete exteriority to modernity but instead from the breaches of its limits. By stretching these limits, we could reinvent and reorient our technical and institutional forms into more ecologically and collaboratively ways of composing our collective coexistence among us and with the planet, less centred on the human subject and its internal rationalisation normativising everything and more distributed in the corporeal compositions that bodies take to continue to exist and enhance their existence.

If viscosity is the attractor that puts heterogeneous bodies involuntarily in relation, a viscous law is the mutual positioning, distribution and crystallised relation that these bodies establish. To give norms to this is a way to give form to the formless and mould the chaos. Norms also emerge in this context. But if normativity is the coordination, organisation and composition of causes, a re/de/compositional method inspired by Silva's work (Silva, 2022) and Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' uncontrolled and perpetual lawscaping could be ways of dismantling the centrality of the rational subject in the control of this composition and the legal machine that it makes to work, so other forms could emerge.

3. A Perspectivist Autoethnography

"O homem cosmopolita é orixá"
Orquestra Afrosinfônica

"I write in order to erase my name"
Georges Bataille

In this chapter, I seek to develop a form of autoethnography that is not reduced to the perspective of a *self* and its personal experience but that understands the body and its subjectivity as socially produced in relations of power that are structural and global, such as colonialism, capitalism and racism. These globalising structures produce hierarchies imposed over the world where I came from and it affects how I am perceived socially for being from that place. Of course, it affects differently the different bodies inhabiting these spaces and others. These hierarchies fractally unfold in many others. But what if instead of taking it as a static structure of social domination where each body would always have a fixed place, instead of reclaiming my place of subalternity and my legitimacy to talk about this, and instead of reclaiming the recognition of my rights as a subject, I squeeze these structures from inside out and make its reverses scream what cannot be contained and suppressed by it? Here I want to make the icy scientific forms that sustain this hierarchical global order be fractured by the bodies, voices and imaginations of the worlds that it worked and still works to sweep out. What I sought to see in these bodies and hear in these voices are reimaginations of this global order emerging from these bodies in their lands. Here I confront the limits of some paths given to me in my time to speak about the knowledge of those not pertaining to the official confines of reason. Here I also make my alliances because such limits are also blurred by those within them who can see their breaches. More than a bibliography explored, what is written here also costed years of lived experience. That means it is not done, not brought to a close, such as knowledge is made; and as that also takes from experience its flesh, here is mine.

3.1. When the home is the field

Before moving towards the critical and epistemological challenges and confrontations that my empirical research involved, I present in this section how it was realised in practice. My objective was to understand how the process of modernisation affected the relationship that people have with the land, the ethnic origins of these people and how they used to live around five decades ago. For this, I visited and talked with some of the oldest people in my village. People who have known me since I was a child. They were between 60 and 90 years old. As usual, most of the people living in Florestal lived from the work with cocoa. They were cocoa workers or small cocoa farmers. All of them had some indigenous ancestor and most of them were black (*preto*) or brown (*pardo*). Moreover, I also talked with younger people who are also cocoa workers. They were between 30 and 40 years old. These were also people that I had known since my childhood. I would like to observe the different ways of understanding the land and the work with cocoa between these different generations. However, I would not like to take these people as a "sample" of a social group treated as an object for an exterior observer. They were my friends or relatives, including my father, who was my main interlocutor. Although I could have divergent perspectives with these people, we shared the same world.

My interests were never to reproduce a traditional form of ethnography, collecting data about other people's ways of living, working and thinking and describing this information in another language and another country where a rural community in the global south like this can be easily seen through hierarchised views. The latter can be expressed for example through exotification and paternalism. People could only see a fantastic tropical world outside of civilisation or a place of suffering and difficulties. I say it because it was how I felt myself being treated and seen when I moved to London. Although, I did not need to leave Brazil to experience it. It could also happen in the meeting with southern and southeastern Brazilians, usually whites.

I was mostly interested in understanding how our lives in this village were connected to London and how despite all differences and distance of realities we shared a common history. I also would like to confront the stereotypes that I always had to deal with in my experience and break with these hierarchical views about me. Therefore, instead of showing this so different world in Europe, I preferred to understand how these hierarchies are built, what makes them possible, what was our place in a global space and how this place could be transformed and affirmed. In this way, I became more interested in exploring the transformation of this region from a global perspective, taking into consideration mainly the history of cocoa global

trade. I was also interested in elaborating on the knowledge of cocoa workers, and how their work was also intellectual, as this was important to break certain stereotypes about these people that reduce them to the force of their arms, or in other words, that deny their humanity.

Although I passed through the formal application for the ethical assessment of my research, the material that fed my reflections could not be reduced to a determined time of fieldwork. In the relationships between people in my village, and in my relationship with them, it is very common to talk about cocoa, as most people work with this. Before the PhD, I was already interested in understanding our history, ethnical origins and so on, and this was already part of my conversations with my father and other relatives. During my more than three years in London, I was always talking about my research to my father, and he was always telling me stories about his youth or other things that happened in our village. As he and my uncles used to do since I know them. My research is an effort to elaborate these collective memories, putting this lived material in friction with theories and discussions that span over global and planetary scales.

Besides this, I was interested in thinking about the ecological alternatives and ways of inhabiting the land, or the Earth, that could be found in our region around the context of cocoa production. It could also be a way of affirming our presence in a global debate, especially the one on climate change. Because of this, I also travelled 3 hours toward the south of my village to visit the Terra Vista settlement, a territory of more than 900 hectares that was recovered and reforested by the Landless Workers Movement (MST) and nowadays is articulated by the Web of the People (Teia dos Povos) in constant collaboration with indigenous and maroon communities. Moreover, following the strong mobilisation of indigenous struggles in Brazil in the last years, I was also interested in investigating how this global history of modernisation contributed to the erasure of indigenous memory in our village and how new social movements were recovering this memory to learn with their forms of knowledge new ways of recovering the land and coexisting with the forest.

One of my main inspirations to develop this research was the book *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins,* written by Anna Tsing (2015). In this book, Tsing traces global and ecological connections spanning national borders and weaving people's lives into local ecologies and non-human forms of life, mainly the mushroom. She investigated through the practices of mushroom collectors forms of living without the horizon of modernisation that rules capitalist temporality. In a similar way, I was interested in taking cocoa as a hub of connections linking local ecologies to global connections and planetary transformations. As well, as how political collectives were reinventing forms of

life through the work with cocoa. I was interested in following Tsing and developing a multispecies ethnography of cocoa. However, my enterprise had a challenging element. I was from the place where I am talking about. I already worked with cocoa too. My ancestors and relatives were all cocoa workers. I also have an indigenous ancestry and I faced prejudice moving to other regions in Brazil or to London to study. These circumstances force me to go through my personal experience to think of cocoa, as my personal and familiar history is entangled with cocoa's history. Therefore, I decided to do an autoethnography, but when I began to have contact with this methodology, I was not so instigated to use this. My personal experiences informed my perspectives on the world, but this was not what I was mainly interested in. I would not like to leave aside my theoretical speculations. These contradictions are what I tried to solve in this chapter. Or differently, I develop below how I seek to inhabit them as they are also part of my life. Given the conflicts and concerns that I exposed above, I move to a critical reflection on the epistemological challenges of this research.

3.2. I is a world

In the book *Argonauts of the Western Pacific,* which is one of the cornerstones of ethnography, Malinowski introduces its method by saying that he considers that an ethnography of unquestionable scientific value is one *"in which we can clearly draw the line between, on the one hand, the results of direct observation and of native statements and interpretations, and on the other, the inferences of the author, based on his common sense and psychological insight"* (Malinowski, 2014, p. 3). An ethnography in its etymology means the description of other peoples' cultures and social forms, but one in which the inferences and interpretations of the author are made distinct from the data collected through observation and interview, as well the perspective through which the description is made. Considering this, we could say that an autoethnography would be the description of one's own people and culture. For Anderson, an autoethnographic work is characterised as such when *"the researcher is (1) a full member in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in the researcher's published texts, and (3) committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena."* (Anderson, 2006, p. 375). For Adams et al. (2015), autoethnography is made from the perspective of the *self* and personal experiences. However, this short conceptualisation is enough to trigger many critiques important to consider here.

First, the traditional ethnography made by European or North American researchers in the territory of indigenous peoples – who suffered violent processes of colonisation – is largely criticised as a form of objectification, appropriation and commodification of other peoples' knowledge and cultures. This would extend the colonial extraction of material wealth to a cultural level. Besides this, the forms of representing a cultural otherness in which the 'Other' has no voice just reinforces the exoticisation of these 'Others' and deepens the distance between Europe and the uncivilised 'rest' (Smith, 1999). Even though what I am doing here is not a description of a people who are my cultural other, my interest here is not to collect data about those people and represent them to Western academia. I am not a sample or exemplary of my culture. Following Strathern's (1987) discussion about the limits of 'auto-anthropology', there is a discontinuity between the researcher's discourse and its community when she/he is doing 'anthropology at home'. Strathern wrote that:

> It is clear that simply being a 'member' of the overarching culture or society in question does not mean that the anthropologist will adopt appropriate local cultural genres. On the contrary he/she may well produce something quite unrecognisable. Common-sense descriptions are set aside. Indigenous reflection is incorporated as part of the data to be explained and cannot itself be taken as the framing of it, so that there is always discontinuity between indigenous understandings and the analytical concepts which frame the ethnography itself (Strathern, 1987).

Anderson argues in the same direction by saying that the autoethnographer differs from the rest of those in the group under study because he or she is a member and participant in the scientific community. This would give them a different cultural identity, as their action is oriented by goals of a secondary level within the social world shared with their group (Anderson, 2006, p. 380).

Taking into consideration the limits of auto-anthropology described by Strathern (1987) and the proposal of analytic autoethnography made by Anderson, the way I want to develop autoethnography is different from that presented by Adams et al. (2015). Their proposal is too focused on the *self* and personal experiences, invoking an epistemology of emotion, featuring a subjectivist point of view and a refusal to generalise their analysis and produce abstraction. Anderson and other critics called it "evocative autoethnography" (Anderson, 2006). In this research, differently, I am approaching areas that are collective par excellence, such as the law, modernisation, and climate change, among other topics. Of course, it is possible to describe a personal experience of these problems, but I am more interested here in exploring perspectives that are not restricted to my personal experience. I do not want to communicate my emotions, even though they were the fuel of this text. What I seek to present is a geographical, ecological and anthropological transformation around the context of cocoa production in southern Bahia

in Brazil, how this is connected to a global process that affected this region locally, and how the struggles for land and agroecological practices of indigenous people, landless workers and small cocoa farmers taking place in this region are not only global but planetary, as they are connected to ecological relations that involve more than human dimensions composing the planet and the local environments.

Since the end of my bachelor's, I have been interested in indigenous knowledge as a source to develop political theory and concepts, in a way that points toward non-capitalist and anti-colonial social forms. Considering myself as an indigenous descendant of a people who forgot their ancestry, I want to take this challenge further, experimenting with how such indigenous concepts could make sense not only in a context where colonial forms were so triumphant but also in Western societies, such as in the UK. In the context of increasing risks of climate change, I argue that indigenous perspectives could contribute to radically reimagining our collective ways of existing, including our relations with animals, plants and their ecosystems.

A difficulty I encountered doing autoethnographic research and writing about myself is that this "self" changes over time and our understandings of our personal processes change together. We do not have transparency about ourselves and absolute control over our personal experiences. Autoethnography is not mere personal expression because the personal is not a closed and self-contained unit. What is worthwhile in this method is what the personal investigation makes you discover and understand about processes that are not yours, but that cross and condition you. Hence the personal becomes a point of tension that weaves lines of force producing a world that is expressed through the body that inhabits it. Not a transparent world presented as a clear totality for a self-enclosed subject, but an opaque world that cannot be completely apprehended and ordered, one that manifests itself as dispersion and it is also composed through negotiations, connections or conflicts with other possible worlds. As I am writing about something so close to me, this is indeed personal, but what I want to argue is that the personal is not enclosed upon itself but it is a knot of different assemblages. I do not want to work with an individualistic perspective or with a presupposed conception of an autonomous subject. I am inscribing myself within social, global, political, legal, ecological, and geographical assemblages that trespass and condition my experience.

My personal experience situates myself in relation to the contexts outlined above but my *self* is not the central focus in this work. My discourse about the experience of the place where I grew up is neither a full representation of that place nor an affirmation of an identity. Identities and places here are indicators of the relations of power in which they are forged, such

as racism, colonialism, capitalist extraction and so on, which distribute these identities and places through social hierarchies and geographic inequalities – considering how wealth and capital are unevenly distributed. It implies that my description of places and people here immediately demands a confrontation with how they are apprehended in a common sense determined by capitalist and racist perspectives. It also demands me to question any exoticisation of these places and people. It is very different to write about marginalised and racialised contexts when you are part of them and the way they are seen also falls upon you. But to position myself in relation to these contexts also implies tension and rupture with many conservative behaviours and perspectives present in my community. I am also questioning forms of power and social structures operating there that should be changed.

It was painful to visit the stories of the place I came from and write about it. It is challenging to do an ethnographic study of that place when I also carry it in my own body. It is very intimate and resonates with the marks of prejudices that I suffered for being from that place. This thesis demanded very much from me subjectively. Just as it was very difficult to come from where I came from and get a doctorate in London, learn to live in that city and carry out this work. How easier could be just to write about something distant from me and in which I am not so deeply implicated. But my writing and my thesis were an inevitable confrontation with this world and how it positions me. And I did it because I did not believe in the impositions of what was supposedly my social fate. I did not accept the biased gazes and words that tried to impose them on me. I am a living body thrown into space, confronted with existence and I refuse to be reduced to any identity that determines my fate *a priori*. Identities define differential relations of force between bodies but not the essence of any being. I am not completely determined by the historical circumstances that condition my existence and I am not hostage to the causal relations that brought me here. I am a body composing with other bodies a part of the real that expands or reduces my possibilities of freedom and experience.

My village seems forgotten and irrelevant in comparison to a place like London from a capitalist point of view. Who has heard about Florestal here? But this little place where I grew up helping my father in the cocoa crops, where until about sixty years ago many people barely reached old age due to lack of access to health services and to information on diseases, where until a few decades ago the trip to the city, Jequié, would take a day on foot or horseback…[41] This little place is connected to a global chain that links it to big centres of capitalism such as London. An old aunt, my father's sister, told me that they lost the chance to have another older

[41] Nowadays, the distance between my village and Jequié by asphalt road is 40km.

brother because the child fell from a cocoa greenhouse, broke his neck and died from it, as he had no way to reach a hospital. My father told me that in the time of his teenagerhood when someone needed to go to the hospital in a serious situation, it required four men to take the body in an improvised stretcher along a day walk to the city. But, at the same time, the product of my father's and his brothers' child labour arrived in the United States and Europe, as the history of cocoa exportation in Brazil shows (Ramalho & Targino, 2004).

However, I only could understand the implications of these contrasts when I moved out of my village. That place is neither my object nor my departure point. I depart from the middle of my dispersion and I want to grasp the knots connecting such different and distant places as London and Florestal. Exploring the experiences of my displacement across so many different worlds, I assume the positionality of a body – where a position is not a fixed point but dependent on the relations in which this body is involved. In the meetings with these different contexts, differences were contrasted and this body exposes these contrasts and a shock of different perspectives. This research seeks to explore the perspectives of this corporeal position. To think from this position situates me but it does not fix me. It is because of a corporeal movement that these shocks could be felt and the differences realised. Movement and relation are key in this reflection.

I have lived out of Florestal since 2011 when I moved to the southeast of Brazil to do my bachelor's degree. But all the times that I got my way back home between my degree courses, I was intrigued by my relationship with this place. This is the place that I always felt was my home, but where many other young people also had to move to bigger cities to study or seek jobs. I passed through a long process to understand myself as someone who came from this place and what implications this brings to my trajectory. This personal process is not the focus of this research, but it permeates everything that I write here. In some paragraphs above, I mentioned my fear of how an autobiographical discourse could risk reinforcing some misconceptions and prejudices about how I am perceived socially. But how can I use an autoethnographic methodology to confront these misconceptions not only about myself but also about rural communities in global south countries? How can I use it to show how these small communities are connected to a wide global web and are also agents producing them? How can I bring up the potential ways of living in composition with other species that we need to compose with to better resist the consequences of climate change? This is why I do not want to be neutral in my methodology. I am not seeking an indifferent description of these places that would just gather data about people's lives. Hence, I need to smear my method with cocoa

viscosity too and use its viscous lines to gather stories that connect us to the global webs of capitalist exploitation and planetary meshworks shifting the planet's behaviour.

3.3. Against particularisation

How better would it be if I could write this thesis in a way that dissolves the contradiction between being a cocoa worker and an intellectual, a researcher, and a PhD student with a full scholarship in London. A contradiction that many times seemed stamped in the face of every person who looked at me as though I was a body doing something that I was not supposed to be doing. I know how my people are stigmatised as rudimentary, brute, indelicate, and non-intellectual when we come from peasant families in marginalised regions of the global south. In his investigation about the "invention" of the Brazilian northeast, Albuquerque Junior explored the stereotypes created about *nordestinos* (northeasterners) (Albuquerque Junior, 2014), and Serrao also questioned how these representations are mobilised in offences against us on social media during the Brazilian election in 2018 (Serrao, 2020). Their works show how these stereotypes are built and perpetuated, creating a kind of internal orientalism in Brazil, as Serrao says (*Ibid.*). In my personal experience, when I moved to Uberaba in southeast Brazil to do my undergraduate course, or even when I was in Rio de Janeiro – also in the southeast – , I needed to hear many times commentaries, bad jokes or questions about the place from where I came as a place outside of civilisation, violent, backward, where people had always a hard life and were slow, lazy, incapable of dealing with the ways of living in big cities. These stigmas destroy the self-esteem of our people and I saw many people from my region be ashamed of their social origins because of this. I would like to write about cocoa in a way that could break these false images and show that intellectual knowledge is also part of the skills required to cultivate cocoa. Bringing up the knowledge of cocoa workers and indigenous people on lands, I want to contribute to a knowledge-making that takes seriously those people as subjects of knowledge. By so doing, I hope to break stereotypes about us that erase our intellectual potential, as such erasure is also part of the devaluation of these people's work and the mechanisms of capitalist exploitation and production of poverty.

In the book *Out of the Dark Night*, when discussing research about the stereotypes produced socially on people of colour, Muslims, and immigrants in France, Mbembe shows how until the 90s, they were usually represented in the media as athletes, musicians, dancers

or comedians, usually exposing their physical or ludic skills, but they hardly appear playing roles as politicians and intellectuals. Mbembe says:

> In this respect, until the end of the 1990s, the media in general and television in particular constituted the principal scene of a double symbolic violence: on the one hand, the violence of indifference and minoritization; on the other hand, the violence implied in the production of stereotypes and racial prejudices. At the time, minorities were certainly not invisible on television. But, when they broke onto the screen, it was on music or sports shows. Blacks in particular often only appear onscreen and in the public sphere as actors, singers, or entertainers. When they appear in fiction, it is almost always in American, not French, fiction. The same is true of advertisements and shows about everyday life. Soccer players and other athletes fare no better. They are compared to modern *tirailleurs*, whose bodies and physical strength are entirely dedicated to the flag, but who are constantly suspected of not wanting to sing the national anthem at the top of their voice (Mbembe, 2021, p. 123).

When we manage to access the official intellectual institutions, things get not easier for us. In the fifth chapter of *Black Skin, White Masks* (1986), Frantz Fanon discussed the intellectual experience of the colonised. He narrates his experience in France showing that he could present the same claims as a white man but in his case, he would never be taken seriously while a white person would be applauded. For him, "the scientific objectivity was barred", he says (Fanon, 1986, p. 225). The ideal model of the full realisation of reason and intellectuality is that of the white European man, the philosopher par excellence, the model of the Christian white god who has all authority over the universals, who speaks from nowhere to everywhere, which Haraway called "God's trick" (Haraway, 1988).

One challenge of doing research as someone who comes from below is to resist exoticisation and the paternalistic look from others that usually put our intellectual production as something always specific, but never relevant enough to have a place in those theoretical discussions that define the lens through which reality is explained. Alexander Weheliye puts this problem in the introduction of his book *Habeas Viscus* (2014), saying how European white men have the alibi to theorise freely about the world while the theoretical productions of people of colour are always seen in a place of particularity and *"relegated to the jurisdiction of ethnographic locality"* (Weheliye, 2014). However, our intellectual production is also concerned with global concepts but those are thought from positions marked by the lived experiences of the contexts that these concepts intend to explain. For instance, when we speak of coloniality or racism, we are speaking of something that sets up our personal trajectories. Weheliye observes it here:

> As Junot Díaz remarks: *"Women-of-colour writers were raising questions about the world, about power, about philosophy, about politics, about history, about white supremacy, because of their raced, gendered, sexualized bodies; they were wielding a genius that had been cultivated out of their raced, gendered, sexualized subjectivities. That these women are being forgotten, and their historical importance elided, says a lot about our particular moment and how real a threat these*

> *foundational sisters posed to the order of things."* Yet because women-of-colour writers articulate their critiques as a result of and in relation to their identities, the knowledge they produce is often relegated to ethnographic locality within mainstream discourses (Weheliye, 2014, pp. 6-7).

To resist these colonial looks on our intellectual trajectories, it is also needed to break with a modernist and capitalist culture that bequeathed us an inferior image, while it leads the planet to a catastrophic disaster with its ideal measure of civilisation and full humanity. This kind of hierarchy is also based on the division between subject and object, society and nature, in which the bourgeoisie stereotype of an elegant, rational, self-determined European white man living in the city is the full realisation of what means to be human (McKittrick & Wynter, 2015). The model of a developed capitalist city is seen as the proper ideal of a society and it is the place of realisation of culture distanced from nature and the wildness. This is understood in opposition to racialised people living outside of cities, the uncivilised ones that are put outside of history as Hegel referred to African peoples (Mbembe, 2021, p. 7), unable to determine themselves through reason (Silva, 2007) and stigmatised for their natural traces, their corporeal force, closer to nature, pure brutes (Fanon, 1986). But, while appropriating the English writing, I want to show that the deranged ways of living in these colonial and capitalist models – with its contraction of space-time and excess of anxiety, fears, and diseases that make most of the people sacrifice their health and time to guarantee the minimum to survive in precarious and tight ways – are not the only world possible to us. As the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report exposed in 2021, the upcoming climate changes can affect the planet to the level of making human extinction a concrete possibility. This does not need to be the only possible future.

For Silva (2007), the formation of Western modernity is never separated from a process of racialisation. Silva investigated in modern thought what she called *analytics of raciality*, which was the creation of categories to account for human differences, mainly race and culture. Science here plays a role in symbolic construction, and it has a productive force in shaping normative forms in the economy and the law. She observes how these categories of race and culture were employed to map a new global space that emerged with colonial expeditions and the distribution of peoples over this space. For Silva, globality is a new ontological dimension that emerges together with modernity because of overseas explorations and the encounter between diverse peoples (*Ibid,*. p. xix). The modern subject is produced through a differentiation of himself from the others who suddenly populated his imaginary of this new dimension: the global. Race and the presence of the racialized other have always been implicated in modern philosophy since its beginnings, even if in an unspoken way. Silva

explains that the modern subject is produced by removing from itself all traces of external determination. The rational subject forges an interiority that is conscious and capable of self-determination, different from those bodies affected by passions, climate or geographical conditions of the "others of Europe". But since this abstract subject always has a body and its conditioning factors, exteriority will always return and haunt the modern construct (*Ibid.* p. 44).

For Silva, Hegelian dialectics marks an important moment in this process when exteriority is incorporated into the rational process. In the Hegelian dialectic in which history is produced in the friction between subject and object, exteriority becomes an unfolding of reason itself, which historically actualises itself into rationalised social forms. Hegel crowns modernity as a world governed by reason after the death of God, which was later announced by Nietzsche who diagnosed it in the modern history. Silva explains how this transformation places society as the realisation of a *"transparent I"*, having the State as the highest expression of rationalisation. Yet race will always remain a ghost haunting this construct from within, an obstacle to its full modernisation. In the third part of the book (Silva, 2007), the author also analyses the mobilisation of the concept of race to explain the problems with racialised subjects in the formation of American society and how race appears in sociological discourses as an impediment to the realisation of a modern society. For Silva, race is not an identity, it is far from being something individualistic and has a productive role in the configuration of social space.

In Brazil, indigenous peoples and maroon communities still appear in speeches by former President Bolsonaro and other politicians close to him as an impediment to development, modernised agricultural expansion over lands that seem completely virgin, uninhabited, untouched by man, a natural realm yet to be cleared.[42] Caribbean writer Dionne Brand (2001) says that the black body is always a naturalised body in popular culture. She reminds us how in Western culture the natural is captive to science, where nature is always mastered by the rational subject of science. In Brazil, this naturalised body is also the body of the strong *nordestino* who resists sun, drought and hunger. The racialisation of the Brazilian Northeast also produces a symbolic effect on the identity of a Northeastern culture, almost another nation inhabiting internally the Brazilian national body; a diffuse identity that spreads out into the country, hindering the dream of a modern nation in European forms (Moraes, 2022).

[42] An example of this can be seen in this report: https://www.dw.com/en/jair-bolsonaros-stance-on-indigenous-people-is-discriminatory-and-racist/a-46959983

I am also a *nordestino.* As are also the cocoa workers that I mentioned above. Since it is impossible to remove my personal history from all this context of discussion, instead of seeking a supposedly neutral and objective description of my subjects, I am going to deliberately invest my perspectives with a partial and situated point of view. I intend to explore an immanent perspective of who lived in this world of cocoa, moved from this context to other cities, went back there, moved again. I experienced in my trajectory a considerable part of the restrictions that this context imposes on people living there. For example, the geographical distances, the lack of financial resources to cross these distances to study, the social stigmas, among other issues. This context is historically produced, economically determined, geographically and environmentally conditioned, politically articulated. Therefore, considering the implication of my subjectivity and personal experience in the contexts discussed here, this makes this research an autoethnography. But what happens to one can expose a norm operating in many singular cases that when perceived and described in its conditions and formalised in its causalities, becomes a theory. As Saidiya Hartman says: *"The autobiographical example is not a personal story that folds onto itself; it's not about navel gazing, it's really about trying to look at historical and social process and one's own formation as a window onto social and historical processes, as an example of them"* (Saunders, 2008).

I write by appropriating the discursive material that is absent in my familiar geography and the lived material that is absent in the larger extension of theoretical references. This spectral discourse of crossed presences and absences emerges from this third margin that in the writing claims the right to exist. I do not abandon the theoretical elaboration that wants to trace a web capable of actualising a complex arrangement that is not easily translated into common sense, and I do not abandon the singular position of a body in tension with its empirical constraints. I write through the friction between these two scales. As claimed by Anderson (2006), autoethnographic writing can also think of generalisable categories – concepts that enable the discourse to speak of an untotalisible manifold – from a first-person perspective, but one – I would add here – in which the *"I is another"*, as said Rimbaud (2004). What I seek with my autoethnography is not a mere collection of data about a reality objectively described in transparency. Neither do I believe that my personal involvement with the empirical context would turn it into mere subjectivism because my subjectivity is also conditioned and constrained by the materiality of the context. To turn it into a dialectic would not solve the equation as well, as the perspective that I build also brings together other voices with whom I "*stitch together"*, as Haraway suggests about situated knowledges that are neither a transparent apprehension of a totalisable reality nor a subjectivism, but a partial perspective in connection

to materiality (Haraway, 1988). Such situated discourse can limit theoretical abstraction but it keeps the latter in a friction with experience. Without this, the most radical theory is nothing more than empty transcendence, even when it claims to be immanent. Theory needs to be a material around which practices and relations are weaved. The material I bring to my discussion requires its own form to be addressed. The method is made together with the research. Here form and matter mutually codetermine each other. The material demands its own form just as wood cannot be carved in any way otherwise it splinters. As Tim Ingold says, what a painter does is not impose an already given form on the matter being used, but to bring together diverse materials and combine their flows by trying to anticipate what will emerge (Ingold, 2017).

I try to construct here a theoretical discourse that does not dissimulate the body of the one who writes. The use of a personal perspective is a form of situation that resists the dissimulations of abstraction, as Hartman says (Saunders, 2008). But abstractions are also necessary to deal with the manifold. We use abstractions all the time and if we did not have them, we would never be able to account for thinking about the multiplicity of such diverse objects and relations that are infinitely differentiated, are not reduced to the identity of sameness and escape representation (Deleuze, 1994). However, conceptual abstractions must take place in friction with diverse specific contexts and it is this friction that makes the movement of thought possible, as it is with the friction required between the tyre and the asphalt for the car to gain traction (Tsing, 2005).

In short, the forces of territorialisation should not be greater than those of deterritorialisation, since the former is always formed from the latter. But every territory constituted in its codifications and identities should be nothing but a way of passage to the cosmos. We need a certain territorialisation to situate ourselves in the chaos of the dispersion of experience, like someone who builds a small hut when lost in the middle of the forest (Deleuze; Guattari, 1987). But it is from this rudimentary constituted territory that we can increase the complexity and consistency of our movements. The friction between the general and the particular makes possible new understandings of the specific context analysed. But, in parallel, it also demands the reformulation of the general categories that are mobilised to formulate such understandings. In other terms, the most singular position is a point of tension that should make the universe tremble.

3.4. Suspending the scene, being out of measure

In her article on racism and sexism in Brazilian culture (Gonzalez et al., 2021), Lélia Gonzalez begins the text by describing an academic event organized by some "nice whites" to talk about black people, but the latter were only invited to watch the white people lecturing about them. The event ends up generating indignation among the black people present, which in Gonzalez's description is something like an uproar, a turmoil, an upheaval. Gonzalez does not say that those black people took the floor and argued logically against that situation. She describes something like making a scandal, causing a riot, something like that. The first time I read that, it struck me. It seemed to refer to familiar situations in the context where I grew up, but only after reading authors like Denise Ferreira da Silva and Frantz Fanon could I understand it better.

Here I also remember what Fanon wrote about his intellectual experience in the already mentioned chapter of his book (Fanon, 1986), which was a doctoral thesis rejected by white scholars in France. I recall how eloquent, affective and poetic this text is. In this chapter, Fanon says that the rational, neutral and objective argumentation demanded by whites in the academy was not possible for him. Before this, Fanon makes a break in the middle of this chapter by throwing himself into the rhythms of the cosmos, suspending the silencing that was imposed on him. Silva argues that whiteness is always taken as the signifier of transparency and the universal measure of reason (Silva, 2007, p. 214), but as Fanon shows in his experience, it served to silence his voice and it was needed to destabilise this measure so his intervention as a subject of thought could be possible.

The case of law, a subject so often addressed by Silva, is paradigmatic in this sense, mainly because of its corporal modulation. The law makes this demand that it is necessary to wear certain culturally determined clothing and to sit at the table to argue according to certain methods required by its entire normative, traditional and institutional apparatus physically visible. The second episode of the TV show Small Axe (2020), produced by Steve McQueen, gives an interesting demonstration of this. The episode shows a case of judicialisation of a racial conflict. In the scene showing the trial of the case in the court of justice, the white corporeality of the law is all the time confronted with the intervention of black bodies in the court. The scene exposes how the literate and cultured whites occupying the main positions of power in the court will not directly use the resources of coercion for those who do not fit their measure. In this case, that is left to the police. The educated whiteness conceals its relationship with violence. White people will not lose their elegance, but they have someone to do their

dirty work for them. Even if they are not in charge. They do not have to. They will protect themselves and they know that the social system itself will protect them also by its own reproduction that privileges white people.

In Brazil, it is common for white men to use attributes contrary to reason as a form of disqualification. The hysterical women, the depraved faggots, the *barraqueiras* (scandalous) black women, the rude *Nordestinos* (north easterners), the lazy indigenous. I do not need to state the obvious that all non-white people are fully capable of making use of the logical and argumentative modes of reason, and I only feel the need to unfold this part to say that they do so with attention to many problems ignored by most white authors when exercising intellectual work. But this demand that a body express itself according to that universal measure of reason, education and elegance tailored to European moulds, is also a form of coercion and violence. For those who have been denied the means to develop the mastery and practice of intellectual and scientific discourse, it is a painful process to access them. I experienced this in my trajectory, and for my parents who worked doubly hard so that I could study, it was much harder.

Certain verbalizations seem to update social structures that are much more encompassing than the specific moment and relationship in which they happen. Structures that are forged in the friction of relationships, as Silvio Almeida exposes in his book on structural racism (Almeida, 2018). Verbal aggressions that reproduce racism, elitism, male chauvinism and homophobia emerge in the friction of the encounter between diverse bodies. It is in this encounter that the contrasts between bodies socially moulded in different ways emerge. This is beyond consciousness and even if one reads many books on these issues, it is still possible to make such gross mistakes. In my trajectory, as a non-white person from the Northeast of Brazil, a *nordestino*, I have experienced prejudiced discourses that have come from people who are academics and consider themselves to be leftist and against these kinds of discourses. The academic space can often be an oppressive space for those who come from poor contexts where the corporeal difference is many times marked by poverty and violence. A good education for us meant to become whites and learn the white standards of expression, language and behaviour. At least for my generation and previous ones.

Centuries of colonisation and slavery have produced a social unconscious that codifies bodies in perverse hierarchies. It is not surprising that in the relationship with white people of a more privileged social class, this historical background reactualises itself, and we cannot neglect our responsibility with this. In an intellectual and institutional context mostly controlled by whites, who own the means of production and circulation of intellectual work, we who come

from less privileged backgrounds sometimes feel guilty for questioning all this when we also need these spaces to flourish in our vocations. But we do not want to access these spaces in a way that is subjectively violent to us, that makes us ashamed of our way of speaking and expressing ourselves, that destroys our self-esteem for not mastering what we have not had the opportunity to learn to master, and above all, that ignores our potential to create alternatives of knowledge that answer these problems. We do not want to merely learn and have to fit into a model that has caused us so much suffering and that has discouraged so many of us. We want to create other measures of consistency. We want to do science with rigour too but whose efficiency points in another direction.

The moment in which we came to occupy spaces in scientific institutions has lasted for a few decades and we are faced with a tradition that extends for centuries. I have never stopped reading this tradition, but I question very much why only it is read. I do not stop paying attention to the production of white researchers, but I am saddened and indignant that we non-whites are so often ignored.

We non-white people, heirs to the legacy of colonial violence and exploitation, are the most knowledgeable about the Western tradition and its ways of thinking. It is all marked in our flesh and our histories, trajectories and pains. We are profoundly intellectual. We know more than anyone the effects of the intellectual history that goes from Plato to Kant, from Aristotle to Hegel. We know very well what the institutional, political and legal forms forged in that history have done to us. We are great knowers of that library that has always been far from our homes and with doors closed to us. We read this tradition better when we fail to understand its self-referential codes and realise that it has stripped us of all the training conditions to understand it and blamed us for not being able to read it. It is in our misunderstanding of it that we better understand what it has to say about us.

We will not give up access to these intellectual institutions and traditions, but we cannot reproduce this same measure in which we have never fit and which excludes the contribution of knowledge and perspectives that are not expressed in the way that white Western tradition demands. Creating other measures is not an easy task, but it is the challenge of a philosophy that intends to be decolonial, which has as raw material for its elaboration the ruins left by colonisation, the traces of almost erased traditions, stories told by older people, narratives and historical documents to be read against the grain. To perceive in the letter of a slavery master the traces of those who did not write but left as a record the nuisance, the riot, the *fuzuê* that Gonzalez described, that which they have to record against their own will because it constitutes an event and has historical effects against them.

3.5. Decolonising what?

The discussion on decoloniality circulating around the academia sometimes tends to change the theoretical enunciations but maintains the subjects of enunciation and their places of privilege, such as the event described at the beginning of the previous section. In Europe and in the UK, many middle- or upper-class people are doing decolonial theory. It is common to find this discourse coming from white Brazilians from economically privileged backgrounds who have no connection to the periphery and the struggles of poor people. In Europe, they suddenly become *Latinos,* as a minoritarian position but, despite their good intentions, this conjecture also exposes the reproduction of the abyssal inequality present in Brazil, which conditions who can produce knowledge or not and who can migrate to Europe or not.[43]

Another problem concerning the discussion on decoloniality is how it is many times limited to a liberal agenda of inclusion, diversity and representativity without challenging the structural problems in society that systematically produce the forms of exclusion. This problem makes it complicated to think about the inclusion of a few people in a type of society that is only sustained by the exclusion and marginalisation of so many. This kind of society will never accommodate those many whose vital energy is extracted without return. This is even stronger in the case of rich global north countries whose wealth was and still is extracted from destruction and exploitation elsewhere. We need to face how such an exclusionary and hierarchised society is based on the brutality of capitalism. The liberal decoloniality reduces such agenda to the decolonisation of curriculum and inclusion of less privileged people in a few positions at the university, which are important proposals but not enough since our lives do not happen only at our campus. Focusing only on such an agenda, they ignore the capitalist structure of society that underpins the neoliberal university. We cannot make a debate about global justice by ignoring what is happening outside the walls of the university. It makes decolonial discourse such an imbroglio that scholars have already begun to talk about "decolonising decoloniality" (Levitt et al., 2023). Critiques of decoloniality have also shown how within this scholarship the intellectual production of global South scholars is less considered than those scholars based in the global North universities (Moosavi, 2020).

I cannot invalidate the theoretical contribution of those who come from more privileged social positions, but it is important to question how the discourse of decoloniality by people from such contexts appropriates the experience and struggle of non-white and poor people who

[43] These inequalities between Brazilian immigrants in London is accounted by Martins Junior (2020).

for a few decades have had few more chances to occupy a space of intellectual production that coloniality has kept exclusive to white people. To talk about colonisation for us is often to talk about our parents and grandparents and the places where we grew up. It is possible to make rich analyses of reality and produce concepts that contribute to the struggles of those from below without saying that you are decolonising something when colonisation is always this appropriation and obliteration of what colonised bodies produce with their lives.

But concerning those who come from below, I am in favour of the total devouring of all knowledge without any guilt. Our bill has already been paid by the work of generations of underprivileged people and it is regrettable to be excluded or blamed for our deep curiosity in thinking about problems beyond our personal experience. It is that curiosity and passion for thinking that brought us here and we also want to think of physics, technology, complexity, poetry, or whatever thing that makes our minds gleam. We can know and appropriate all knowledge available to us, but above all, we have to be fair with our own trajectory.

To those from below, I wish freedom and all creativity to do what we cannot do in the places where we grew up, where we are cruelly repressed by family's conservatism and other social forms of violence and repression, where many times there is no economic incentive for creative and intellectual activity. It is already enough to face all that. And may we never blame ourselves for our curiosity, instincts and creativity. If there is one powerful thing that makes us go through so much pressure and deprivation to keep searching, it is our dreams and unsubmissive passion. It takes us far. And when we get far, we often feel guilt and pain for the distance we crossed. We then see the abyss of inequality that divides these worlds and the realities between them. The decolonial theory is a jump into this abyss and a challenge to inhabit it, to bridge it, and above all, to struggle against what produces and enlarges it more and more.

It is important to understand that our speech situates us but does not limit us. We can even change of planet, but we would not change where we came from and the trajectory that brought us here then and now. We have all the freedom to be whatever we want without shame for what we have been. But if we really want others of us not to go through the same difficulties we went through, then we cannot be fooled by the silver coins that fall from the cauldron of capitalism. Let us remember Fanon again when he questions our desire to be white, for that is what we are taught to be for survival and for social inclusion in that which has excluded us as we really are. This is not an easy task. We do not fit into the measures of this perverse system. Sometimes we even cut off pieces of ourselves to fit but it only hurts, and we never fit in fact.

We have to create our own measures in this non-place of not fitting where we arrive when no longer fitting where we came from. This is another surprise: the abyss also changes us.

From my own experience to get access to a PhD abroad, I would say that we need to appropriate other languages, methods and theories from the whole Western tradition. It is still difficult to insert oneself into these scientific institutions without disputing the terms that they demand. Of course, this is problematic, but the measures to welcome us are not given beforehand and we need to work hard to create them. Our challenge is doubly more difficult than that of white people who have occupied these institutions for centuries because we have to take care of their terms and also take care of all our histories that do not fit into these terms. For me, one of the first to do this was Fanon when he managed to put the difficulties faced by him as a researcher into confrontation with theory, transforming both the lived material and the theoretical material that are the flesh of his work. Fortunately, today we already have a wider range of non-Western authors, who have come from places marginalised by the capitalist system, to read and think together. Although we still have to struggle with methodological demands and theories that often only alienate us from our own realities. And it is difficult to build on the ruins when one also tries to survive in what produces them. Nonetheless, we keep on dreaming.

I finish this section with the remembrance of a text that I read some years ago and it marked me forever. In a communication presented to a seminar on black literature in Brazil in 1985, the Angolan writer Manuel Rui spoke of having come from a people of oral tradition, and when he discovered the writing, he saw it aimed against him (Rui, 1987). He appropriates it, and turns the muzzle of the cannon to the other side, thus making himself the subject of the narration.

3.6. Inhabiting the void

My social experience regarding identity is often confusing. In my state, Bahia, I am usually seen as white. In southeast Brazil, I suffered prejudice for being a *nordestino*. In Europe as well, but because I am a non-white Latino. A lexicon such as *Latino* cannot say much about me because it is attributed to a large continent despite all its diversity. In Brazil, I am a *Nordestino* but nobody knows what is it on the streets of London. Such as so many other *Nordestinos* from poor families, I have indigenous ancestry but since I did not grow up in an indigenous community inserted in a traditional indigenous culture, I also cannot define myself as an indigenous person. I live somehow in a symbolic void. However, I also learned from this

that I can be an embodied intelligence in movement resisting whatever force that intends to fix myself in a closed identity.

One thing I realised in London is that some of the difficulties I faced were not merely a question of racism, or the question of race is not just about skin colour. There is also a clash of civilisations due to people's complete ignorance of worlds other than their own. Even if their world is not only white. Through this research, I discovered that modernisation plays an important role in differentiating modernised/developed spaces from others taken as undeveloped. This distinction of places also works for distinguishing the bodies inhabiting these spaces. Silva writes about the intersections between race and culture in the construction of meaning about these "others of Europe" that were lacking reason and placed outside of history (Silva, 2007, p. xxi). The meanings that are constructed about a body are also produced through links that refer it to a geographical place, also involving the cultural and symbolic imagination about this place. Thus, race works by mapping the distribution of differences in a global space. This is the case when racial prejudice is accompanied by cultural stereotypes. Identity is not merely a matter of colour. And in this sense, much of the discussion about race does not account for my experience.

In my academic career, either in London or in Brazil, I had to listen to some commentaries that always relate me to the place I came from and how I can be seen because of that. Three examples: once after a seminar panel, an Italian professor from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, with whom I used to work together, introduced me to people at a coffee table where they discussed the violence in northeast Brazil. He introduced me in this way: *"look, this one is from there but he is meeker"*. Another time, a middle-class white girl from São Paulo said: *"the gringos will be surprised by your knowledge of nature"*. I had never talked about nature with her before but why am I related to this? And the final anecdote: when I lived in Uberaba, a city in the state of Minas Gerais where I obtained my bachelor's degree, a guy from the church that I used to go to introduced me to his friends in a barbecue saying: *"go easy on him, because where he came from energy has not arrived yet, he is still adapting to civilisation"*. In London, I have not encountered anything as explicit. The falseness of British politeness is perhaps a gift.

But these people who love it when I talk about cocoa, will they ever seriously consider my theoretical work? I really do not want to be the legitimate subject talking about my community as an object for these people and their folkloric imagination. I hope to contribute with my work to the development of theories able to address the problems faced in the experience of postcolonial contexts. Most of our education in social sciences and humanities

in the Global South is based on the reading of European and American authors. Many of them contribute deeply to the reflection of our experiences in those countries. However, many times we find ourselves chasing answers to solve questions posed by Western theories, and we put aside the challenge of reflecting on our challenges and experiences in our countries. I do believe that there are questions that are not limited to the temporal frameworks that delimit these national or continental identities. It is a lived tension in thought the challenge of going beyond these historical contingencies that conditions its possibilities and references, while at the same time, the thought is indeed conditioned by them. Also because of this, I believe that the possibilities of thinking should not be limited by the temporal conjectures that configure a given epoch. However, this paradox remains as a mystery whispering to our intuition.

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the plane of immanence brings the possibility that thought does not always have to be determined by the already constituted forms of knowledge that determine discourse and its logic. The plane of immanence is a cut of the real, a certain parcel of the real, to make it thinkable. It is a pre-conceptual and pre-philosophical moment that makes philosophy possible and prepares a field to be populated by concepts (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 40). It is a plane that composes a set of non-philosophical elements that will be put in contact with the concepts. All of the several theories and academic disciplines that we know had this moment that defined what is properly thinkable and describable for its area. Each of these areas had a pre-historical moment, a moment preceding the history of that area, which defined its cut of a certain dimension of experience to be thought, described and explained. After this is established and crystallised as a discipline, it gains institutional recognition and the weight of such authority. However, it does not exhaust the battles to relaunch and redefine other reconfigurations of the empirical and material elements that are brought into relation by theoretical discourse. In this way, the plane of immanence makes it possible to relaunch language into another relationship with reality and materiality, a new relation between the discursive and symbolic construct and the material that philosophical or scientific discourse takes as its reference. Thinking together with Foucault’s archaeology of how scientific fields are formed, we can say that it also makes possible a new formation of utterances, which are not the sentences and propositions that form discourse but the very condition of possibility of discourse; the possibility to say something not yet formed by discourse; when “there is language” to speak of an event or phenomenon (Foucault, 2002).

However, there is always a trap here because many of our intuitions and sensations of something that happens and composes us, and we cannot say what it is, have already been formalised in some description by a tradition that precedes us. We can read something from

millennia ago and think, "that was it!". Paradoxically again, it is also in this trap that the already constituted forms of knowledge determine the possibilities and paths of what we can explain and describe about what happens to us. Thought is the battle with these limits to seek the breaches through which the virtual comes into the actual, the possible is actualised into real.

The decolonial proposal, in its turn, and in other terms, also relaunches language in an elaboration not determined by the historical and ontological explanations of the West, repopulating thought with other materialities and other semiotics, but when such a proposal defines a tradition, it also defines its limits. I think of decoloniality as this freedom to reverse the already constituted forms of discourse and re-elaborate its material from other non-Western traditions, just as the bricoleur has to deal with the limits of what he is given to create. I do not speak any languages other than Western ones, I was born and raised in an evangelical family despite my indigenous ancestry, I entered university where I was taught to read European theorists, but in my encounter with the world and its people, another world called out for other expressions. These expressions needed to take shape in tension with the limits of what I had been taught and what had formed me. Because of this, I still insist on a decolonial theory.

3.7. Why we cannot allow masters to own all the tools

One of the main problems that this discussion brings me in the current academic context is how to deal with the colonial past in which knowledge production is also implicated. Arjun Appadurai described two different strategies that have been developed in decolonial thought through a double review of two books: Walter Mignolo's and Catherine Walsh's book *On Decoloniality* and Achille Mbembe's *Out of the Dark Night* (Appadurai, 2021). In the former, Appadurai sees a radical opposition to Western modernity that seeks in the knowledge of indigenous peoples from the Andes a way of thinking radically exterior from the ways of modern theories, moving away from their heritage with a clear opposition between the coloniser and the colonised. In the later, Appadurai observes in Mbembe's work a more tense relation to modernity and the knowledge produced in Europe, which puts modernity in a global perspective from the point of view of the African experience of diaspora and mobility.

Both Europe or modern tradition are not homogeneous but full of internal conflicts, hierarchies and contradictions. When we deal with them as an absolute transcendence imposed from the outside to the Global South, it obstructs a more immanent perspective of living in

post-colonial contexts that are permeated by Western heritage.[44] In the experience of post-colonial contexts, we can see not only the imposition of this heritage but an agonistic relation with this, which passes by appropriations of this but also shows its limitations to comprehend these same contexts where it is imposed. Different authors linked to decolonial thought use as references to the works of European authors. They dialogue with Western authors in a game of alliances and conflicts determined by what is interesting to the development of their discussions or not.[45]

Decolonial thought gives me important insights into how whiteness operates with its universals that intend to be the proper form of objectivity and not a perspective among others (Haraway, 1988; Silva, 2007). Here I consider whiteness as the colonial ideology that marginalises non-European ways of knowledge, imposing paths of thinking that intend to be necessary, confusing itself with the concepts of theory and science themselves – as Silva says, whiteness is taken as the signifier of transparency and universal measure (Silva, 2007; 2017) – never engaging with people and discussions from marginalised contexts because the metaphysical problems of Western tradition are the only ones that are worth thinking about.

However, when decolonial thought delivers all theoretical tools to the colonisers, identifying every use of Western theory as a reproduction of colonial perspectives, it blocks possible appropriations of Western theories from non-Western perspectives to produce a third term from this relation. This latter is not a synthesis, and it is no longer confused with the first two terms in relation, but it is developed in the distance between these two terms, gaining consistency through its differentiation.[46] Moreover, it also blocks the flow of creativity and curiosity of students who can make use of Western theories in a heterodox way in their trajectory. This helps us to navigate the spaces of academia, which is constituted by Western tradition, and it also gives us tools to elaborate theoretical discussions more concerned with our experiences, producing meanings and elucidation to these experiences. Consequently, it also makes way for the transformation of the academic context. This is, indeed, contradictory, as we cross an abyss of inequalities to access the university and this abyss also separates different worlds. As Paul Gilroy says, it produces a double consciousness in these non-white

[44] See, for instance, the work by Paulo Arantes about how the first department of philosophy in Brazil was influenced by French philosophy (Arantes, 1994).
[45] For instance, we can mention how Frantz Fanon dialogues with Freud and Hegel in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* (1986), or how Gayatri Spivak dialogues with Derrida in her *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (2010), or how Edward Said makes use of Foucault's work in his book *Orientalism* (1991), among many other possible examples.
[46] It will be elaborated below in the discussion about anthropophagy, but it also has reference in the concept of disjunctive synthesis elaborated by Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus: capitalism and schizophrenia (1983).*

bodies living in-between so different realities (Gilroy, 2000). But it is a space of disputes and negotiations where other ways of thinking more attuned to our realities can be affirmed.

From a more personal perspective, decolonial thought brings me an infinite debt to the violent context where I grew up and where I fought to find an opportunity to be a researcher and address these questions here. Besides these discussions, it sometimes seems to me that is not enough to be a son of generations of dispossessed peasants and deal with the consequences of coloniality in my own experience. I would not have been able to do this work if I had not read the European and non-European authors that I did. Before such experience, the main question should not be about whether I make use of Western theory or not, but how I can question this experience and describe it in its own measure without judging it accordingly to transcendent patterns that only impose lack and guilt upon us, such as coloniality does.[47] On the one hand, we are accused of being coopted by colonial forms, and on the other, we will never fit the colonial measures. Whatever ideal of purity can only produce violence against lives that are made through encounters with the diverse, woven in contradictions and displacements, built through negotiations, as diasporic lives were made in a relational world, as that one thought by Édouard Glissant (1997).

3.8. Tools that I want to leave behind

In this section, I explain what I understand by theory and what it does. I am assuming here that theory is a discursive tool that enables us to describe events, expose causal relations either between events or between parts that compose a certain reality, and thus, elucidate why a determined context became what it is. In this way, theory organises the way language refers to reality and produces meaning upon the chaos of reality. Consequently, it shapes our way of seeing reality. Theory has to do with the formal aspect of knowledge and how its contents are presented in a way endowed with sense.[48]

Silva shows how modern philosophy works as a process of discursive formalisation of a causal chain organised in a sequential line of determination – which is the way modern logics operates as well –, creating a coordination of events describing a certain process, either in a scientific experiment or the history (Silva, 2007; 2017). Silva describes the main pillars of modern reason as being determinacy, separability and sequentiality (Silva, 2017). By these

[47] An important book that develops this discussion is Albert Memmi's *Portrait du Colonisé, Précédé par Portrait du Colonisateur (2002).*

[48] Henri Bergson explains the relation between philosophy and science in this way in *Creative Evolution* (2007).

forms, modern reason articulates logically the events in a linear and causal sequence. From the perspective of this form of reason, all other ways of articulating the speech to describe reality are seen as irrational, mythological, and an inferior use of reason that is not trustworthy to determine a truth. In this research, I sought to get away from this perspective to investigate how knowledge of cocoa workers and indigenous cosmologies contribute to how we think about ecology and to shaping our lives in relation to non-human beings.

In the second half of the twentieth century, authors linked to the philosophy of the event — more specifically the French post-structuralists such as Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida — will rehabilitate an influence that comes mainly from Friedrich Nietzsche, which shows how each event is linked to so many chains of causality that are impossible of being thoroughly apprehended and described in a linear sequence of cause and effects[49]. The consideration of this manifold of causal determinations will make these authors take a different approach to reality, and then describe events (*événement*), the minimal component of history, in their contingency and their lines of becoming and differentiation. With this change, modern science would not have the monopoly of describing events and, thereafter, other different modes of speech such as those of literature and other kinds of languages will be explored in their possibilities of expressing a becoming or the affections of an event or experience. Here I understand a becoming as the variation process of being in the time that is unleashed by an event, reorganising the chain of memories and the horizon of expectation, that is to say, the way how past and future are understood, and demanding a transformation into language as well for expressing these variations (Deleuze, 2015).

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[49] It is relevant here to mention the aphorism 112 from Nietzsche's *The Gay Science*: *"We say it is "explanation"; but it is only in "description" that we are in advance of the older stages of knowledge and science. We describe better, we explain just as little as our predecessors. We have discovered a manifold succession where the naive man and investigator of older cultures saw only two things, "cause" and "effect," as it was said; we have perfected the conception of becoming, but have not got a knowledge of what is above and behind the conception. The series of "causes" stands before us much more complete in every case; we conclude that this and that must first precede in order that other may follow but we have not grasped anything thereby. The peculiarity, for example, in every chemical process seems a "miracle," the same as before, just like all locomotion; nobody has "explained" impulse. How could we ever explain! We operate only with things which do not exist, with lines, surfaces, bodies, atoms, divisible times, divisible spaces how can explanation ever be possible when we first make everything a conception, our conception! It is sufficient to regard science as the exactest humanising of things that is possible; we always learn to describe ourselves more accurately by describing things and their successions. Cause and effect: there is probably never any such duality; in fact there is a continuum before us, from which we isolate a few portions; just as we always observe a motion as isolated points, and therefore do not properly see it, but infer it. The abruptness with which many effects take place leads us into error; it is however only an abruptness for us. There is an infinite multitude of processes in that abrupt moment which escape us. An intellect which could see cause and effect as a continuum, which could see the flux of events not according to our mode of perception, as things arbitrarily separated and broken, would throw aside the conception of cause and effect, and would deny all conditionality"* (Nietzsche, 2001, p. 113).

Michel Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* brought an important comprehension of theory as the articulation of utterances that shapes language into a new discourse that makes it possible to enunciate the emergency of a new phenomenon. It not only shapes the language but, further, makes it possible to speak of a specific context. Utterances, then, turn into the condition of the possibility of discourse itself, organising the ways of seeing and speaking. Considering that these latter do not confuse with each other but exist in friction with the speech. The discourse seeks to exhaust what is seen but never fully achieve it, and the ways of seeing expose the insufficiency of the discourse to describe what is seen. This articulation between the ways of seeing and the ways of speaking also finds a parallel in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), where the collective assemblages of enunciation keep some proximity to Foucault's concept of utterance, and the machinic assemblages are the process that organise matter itself and the way this assembled matter emerges into perception. The two assemblages cross each other. What is more important to highlight here is how this perspective of theory is no longer determinist and based on mechanic relations of causes and effects. The authors mentioned above break with a way of describing the reality structured by those fundamental forms of modern reason described by Silva (Silva, 2017).

The implications of this theoretical comprehension in my research are mainly how it opens up the possibility of using not only scientific works – either sociological, historical, biological, economic, etc. – to explain how the experience of people in southern Bahia are shaped, but also the possibility of infusing my research of literature, poems, popular stories, indigenous cosmologies and other forms of knowledge that should be put in dialogue with scientific forms. This kind of approach recognises not only the capacity that people in marginalised contexts, mainly post-colonial ones, have to express their perspectives in different ways without owing anything to Western science – although it does not mean to delegitimise the contribution of this latter –, but it also considers how the knowledge and experience that these people have can contribute to elaborating other ways of solving problems and understanding reality.

At last, the theory here does not have the last word and it is not taken as a messianic speech able to exhaust reality, solve the problems by rational calculation, or predict the future based on a probabilistic reasoning causally determined. However, despite this, the decentralisation of theoretical and scientific discourse from its monopoly of knowledge cannot be confused with a total refusal of science and theory. Otherwise, we would end up reinforcing the kind of denialism present in contemporary politics that is completely opposite to my

concerns in this research, mainly those questions concerning justice for indigenous peoples and cocoa workers, environment restoration and related issues.

Indigenous perspectives can challenge our way of understanding knowledge and the role of reason in solving problems. They show a way of thinking that is not commanded by the centrality of reason and its logical process determining the course of history. But an embodied reason sensible to what other living beings are experiencing too. How to think of a way of practising theory without the intention of epistemological sovereignty and the eagerness to monopolise the last word about knowledge? This is the path that will take me to develop a cosmopoetics of justice.

3.9. So, why not theory as a way of dreaming?

In the book *The Falling Sky* by Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert (2013), we can find how knowledge is connected to dreams in the Yanomami tradition. Dreams are an important dimension where shamanic subjectivity is produced. They are an important dimension in their thought because it is where they have contact with the *xapiris*, the forest's spirits. The dreams and also the shamanic trance are induced by the use of a plant called *yãkoana*. For them, dreaming is an important part of the process of becoming a shaman. They blow the *yãkoana's* powder into the nostrils and they are very attentive and sensitive to what happens in this experience. Something I found interesting about this is how they have techniques for producing a body and another consciousness through corporeal experiments. Kopenawa describes it as their way of education and criticises how white people's education is so focused only on many readings that sometimes we cannot even remember what we have read. It made me question how in these societies the production of a body is coextensive to the collective order. I want to develop a possible hypothesis of how indigenous perspectives on dreams question the way we understand knowledge, and more specifically the theory.

But why in a discourse concerning theory, do I abruptly speak of dreams? What does dreaming have to do with theory? On the surface, we can see dreams as a radical deformation of thought, when reason loses its resistance and is completely vulnerable to a stream of images and the illogical flows of memory wandering in a plethora of hyperlinks. It seems as though all the possibilities of the reason to work upon the reality are lost. So, how can the shamans go into dreaming and then bring from that any knowledge and perspective? Kopenawa also speaks of the need to free our thoughts from the smoke of capitalist merchandise, which makes white people *"sleep a lot but only dream of themselves"* (Albert; Kopenawa, 2013, p. 313). His

thought aims to liberate the mind flows, the imagination, and the sensibility to realise all other beings breathing and thinking together around us, because "*the forest is wise, its thinking is the same as ours"* (Albert; Kopenawa, 2013, p. 409).

Ailton Krenak said in an interview that *"the myth is a time when there was not the anguish of certainty"*[50] – an idea very similar to what a Brazilian poet from my town, Waly Salomão, said about poetry as that which fills the hole of the loss of certainties (Salomão, 1993). Is there anything that seduces theory more than certainty? Would a theory be possible that did not try to master each data of reality but instead was able to inhabit the uncertainty and *stay with the trouble* as Donna Haraway (2016) invites us?

Mbembe says that *"theory has been not only the name of the West's attempt at domesticating contingency, but also the way in which the West has distinguished itself from the 'Rest'"* (Mbembe, 2021, p. 20). To think with indigenous cosmologies and cocoa workers' knowledge can allow a path to describe events, expose the relations between the parts that compose a certain reality, organise the way language refers to reality, and shape the formal aspects of knowledge without these problems described by Mbembe. We can see myths, poems, chants, gestures, and drawings as the first expression of an idea coming to life. The first coagulation of language after a stormy and intense flash flood of dreams. We can see theory as a slow work of gathering this language and working on its syntax, its arrangement of relations between phrases that become formalised into utterances, emerging with a new way of seeing the world, the form of a new perception, or even further, a proper new world. As though we step onto the warm sand beach after a long sleep and feel the sea water touching our feet. For many who still put all their tokens on theory, of course, it can generate strong fear and suspicion. But just imagine that in the 19th century racism was defended scientifically (Dennis, 1995). As Deleuze and Guattari say, "*it is not the slumber of reason that engenders monsters, but vigilant and insomniac rationality"* (Deleuze; Guattari, 1983, p. 112). Thus, a rationalist paradigm of thought and its scientism does not save us from all risks. But although those intellectual expressions of cocoa workers and indigenous people cannot be assessed by this same paradigm, they open up a way of knowing that is not detached from the ways of living that they constitute and that also produce them.

[50] The interview is available in Portuguese here: https://revistaperiferias.org/materia/ailton-krenak-a-potencia-do-sujeito-coletivo-parte-ii/

3.10. An anthropophagy of myself

Perhaps all these efforts to understand this history and how I am implicated, are just products of my mind trying to draw a line of meaning within the scattered windows of memory, looking for some continuity in the dispersion of experience, yet ultimately doomed to failure. Any text by and about myself will give an account of who I am and how I need to understand myself in the current context. It crushes me. It was already an immense endeavour to arrive here. But I also exceeded that. Not because of what I have achieved, but because before each of these changes I needed to recreate myself, again and again, to live in-depth in each context. *I is another,* as Rimbaud said (Rimbaud, 2004, p. 174). But if there is a narrative ego in this self-fiction, perhaps it is only a place of passage between subjectivity and structure by which we find a water thread upon a volcano, where the second term of this relationship makes and remakes itself all the time while the first term agonises to form itself and irresistibly falls apart. In the same movement described by Artaud in his *Nervometer*, and recreated below in Ahren Warner's translation (2013):

> *We must understand, intelligence is no more*
> *than a vast eventuality. And that it can be*
>
> *lost – not like the dead, estranged, mad –*
> *like the living, feeling its attraction, its breath*
>
> *(intelligence, not life). The thrill of intelligence,*
> *the sudden inverse of opposites, the words*
>
> *nearly near intelligence. This possibility*
> *of thinking in inverse, of sudden repulsion,*
>
> *of turning invective on thought. This dialogue*
> *in thought, the absorption, the rupture.*
>
> *The trim fall. The mind, idling…*

I also want to inscribe these stories in the flow of a diaspora. But such a flow that the universals are also vanished by the vortex of bodies breaking a geographical order and reshaping the surface of the Earth. I can do it by describing the encounters between the experiences, memories, expressions, and languages that peripherical subjects bring from the place where they came from and the different forms of these same elements that they meet when they move to different places, communities, and environments. The concept of anthropophagy from the work by the Brazilian writer Oswald de Andrade, in which the alterity

of the other is semiotically appropriate in new ways of expression, makes it possible to approach these encounters in a way that allows us to see the hybrids produced by them, which bring new meanings and are more contextualised with the experience of these marginalised people. What these subjects bring from their experiences, such as their knowledge of marginalised social contexts, popular culture or memories of their native places, and that which they meet accordingly they have access to science and art are both reshaped simultaneously. Anthropophagy can be a natural and unnamed tendency for those who come from subaltern contexts and take ownership of everything *"that is not theirs"* along the way, either for their curiosity or for their survival. But it can be an even stronger practice as a conquest of what is ours. The paradox is that for these groups precisely what is most proper to them is denied to them. The social hierarchies that produce the condition of marginality also teach them to hate and lower everything that comes from their original places. So, the anthropophagic proposal made by Oswald de Andrade in his *Anthropophagic Manifesto* (Marques, 2015), *"I am only concerned with what is not mine"*, may have another meaning.

This gesture is doubly anthropophagic because the voracious curiosity for the world is not exhausted by the movement of 'appropriation of one's own self'. On the contrary, what is foreign and what is in one's flesh are both metamorphosed into new reinventions. But this search for appropriation of what is one's own can be like one of those Kafkaesque anxieties in which the centre, the origin, the self, whatever it is that wants to stop the incessant search for Kafka's characters, always remains undetermined, and this search can become a narcissistic quagmire.

Otherwise, if we make movement and find what flows, what continuously passes by without stopping, the lines of freedom that make what is ours circulate and transform what is not ours into something else that no longer belongs to the original owners, this is a movement that enriches, that takes out what is ours from this place of inferiority – as in a song by the carioca rapper Marcão Baixada, *"I was not born to be a defendant / I gave another meaning to the phrase 'baixada é cruel' "*[51] (own translation). Not by making what is theirs more like what is not – and what is not ours is not necessarily what marginalises us, but an immense menu –, but by finding the implosion points that create space and time for these metamorphoses to expand and allow the power of what you bring to assert itself.

[51] Baixada Fluminense is a metropolitan region composed of different cities in Rio de Janeiro, which suffer from a high degree of violence. People from these cities are sometimes stigmatised because of this context, which is massively produced and managed by the State and its institutionalised violence through the military police.

PART II

4. An Autoethnography of Modernisation

"Quiet, like a word whispered,
dim, like a coal under ashes,
insubstantial, like the idea of a house,
we were among you:
the hungry,
the powerless,
in your world, coming closer,
coming closer to our world"

Ursula Le Guin

After the orientations traced in the previous chapter, I use this autoethnographic approach to describe the history of cocoa production in my native region through a personal and global perspective at the same time. I intend to show how the process of modernisation of cocoa production implied an anthropological and cosmological transformation since it implies the de-indigenisation and erasure of indigenous memory from that context; and a change in the relationship between people and the land. Finding myself as an indigenous descendant, I discuss questions related to indigenous ancestry and it is important to highlight that I am doing this through a political and historical perspective, considering the erasure of indigenous identity and memory as part of this global process of colonisation and modernisation. The problem at stake is less about my identity and why such indigeneity was erased in my native context. This chapter argues that the extermination of indigenous people and their memory also precluded other possible social and ecological futures with other forms of inhabiting the land collectively. I also want to show how the recovery of indigenous knowledge can allow for a reimagination of social forms in connection to more-than-human worlds. With this, I propose that decolonisation also should imply *ecologisation*.[52] This will have many implications for the way we think of the law since the modern law is also made through a normative, anthropocentric, colonial, ethnocentric and rationalistic (a specific form of reason) that usually does not take into account the perspectives of other people to which this law is also applied. For example, one of the first laws promulgated in Brazil after its independence in 1822 was the law nº 601

[52] I am interested here in the opposition between modernising and ecologising made by Bruno Latour (2012; 2018). This will be further discussed in the next chapters.

of 1850, also called the Law of Lands (*Lei de Terras*). It was the first law to regulate property in Brazil, a nation-state instituted in a territory of indigenous people for whom there was no concept of private property. This law gave legal legitimacy to large properties of powerful landowners that until this point did not have any legal regulation. Important to say, that at this time slavery had not been abolished in Brazil yet. What only happened decades later in 1888. Therefore, the black people who did not have even the right of property over their own bodies, also would not have any right to the land that was worked by them. These people are many times placed outside the proper limits of modern civilisation that the law demarcates. These implications in legal theory will be further developed in the third part of this thesis but they are dependent on what is discussed below. The cosmopoetics of justice that I seek here is one able to confront such erasure of indigenous presence not only in Brazil but also in this so-called global society.

4.1. A history of displacements

The first "chocolate house", where chocolate was first commercialised as a drink, was established in 1657 in Kendal, a small city in England. Almost exactly two centuries later, in 1847, the first solid chocolate bar was produced by Joseph Fry in Bristol (Off, 2007). The commercialisation of chocolate as a solid bar and its insertion in the popular market boosted the industrialisation of chocolate and consequently the international trade of cocoa. This increased largely the export demand for cocoa *in natura.* Brazilian cocoa was destined mainly for Western Europe and the United States – the latter being the largest importer of Brazilian cocoa. In Western Europe, the UK, Netherlands, France and Germany were the main importers (Ramalho; Moreira, 2004). Since the first expansion of cocoa agriculture in Brazil during the second half of the 19th century, the United Kingdom was one of Brazil's main partners in the cocoa trade (Graham, 1968). During most of the 20th century, Brazil was the second biggest exporter of cocoa in the world, only behind the Ivory Coast. The years between 1974 and 1988 marked one of the periods of biggest exports of Brazilian cocoa, taking Brazil to first place in cocoa exports in 1979. Brazilian geographer Milton Santos opened his book *Zona do Cacau* (1957) by saying that 95% of the Brazilian production of cocoa was concentrated in the southern region of the state of Bahia. That is the region where I came from and all the processes of transformation that I describe below are connected to this event in England: the creation of the first industrialised chocolate bar.

The work with cocoa is very rough. I have worked with it and have personal experience of it. I have not witnessed individuals attaining substantial wealth by working hard from Sunday to Sunday in the crops, except if one was the owner of big farms in periods when cocoa production and exportation were much larger, such as in between the 40s and 70s, the legendary gold times of cocoa told by elderly people. At the time of writing, my father is 66 years old. He has worked in cocoa crops since his childhood. He needed to drastically reduce his work with cocoa not because he chose it but because of health issues. By this age, he did not manage to retire yet, whereas the global trade of cocoa carries on mobilising great fortunes for more than a century. Why was it so easy for the product of such hard work to get here in England and so impossible for the people who produce it to be able to come here even for a trip? I arrived here, the first in the region of my village to be able to study abroad, and I had the opportunity to address this question as part of my doctorate thesis, after crossing the national borders that have always been so easy for commodities to cross through, but never for poor people who produce those commodities in South America.

When I arrived in London, I felt it seemed a great irony. A place that I was never supposed to reach, considering where I came from and the economic condition of my family. When one crosses so many geographic and social distances, one of the greatest difficulties faced is that sometimes you cannot comprehend people because you were not taught to understand their codes. The inverse is also true, but the effort to understand each other is not reciprocal when a colonial history encompasses these relationships and distributes bodies in asymmetrical positions. The dominant culture is the norm and it is toward there that we should adapt ourselves. To be out of its measure is to be out of the ideal measures of what it means to be polite, civilised, pretty, elegant, or more radically, fully human. To learn another language was not enough and I was judged by cultural patterns and social codes that I did not understand and nobody explained to me. It conditioned the possibilities of my social experience. The command of a different language and the semantic transmission, which are the basis of communication, are the simplest issues when people do not share the same world of references and shared experiences in a conversation. In London, I could not be spontaneous. I needed to learn the game and play it, but I could not accept the role that was destined for me. I am not merely speaking of a cultural estrangement here but of the hierarchisation of cultures and the racism implicit in this. When I went back home, talking about the bad social experiences in London or Europe with my parents, I never stopped to talk. These were sickening experiences for me. Even when I went to the Critical Legal Conference – a space that was supposed to be engaged with critical theory, progressive politics, anti-racism and so on –, in my first time

going to a conference during my PhD and out of Brazil, in my first day there, the first person that I tried to talk with turned her back to me and left me alone. I did not have much chance to say almost anything. It was just one case among many in which I was mistreated by white English people or Europeans. Without saying the fear, the underestimation, the paternalism, the exoticism, the so many ways of demarking distance and showing that I was different but in a bad way.

I fear to discuss that in English because I know that I can be misunderstood. I fear ending up reinforcing the stereotypes that I want to dismantle. Those who read me here, in this language, likely can do it with imaginations shaped by these stereotypes. Even in my country, and in my language, I needed to struggle with many stereotypes about the place I came from.[53] As a *nordestino* from a rural community, I am from the Brazilian region where millions of people needed to migrate in the 20th century, mainly to São Paulo, for work. Many of my childhood friends took this path. I am one of the few who had the opportunity to access higher education. Before that, I also saw some friends dropping out of school to work in cocoa crops because they needed to help with their family income. After opportunities of getting public funding that allowed me to access higher education, combined with many sacrifices and efforts assumed by me and my parents, and some support of friends, I had access to a PhD with a full scholarship in London. Mainly in my first two years here, it was not easy to deal with the parallel between these two realities, but it was an unavoidable challenge that I could not escape from.

These two realities seem incommunicable between them and my body inhabited this distance while my consciousness processed this experience. This is not a dialectics between subject and object and it will not produce a synthesis from them. The discourse arrives later when some syntax is formed in a new utterance. Would I call the gathering of these utterances formalised in a speech an autoethnography? As though my method would be my own history and I just needed to tell it? How did the trade between Brazil and northern global countries, England included, shape the region where I came from? What are the implications of all this history in the way I am seen and treated in England? I have lived far from home since I was 17 years old. During my bachelor's degree, I used to travel 30 hours by bus to study and go back home only on vacation semester by semester because it was far from home that I managed to

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[53] Concerning the kind of stereotypes and unconscious bias addressed here, see Serrao (2020), *'Racializing Region: Internal Orientalism, Social Media, and the Perpetuation of Stereotypes and Prejudice against Brazilian Nordestinos'*, Latin American Perspectives.

get a publicly funded scholarship to study. I benefited from the *Prouni – Programa Universidade Para Todos* (The University For All Program), a federal policy enacted during the Worker Party (PT) government to offer private university fee waivers for students from low-income families and public schools. Flights were not affordable for me either because of my economic situation or the lack of airport infrastructure in small towns in the countryside of Brazil. London was my fourth city, after my master's degree in Rio de Janeiro, but my first time out of Brazil, out of my language, inside of my dream to be a researcher.

What are the subjective costs of pursuing a dream? I lived the first nine months in London under lockdown because of the pandemic of Covid-19. I did not know anyone here and all I could do was walk. I walked very much around this city. Some places amazed me with the accumulation of wealth and infrastructure. I saw the huge abyss that separates the realities of where I came from and of this city. When the city reopened after the lockdown, it was a second arrival and to live in the vortex of this capitalist culture was an experience that completely tore me apart. The little pleasures of consumerist culture never fulfilled my need for real connections and something that could not excite me to live for. For a long time, I walked around this city feeling completely desolate and frustrated with the loneliness that this city imposes, feeling the weight of a form of racialisation very new for me and not understanding myself socially. The feelings of invisibility and rejection were difficult to deal with. Depression and anxiety were a roller coaster during these years here. What helped me to understand London better was to know other places different from here that highlighted the specificities of this place. Feeling my body being positioned in other ways in other webs of relationships with different bodies.

It was strange how belatedly I began to think about where I came from and how this marks my journey. It was only by moving to distant places and having very diverse experiences that I felt the contrasts and their consequences directly. It made me think about heredity and ancestry. I grew up helping my father on the cocoa plantation, who has worked on the plantation since he was a child and could not study. My grandfather, in his turn, also worked on the plantation since his childhood and could not study. My great-grandfather was an indigenous man, one of the first people to arrive where my village is nowadays, and he also worked on the cocoa plantation. On my mother's side, my grandparents and great-grandparents were also cocoa workers and cocoa farmers. What does it have to do with the shock that I experienced moving to London?

I know intercultural relationships can always be confusing for whatever person and I know I was an inexperienced first-timer when I arrived here. But it is not usual to find here

people from places such as the one I came from. This is even more difficult among Brazilian students here, who usually are white people coming from upper- or middle-class families.[54] Access to this position is much more difficult for people coming from geographical places dislocated from capitalist centres where technical, infrastructural, and financial capital is more concentrated; and people descendant from certain ethnical groups who historically suffered genocides[55] and slavery, such as indigenous and black people. People who inherited for several generations the impoverishment caused by the conjoint and inseparable history of colonialism, slavery and capitalist exploitation – what Silva called *negative accumulation* (Silva, 2022). Even though the experiences of these people vary, there is a global configuration that marks specific distances and obstacles crossed by these people. We all cross a bridge distancing a world that sees itself as more modernised, developed, civilised, polite, and above all as the model of being, from those worlds which are strangled to make possible the material production of these modernised worlds. We all step differently on this bridge. For many, there is no bridge at all, but instead, a long sea to be crossed with despair, as is the case of so many refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea to find possibilities of life in Europe.[56]

But maybe now we all feel it trembling under our feet in all sorts of tremors when those worlds that determined themselves as the teleological path to be taken cannot fulfil your promises anymore. Promises of development, modernisation, welfare states, democracy, and well-being for everyone. These modern promises were never realised for most racialised populations in global south countries marked by strong racial violence. The modern horizon of endless progress has been shattered, giving place to an increasing precarisation in the ways of living and working in neoliberal societies; where insecurity, uncertainty about the future, instability and anxiety are very common affects (Tsing, 2015). Something that an English writer such as Mark Fisher perceived and called *"the slow cancellation of the future"* (Fisher, 2014). Besides this, the infinite horizon of modernisation bumps into the finite and material limits of planet Earth (Latour, 2018), which is already reacting to the exhaustion, depletion and

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[54] Such differences among Brazilians in London are discussed in the ethnographic works of sociologist Angelo Martins Junior (2020). His work shows how differences among people from a same nationality also come together when these people immigrate.

[55] See, for example, the recent case of mass death of Yanomami children during the Bolsonaro's government: https://sumauma.com/en/nao-estamos-conseguindo-contar-os-corpos/.
Concerning the history of genocides of indigenous populations in the Americas, I refer again to the bibliography already mentioned in the introduction, which includes Hinton (2002), Short (2010), Woolford et al. (2014), and Tucci and Rossi (2020).

[56] Data about the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean Sea available on the website of the UN Refugee Agency: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/protection/operations/5592bd059/sea-route-europe-mediterranean-passage-age-refugees.html

extinction of its lands, rivers, glaciers, atmosphere, seas and so many living species caused by capitalist production.

The shock between incommensurable realities I mentioned above hardly challenged the way I developed this research and this thesis is an effort to make sense of this confusing experience. This research made me look at my own trajectory and investigate my ancestry, the social formation of Florestal around cocoa agriculture, the global connections created by the cocoa trade, the stories of old people in my village, the difference between the context where those people grew up and the current situation, the changes of mentalities and relation to the land from these old generations to the new ones, how the processes of modernisation affected this context and caused these changes. It also made me look at events happening in regions near my native village, as the conflicts and struggles for lands faced by indigenous communities and landless workers in southern Bahia and their creative ecological practices developed around cocoa production in the last decades. It is by exploring and reflecting on these stories that I want to describe the relations of force that mark the contact between these so different worlds from an autoethnographic point of view. I want to take the concept of perspective seriously such as it is developed in Amerindian perspectivism in which the perspective relies on the position of a body before other bodies and it is through the body that otherness is apprehended (Viveiros de Castro, 2002, p. 380). I develop it from a personal point of view but one in which is not a *self* that is said but a world; it is less about a personal perspective and more about which world is expressed through the position of a body that puts in friction these incommensurable realities and their different points of view.

Exploring my ancestry and discovering the stories of older people in my village, I realised how the process of modernisation implied a change in the ways of coexisting with other species and inhabiting the land. Moving from Florestal to other cities, mainly London, I realised how modernisation is also a form of distinction that distributes human bodies differently and asymmetrically in a global space (Silva, 2007). Besides this, as I identified a change from more indigenous lifeforms based on the land to more modern and capitalist lifeforms, I saw that the geographical distribution of techniques and the technical transformation of the space (Santos, 2021) played an important role in this change. As argued by philosopher of technology Yuk Hui, techniques are a distinguishing mark of modernity (Hui, 2021). However, I prefer to speak here of modernisation instead of modernity because I am not referring to a historical epoque but a geosocial process.

Following the displacement of cocoa as an *actant* and the traces of the cocoa trade (Latour, 2005; Tsing, 2015), I found the ethnic dispersion that formed my village – collective

formation from chaotic dispersion – and the viscous lines sticking this place and its bodies to global arrangements and asymmetries that distinguish and position bodies differently in a society. These lines bring the shock and connection between modern and non-modern worlds and their differential relations of power. I know a bit of the pain this shock causes. This reflection would never be the same if I did not move to London. This autoethnographic investigation took me to understand myself as an indigenous descendant but this happened while I was having an international experience among people from many different countries. To think of indigeneity in this context demands questioning the prejudices and misconceptions that reduce indigenous people to cultural stereotypes, stuck to a local, specific and particular position. The indigeneity that I want to think about here is positioned globally and this is important mainly now that indigenous territories in Latin America, the Amazon rainforest mainly, became an international concern in the context of climate changes. Important to highlight, I am not seeking a modernised indigenous identity adapted to modern spaces. It is quite the opposite: I am looking for an alternative way of understanding the social-legal formation that could point towards horizons not oriented towards modernisation. This alternative goes through the *ecologisation* of social forms as collectives composed of human and non-human beings.

Looking at my ancestry also made me see conflicts, forms of discipline and repression, historical erasure of indigenous memory, racism, and patriarchy, all tangled together in knots weaving local and global relations of power that make the social. What I call autoethnography cannot be reduced to my personal experience because my body cannot pick up all causal chains out of reach to my sensory perception. It is not a *self* that I want to put here but the loss of it, its shattering, which was what I felt when I moved to London. What makes this research an autoethnography is a dive into a personal history but one that led me to find through my body viscous lines that put in contact different worlds. This also positions a body as a site of tension between relations of forces that produce a person socially. This autoethnography is how I found myself implied in this web of power relations. Recovering myself from this shattering, I recovered a world and it is this world that I want to make speak here.

4.2. Iracy, the mother of honey

There are not many documents and registers about the history of Florestal available for us in our village, and as the first inhabitants to arrive in that location did not have much contact with any formal institution, I realised that through oral history I could find information that

archives could not provide me. Moreover, I was more interested in dialogue with our older people and in analysing how the experience of living there changed over time, mainly concerning the ways of coexistence with the forest. Despite the lack of registers of the first inhabitants of this location, there is a very short book, a kind of zine, titled *Florestal, Antigo Iracy* written and self-published by Hildenfor dos Reis Rodrigues in 1990. Rodrigues was one of the first teachers to work in Florestal. For decades, he worked in different functions, either as a nurse, a teacher or dealing with administrative issues near the village and its surroundings. He used to walk 4 to 8 kilometres around the region to provide basic health care and realise administrative tasks, such as tax collection. As a teacher, he worked in the first school installed in 1953, which catered for 54 children from families living around that location. The school was first established in a family's house. In 1962, Rodrigues built by his expenses a chapel for the scholar activities. The same building was used for religious activities too. It was also in 1953 that the mayor of Jequié, Lomanto Júnior, visited Florestal for the first time after travelling by horseback, which was the only way to access the village besides walking. Rodrigues says that only on 9th March of 1967 a dirt road linking Florestal to Jequié was opened. Still in 1953, light poles using gas lamps were installed in the village.

As the title of Rodrigues' book informs, before being named Florestal, my village was called Iracy, which is a name of Tupi origin and derives from the elements "*yra*" (honey) and "*cyg*" (mother), thus 'the mother of honey' (Dias, 1858). Rodrigues says that a man called José Augusto Dosreis proposed a conversation to some local residents – including my grandfather, Ananias Porto – suggesting that Iracy was not a good name for the development of that community. Dosreis suggested that as the village was located in the middle of a forest it should be renamed Florestal. He wrote a petition to the mayor Lomanto Júnior who accepted the requirement and changed the name. Rodrigues also described Florestal as an important site for the production of cocoa, fruits and vegetables which could contribute to the supply of Jequié. He mentions other realisations that contributed to the urbanisation of Florestal. Curious to notice that the catholic church was built with funding from Italy and the priest Ângelo de Ricoco, who worked there between 1969 and 1989, was liable for this.

However, the history told by Rodrigues does not inform about the settlement process of Florestal and the first people who arrived in that location. His departure point mentions people already living there, such as the families of José Higino da Silva and Hermídia Geralda da Silva and my grandparents Ananias Porto dos Santos and Diolina Eufrosina dos Santos. Hermídia and Ananias were siblings. These people, however, were not the first inhabitants of this region. About this, the only source of information that I had access to was the stories told

by the oldest people in my village, mainly one of the oldest cousins of my father. This special interlocutor told me that in his youth he had the chance to meet the brother of my great-grandfather, an indigenous man called Carlo. The informant described him as a short, stocky, dark-skinned man with a slurred way of speaking – possibly, Portuguese was not his first language –, who enjoyed hunting, fishing and drinking *cachaça,* and was not so worried about working with cocoa. As my interlocutor said, *"Ah, he was an Indian, he did not care about working".*

As he shared with me, my great-grandfather was an indigenous man called João Porto, also known as João Burí. He was married to a Portuguese woman called Maria Geralda. His brother Carlo was married to a black woman called Maria Senhorinha, also known as Dona Senhorinha, and who the old people in Florestal commented as being *"from the time of slaves".* My father met her when he was younger and I had the chance to meet her daughter, Margarida, also known as Dona Miúda. I can remember very well of her. She was a black woman with straight hair, our neighbour, our backyard was only separated by a fence from her backyard. When I was a child, she used to roast meat for me on her wood stove. However, only after I became an adult that I learned about my familiar connection with her after she had already passed away. I also grew up without knowing about my indigenous ancestors. My family did not use to talk about our ancestry and nobody told me anything about this. I did not have the chance to know my grandfather because he departed before I was born. I only met my grandmother already very old and bedridden. I was too young and she was too old to have this conversation about ancestry. She was a white woman who grew up not so far from Florestal, as my father told me.

There are no documents, pictures or belongings from these first people to arrive in Florestal, except for a picture that my father saved of Dona Senhorinha. Nothing but stories from their descendants and other elders. Together, they came from a region called Vale do Jiquiriçá, located towards the north of Jequié. They fled from a conflict motivated by a case in which a woman hurt my great-grandmother, Maria Geralda, with a stick of coconut branch. The brother of my great-grandfather, Carlo, was revolted by this situation and wanted to revenge the aggression. João Burí, my great-grandfather, did not want to get involved but Carlo did it by himself taking the aggression out on the husband of that unknown woman. After this, fearing retaliation, they fled together to where is nowadays located the city of Itamari, which at that time was called *Três Cepas.* Carlo had a brother-in-law there who took them to the area where Florestal is located now.

My family from my mother's side is also mixed and I did not manage to identify their ancestry, although some ancestors were described with indigenous traces such as darkened skin and black straight hair. They lived in a region located around 16 kilometres from Florestal and the only information that I had was that they came from the backlands, the *sertão*. However, in this research I preferred to focus on the formation of Florestal since it is where I grew up and where there was a more concentrated social formation linked to the production of cocoa.

In conversation with other elders who lived in Florestal since their ascendants, I also identified that there were other families living nearby that area. Considering the ages of these people and the generation of their grandparents, probably their ancestors arrived around that region in the same period as my great-grandparents, roughly between the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century. As I described before, this is a period of expansion in cocoa production in southern Bahia. There was an intense immigration of people from the north of the state or other northeast states such as Sergipe and Ceará to the south of Bahia (Mahony, 2008). That region was mostly covered by the Atlantic rainforest, its native biome, and many of the people arriving there in this period worked clearing the forest to grow cocoa. Big properties were made – what local people called *posses* (possessions). But as families grew and had many descendants, the lands were distributed among their heirs and this contributed to a lower concentration of lands, although a few farmers in the region nearby Florestal owned large extensions of land.

These histories of immigration and deforestation in southern Bahia appear very much in some novels of the worldly known Brazilian writer Jorge Amado, mainly his books *Cacau* (1933) and *Terra dos Sem Fim* (1943). Amado was born on a farm near the city of Itabuna, which together with Ilhéus were the main cities in the history of cocoa production in Brazil. This also indicates how this process was happening in different areas around southern Bahia, dispersing people, transforming the landscape and redistributing the space. Historian of cocoa production in Brazil, Mary Ann Mahony describes how these immigrant workers coming from the north at the beginning of the 20th century were declared as *mestiços* or *pardos*, mixed race, however, the number of black people increased in the census (Mahony, 2008). A problem that made it difficult to count the number of black people was that *"the deaths of the darkest – and presumably the poorest – migrants were never registered with the authorities"* (*Ibidem*). According to Mahony, in 1872 the population of Ilhéus was 5,682, of which 1,051 were slaves. In 1920, the population of Ilhéus was 104,279, considering that the abolition of slavery only happened in 1888 in Brazil. This is very informative about the intense transformation of southern Bahia after the expansion of cocoa exports.

The region around Ilhéus and Itabuna was also inhabited by indigenous peoples, such as the peoples Tupiniquim, Tupinambá and Pataxó (Paraíso, 1987; Alarcón, 2019). Tupinambá people were the first who had the misfortune to meet Portuguese invaders on the (now) Brazilian coast in 1500.[57] More specifically, where now is located the city of Porto Seguro in southern Bahia. Because of their long history of contact with white people, they underwent a long process of miscegenation, which later caused the negation of their indigenous identity by the State at the end of the 19th century. They were considered *caboclos*, mixed between whites and indigenous. Consequently, this also justified the negation of their rights to lands. During the 20th century, they also suffered intensely from the violence caused by the expansion of cocoa production over their lands. This conflict with cocoa farmers was perpetuated throughout the century. But, after many decades of struggle, in 2004 the Tupinambá people organised to take their ancestral lands back by themselves. They managed to recover an area of 47 thousand hectares which was occupied by more than 87 farms (Alárcon, 2019).

Most of the people over 60 years of age with whom I talked in my village mentioned some indigenous ancestor among their grandparents. The ethnic groups are undetermined and there was also the presence of white and black ancestors in their speeches. Despite the lack of information about the ethnic group from which these people descended, there is evidence of indigenous populations occupying the region of Jequié, mainly the Mongoió-Kamakã people (Conceição & Maia, 2012). After military expeditions commanded by the Portuguese colonel João Gonçalves da Costa during the 18th century, the Kamakã-Mongoió people suffered a long process of extermination and the survivors migrated toward the south of the state of Bahia, where they mixed with another ethnic group called Pataxó HãHãHãe (Souza, 2007; Aguiar, 2007; Oliveira, 2012). The latter was formed by the mixing of different ethnicities such as Tupinambá, Pataxó, Kamakã-Mongoió and Kiriri Sapuyá.

The Kamakã-Mongoió people lived in the limits between the Pardo River and the De Contas River, the latter crossing the city of Jequié. They used to live along De Contas river's banks and the name of the city derived from *jequi,* which was a kind of basket woven from vines (*cipó)* and in a conical shape used by these people to fish in the river. My father told me that he already used it to fish when he was young. It was an indigenous tool still used in my village decades ago. Another one is the *moquém,* a kind of handmade grill made of sticks used to grill, dry or conserve meat. My grandmother used it, as my father told me. When I showed

[57] According the studies of Anthropologist Susana Viegas published on the website of the *Instituto Socioambiental* (ISA). Available in the link: https://pib.socioambiental.org/pt/Povo:Tupinambá_de_Olivença

images of these objects to my father, he recognised them immediately. These objects were also used by other indigenous groups such as the Tupinambá people. But the people in my village grew up without knowing where these things came from.

Besides the Kamakã-Mongoió people, other people used to travel around this region and there is no novelty about indigenous presence in this context. Another indigenous group that used to live across this region was the Kiriri Sapuyá people. As the work of Paraíso shows, the history of colonisation and war against these indigenous people displaced them across different regions, thus intensifying the ethnic dispersion (Paraíso, 1985). This was not different from other indigenous people in southwest or southern Bahia. The different indigenous groups that used to inhabit this territory were present in different locations. There is also a long history of exchanges, connections and also conflicts among them. Their territorial organisation, political life, commercial trade and diplomatic relationships were brutally disturbed by the invasion of colonisers. It would be needed to elaborate an *"ethnology of losses and cultural absences"* to think of the history of indigenous people in the Brazilian northeast, as suggested by Pacheco de Oliveira (2016, p. 194). The dispersion and ethnic mixing have always been used to erase their indigenous identity. They would lack the "cultural distinctiveness" that marks their otherness concerning the ethnologist (*Ibid,* p. 196). Pacheco de Oliveira says that *"such peoples and cultures are now described only for what they were (or what they were supposed to be) centuries ago, but nothing (or very little) is known about what they are today, what, certainly, little contribution would be made to Ethnology as a comparative study of cultures" (Ibid, p. 195).* But these people who were supposed to disappear through acculturation and assimilation into the colonial society are still present today, despite all the violence they still suffer for resisting in their territories.

I could not determine the origins and ethnicities of the people in my village. Instead, I found dispersion, erasure of memory, and lack of records. I am mentioning the closest indigenous populations that lived around this region but I do not want to reproduce here a colonial obsession with identification and control of populations. I am from a place where people forgot their ancestry but what I am saying is that I am from an indigenous land from where indigenous memory was erased. What I am talking about is the violent extermination of our ancestors and their memories, which also meant a loss of alternative social forms with other ways of coexisting collectively and inhabiting the land caused by colonialism and the capitalist expansion over the planet. The erasure of the past is also the erasure of other possible futures.

4.3. De-indigenise and modernise

Before I begin this section, I would like to highlight that although some issues treated here are not a novelty for the discussion of modernisation – such as the migration of people to cities or the increasing use of technologies and science in agriculture –, the description of this context and its transformation is key to the argument that advance in the next chapters. It is important to remember that the focus of my work is not a strictly sociological, economic or geographical approach to cocoa production and its economic history. What I want to show in this section is how the process of de-indigenisation correlated to modernisation implies an anthropological and cosmological mutation at the same time. I also aim to show the relations of power involved in this process. For a broader analysis of the modernisation of cocoa agriculture and its economic history, I would recommend the doctoral theses of Jorge Chiapetti (2009) and of Maria Cristina Rangel (2013).

The change of my village's name from Iracy, a name of Tupi origin, to Florestal for economic reasons somehow expresses symbolically the process of de-indigenisation of that land and their people and the erasure of indigenous memory. I say this not merely because of the indigenous ancestry of those people but also because of the transformation of the ways of living caused by processes of development and modernisation. The stories of old people about their childhood tell of modes of subsistence based on the land and without much contact with the cities, which were difficult to access. Some people only visited Jequié after they became adults, mainly those who grew up in areas further away from Florestal. Since access to cities was so strenuous, people took from the forest most of what they needed to live. Fishing and hunting were more common activities and their houses were also built with material available in the territory. As they did not have much access to goods and merchandise, people living in more remote areas did not have beds and other house furniture, children grew up without clothes, and healthcare materials were not available. These old people with whom I talked described it as a time of arduous difficulties.

As I already mentioned above, this context was marked by ethnic dispersion and loss of ancestral memory. They did not live in more homogeneous communities where people shared the same ethnic identity and traditional knowledge. The context I am describing already underwent a dissolution of these lifeforms. Christianity had a strong influence in this process because it was not enough to change the forms of working and producing; a subjective change in people's mentality also came together in this process. When I say that those people had a

more indigenous way of living before, what I am calling indigeneity has to do with a way of living more based on the land that was weakened after the technical transformation of space and lifeforms. I cannot deny the context of poverty described above but neither can I dismiss how modernisation breaks a connection with land and other living beings that we need to recover now under the geological pressure of our planet demanding a radical change in our collectives. Techniques play an important role in this transformation as a hinge between de-indigenisation and modernisation. But indigeneity is not the opposite of techniques and it is not synonymous with backwardness and primitivity as the misconceived gaze about it. Indigenous contexts are not absent of techniques, as the latter is that which mediates our relationship and intervention on nature and matter.[58] However Western modernisation created this opposition as the imposition of Western technical systems depended on the remotion of indigenous lifeforms to be imposed.

The asymmetries of gender and race were also strong in this social formation. Concerning access to cities, men used to travel more by horseback, but women had much more barrels to travel around, as they depended on the authorisation of their husbands. Gender inequalities also differentiated labour relations in cocoa production. Women could not make the same contracts that men could do, such as borrowing someone's else land to work on and sharing the final production after a certain period. Cocoa workers call it "taking a half land" (*pegar uma terra de meia*) and the person who does it is called *meeiro*.[59] In my conversations with elder women, I also heard stories about people doing domestic labour or agricultural labour in exchange for food, clothes or housing, which could configure enslaved labour nowadays. Even paid work was very poorly paid.

The property of land was key to defining who would be subject to these social conditions. If one was a landowner, he would not be subject to the very precarious or even inhuman conditions of working for someone else. As the society in southern Bahia is largely mixed racially and almost 80% of the state population is black (including *pretos* and *pardos*), it is not difficult to find brown or black cocoa farmers. According to research based on data provided by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE,[60] cocoa production was the sector of Brazilian agriculture with more black producers, 77,37% of them were black

[58] About this, see for example the concept of technique in the work of Walter Benjamin (Sieber, 2019).
[59] This form of partnership could be very disadvantageous for cocoa workers, as the part liable for taking the land to produce would bear all expenses invested in the production, while the landowners would have their half part granted. For more about this, see the work of Dantas (2014).
[60] The research can be found here: https://apublica.org/2019/11/o-agro-e-branco/. It was based on the Censo Agro 2017 realised by the IBGE, which is available on the website: https://censoagro2017.ibge.gov.br/

and this production was mostly concentrated in the state of Bahia. However, among them, 22,5% never attended the school. When the census considered who were the owners of properties with an area higher than 10 hectares, 84,75% of the landowners were white in Bahia. Based on my observations of this context and my interviews with cocoa workers, I can argue that over the last decades, many farms were divided among the heirs of the owners' families and many workers could buy small portions of land to cultivate their own crops, even though they work in someone else land to keep their basic income. Around my region, at least, there are not many big farms that could be configured as latifundium. Lands in cocoa production became much more distributed than in other sectors of Brazilian agriculture. Besides this, since the early 90s, cocoa agriculture underwent a substantial reduction in its production due to a fungus called witches' broom (*vassoura de bruxa* or *Moniliophthora perniciosa*). According to Rocha, the production of cocoa in the state of Bahia went from more than 300 thousand tons in the 1990/91 period to just over 100 thousand tons in 2002/03 (Rocha, 2008, p. 90). More recent analyses of the impact of witches' broom disease on the production and distribution of cocoa in southern Bahia show that *"harvested area decreased by 30.7%, production by 65.4% and productivity by 50.1%"* (Rocha Sousa Filho et al., 2024). This led many cocoa farmers to bankruptcy and many of them abandoned their activities. The cocoa farms were devaluated, and this can also be considered a factor for the higher distribution of land in this context.

As I mentioned before, in my conversations with cocoa farmers of different generations I noticed a cosmological mutation, a change in the relationship between people and nature. What highlighted these changes of subjectivity and relation to the land in this context was my conversation with younger cocoa growers. However, there are not many of them nowadays since most young people have migrated to bigger cities to work or study. As I mentioned before, many of my childhood friends live in São Paulo now. Concerning these new generations of cocoa growers, they grew up in a context with much more access to transportation infrastructure such as asphalt roads, cars, motorcycles and more connection to the cities. They also had access to technologies of communication such as smartphones and the internet that their parents did not know. Most of them also had access to education at least until middle school. Besides this, the ways of working with cocoa changed very much in the last decades. Cocoa crops no longer have many species of trees, insects, and birds that were known by their ancestors. Younger generations of cocoa workers use motorcycles to travel across the crops and have access to electric tools such as brush cutters. These changes affect the perception of the environment and the relationship with the crop, as it is now much mediated by technical equipment.

Over the last decades, the modes of subsistence became mostly dependent on money and consumption and people buy their supplies in the city or local markets. They have a perspective on agriculture more oriented towards optimization of production and sometimes they criticise older cocoa growers for being still stuck to traditional forms of agriculture. Talking about this with my father, he said a phrase that was remarkable to me: *"The crops are no longer crops, they became agroindustry".* His phrase suggests that there was a relationship with the land that was not reduced to work and production. Of course, the modernisation of agriculture is far from being exclusive to young farmers but older people, who grew up in a context without access to these things listed above, had a connection to the land not only as their place of work but also as their home. Even for me, from a much younger generation, the cocoa crops were the surroundings of my house. They were part of my sense of home. This was not completely lost but this process of modernisation created a more technical perspective on the land. It is important to call it a process, an ongoing transformation that is mixed with elements of the past that did not disappear completely.

Another crucial aspect in the formation of a more technical perspective on the land was the arrival of technical commissions in the '70s that taught new agricultural techniques more grounded on scientific knowledge. It is the case of the Executive Commission for Cocoa Cultivating Planning (CEPLAC) and the Cocoa Research Centre (CEPEC). CEPLAC was founded in 1957 and it was linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply. My father and my uncles told me that in their youth they used to plant cocoa in low areas in the hill foot where land was more humid. Cocoa was planted in the shadow of taller trees, as it works in the traditional plantation system called *cabruca*. After these technical organisations arrived, agronomists coming from cities such as Ilhéus and Itabuna started training cocoa workers with techniques that allowed them to expand cocoa plantations up to the hills and with more cocoa trees per area. Consequently, decreasing the native forest. Important to say that logging was very present in that region in the late twentieth century. Even years later, when the control of deforestation became stronger, there was illegal logging. I remember that in my childhood it was usual to see trucks loaded with huge logs of wood passing by the village late at night.

Also, with the technical support of these organisations listed above, cocoa growers began to have more knowledge about the chemical composition of soils and based on this kind of analysis they were oriented about the uses of more suitable fertilisers and agricultural practices. In the last decades, after CEPLAC's decay, many cocoa growers came to do this chemical analysis of soil with a laboratory of agronomical analysis and chemical solutions

called Fullin, which is based in the state of Espírito Santo, southeast Brazil. They send samples of the soil to the laboratory by mail. CEPLAC is still active and they work giving technical support, helping to interpret this scientific analysis and orienting agricultural practices.

The technical transformations in cocoa agriculture were parallel to another transformation in religious practices in the region of Florestal. The Baptist Church also arrived there in the ‘70s and there was an intensification of evangelisation in the following decades. I grew up listening to my father telling of his youth. He used to talk about parties in which people played drums around bonfires, dancing the samba and using expressions that are no longer used. Questioning him about this, he told it was candomblé parties and he remembered the names of people who were more involved with this. Hildenfor Reis, the author of that short zine commented above, was one of the people involved in these parties. My father described these events more as a place where people used to go for socialising. Later in his adulthood, he became evangelical and I know my grandparents were already Christian as well. One of my interlocutors spoke of candomblé as something that distorted people’s minds and how the gospel made people more aware and disciplined, which also contributed to making people seek more economic prosperity and develop more.

I grew up in a context where candomblé was no longer present. In a village with a population of approximately one thousand people, there were five evangelical churches and one catholic church. In that context, whatever expression of African or indigenous religions could be severely demonised. Christian morality had a strong force there. Some deviant behaviours could be easily tolerated but things such as homosexuality and other forms of spirituality would be very repressed. Bodies should have to be obedient to a patriarchal order and souls could serve only one god. All these things came together: modernisation, techniques, Christianity. They formed a combination. They produced a world together, which is produced not only through a transformation of space but also through an anthropological mutation, which implies a way of disciplining bodies and controlling minds and desires. To develop and to civilise implied a violent repression of whatever forms of being that could put at risk the colonial-cis-hetero-patriarchal-capitalist project. As a cis-hetero man, I was educated to be strong, and never express my vulnerability, my masculinity should have been affirmed and performed without wavering and if a man had his masculinity questioned it would be offensive. To question this order could put one’s body at risk. I came from a place where political agency and sexual freedom could cost the risk of violence. These two dimensions are not separated since the power is not detached from the bodies.

What does it mean to reclaim an indigenous ancestry in a country that lets and makes indigenous people die such as Brazil? What does that mean to speak of myself as an indigenous descendant in a country where this identity is completely invisible, distant, exotic, lacking intellectuality such as in the UK? When I speak of indigeneity, I am not concerned with sustaining the purity of any identity. Less than individualised identities, what matters here is the collective emergences of people in alliance with other species composing territories where life can thrive in the ruins of capitalism. What is important for me about indigeneity is how it exposes the way colonial forces operate in a biopolitical dimension taking bodies as a point of intervention and repressing other possible forms that bodies can take. That is what my ancestry made me learn: the ethnocide of indigenous presence and their forms of life in Brazilian society. I understand that bodies exist in connection with other human and non-human bodies in the space, as spatial entities that compose the atmosphere of affects in which they exist (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015). Bodies are not entities enclosed upon themselves but instead are always crossed by material and immaterial connections with their environments. This implies either affects, relations of power, social identities or biological and physical compositions with techniques, urban infrastructure, heat, viruses and bacteria, other species of animals and plants, geological elements such as water and land, and so on. Bodies are not isolated entities but are always in relation and composing *assemblages* with heterogeneous elements. They do not exist outside of assemblages.

Viveiros de Castro explains that in Amerindian traditions the body is not essentialised in a static form. The body is not seen in its unchangeable features but by the different affections it can assume. It is apprehended in a confrontation of perspectives which says about the relations of force positioning the bodies among themselves. Viveiros de Castro says:

> Thus what I call body is not a synonym for distinctive substance or characteristic anatomy; it is an assemblage of affects or ways of being that constitute a habitus. Between the formal subjectivity of souls and the substantial materiality of organisms there is this central plane which is occupied by the body as a bundle of affects and capacities and which is the origin of perspectives. Far from the spiritual essentialism of relativism, perspectivism is a bodily *mannerism* (Viveiros de Castro, 2002, p. 380, my translation).

This is important here because it breaks with essentialisation and stereotypes that fix bodies in a certain image and position. To bring this up also allows for keeping open the possibilities of spatial redistribution of bodies, of change in the relations of force among them and of ongoing differentiation in these relations.[61] Considering this, indigeneity here is not a

[61] In other words, a possibility of spatial justice and change in the *lawscape* (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015), which will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

"massive state of stabilised difference" (Viveiros de Castro, 2006), which would constitute an identity. I am more interested in what could be an indigenous becoming in politics and in the law triggered by the retaking of indigenous ancestry and infusing its memory into socio-ecological processes. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) explain, a becoming is not a process in which an element turns identical to another one; it is an unstable zone of contact and coexistence between differences that do not produce a synthesis but a third term different from its previous parts. Thus, I do not expect that modern societies will take Amerindian forms. But indigeneity points toward forms of political communities that are not limited to a sovereign State and allow for a form of anti-colonial politics that redistribute bodies in the space in contrast with the hierarchical relations produced by colonialism. This is not a question about turning modern societies into indigenous societies, but it is about an indigenous becoming that opens other horizons of possibilities for the ways of coexisting among humans and non-humans together with the planet. Through this, indigenous identities could be repositioned in modernised societies no longer as subalterns but as potentially linked to alternatives of futures before our contemporary challenges. With climate changes, the planet can switch over very suddenly and geological transformations can happen now in the duration of one's lifetime. Indigenous perspectives can be an interesting source of learning to develop perspectives on politics, law, and justice that are never separated from ecology and a diplomatic relationship with non-human beings. Putting it with two concepts developed by Clark and Szerszynski (2021), indigeneity can help us to imagine legal and political forms of *'earthly multitudes'* that can allow for better compositions with the *'planetary multiplicities'* and its conflicts to come.

4.4. Ethnopolitics of indigenous ancestry

On the one hand, I understand indigeneity as an ethnic category as any other, which does not imply any implicit content and is different from the cultural traditions of indigenous peoples. There are indigenous people who are evangelical such as there are whites who are Buddhists or Candomblecist. To study about indigenous peoples in Brazil makes me question idealisations and stereotypes about being indigenous. There is nothing extraordinary about saying that one is an indigenous person. Most of the white people in Europe are indigenous, descendants of natives of this land. Indigenous is a general category that in its etymology (*indigĕna* in Latin) means one who belongs to the land. The opposite of alien (*alienigĕna in Latin), which is one from another land, from outside*. At some point in my research, I realised

that London was full of indigenous people from different lands. Global capitalism created a system that expels those people from their lands and creates a vortex of global dispersion. It makes it impossible the material conditions of living outside of its metropolis as it degrades different ecosystems all over the planet and submits their populations to its tentacles of extraction. By doing this and breaking all connections between people and land, capitalism forces us to a kind of floating without territory to land ourselves. So, we are forced to work and pay rent, and thus we are stripped of all material conditions of resisting to capitalist impositions. It strips us of the material basis of power. Then, social identities are as individualised as the ways of living are in modernised cities, where our lives are burdened with so many demands impossible to be met. We are all the time exhausted to keep a standard of life that is only possible because of the exhaustion of the planet and other worlds invisible in these cities. Worlds such as the one where I came from, where my father, uncles, cousins and friends work, where once I worked too.

My family have always lived from the land, taking from the land the means of their survival. For many generations, they have lived in the same region. I am a native of there, the village of Florestal. However, I cannot say I am Tupinambá, Pataxó, Mongoió or any other ethnic category used by indigenous peoples to identify themselves and these are no longer generalised categories as the term indigenous is. They are names of people who have their histories. In my village, because of the forced dispersions triggered by capitalism and colonisation – remember that all this process around cocoa was started because of the industrialisation of chocolate in England –, we lost the connection to these histories. But not completely and there are still vestiges that make it possible at least for me to believe strongly that I am part of a people who lived in that territory for thousands of years. I know the policies of indigenous identification in Brazil and I cannot say I am an indigenous person. I could not know my ethnic ancestry, I did not grow up in connection with a traditional indigenous community, I grew up in an evangelical family of mixed identities, and now I am writing in English and doing a PhD in England. But I know I am an indigenous descendant and despite all heteronomous recognition, I know more than this the world where I came from, what I lived there and my trajectory until here. Nobody can take it from me and this is what situates me here. However, the impossibility of knowing our history is a very political problem, or better to say, an ethnopolitical problem. I did not choose to ignore my ancestry. It was erased from me. Why does it matter to know it now?

In a conversation about indigenous ancestry and self-declaration with two indigenous people from southern Bahia, which happened by WhatsApp, I noticed how these issues have

more to do with the alliances and conflicts that one assumes from an understanding of oneself as part of a collective history than with any stereotype of cultural identity. It has to do with a process of re-education first and foremost. One that makes us question how colonialism still unfolds in the present producing social exclusion and violence. The loss of contact with indigenous culture, language and tradition needs to be understood as part of the colonial violence and the erasure of indigenous memory caused by this violence. Self-recognition needs to resist any kind of romanticisation and folklorisation of indigenous identity and the primitivist stereotypes that take this ethnic identity as opposite to social positions in modern society. There is no contradiction between being indigenous and being a scientist, lawyer, doctor or any other position one wants to assume. These oppositions work to reinforce the inferiorisation of the indigenous identity and exclude it from what would properly be part of society – a certain modern ideal of society and civilisation from which indigenous social forms are excluded. By saying this, I am not arguing that symbolic forms of indigenous traditions do not matter. Instead, it matters for the way it exposes how that which features modern societies such as science, law and certain kinds of technology (Latour, 2012) is shaped by ethnocentric looks, more specifically, it is shaped by whiteness.

The work of Marisol de la Cadena about *Indigenous Mestizos* in Cuzco in the early 20th century shows how indigenous identity was seen as essentially illiterate and opposite to intellectuality (de la Cadena, 2000, p. 308). The formal education would be a path to distance oneself from indigeneity and a literate Indian would be a kind of anomaly in that time. The racial mixing was also seen as a form of distancing oneself from the indigenous social condition. As de la Cadena explains, the discourse of *mestizaje* was articulated based on these oppositions and dichotomies and it would be only possible to move from one side to another. In her words:

> "Contemporary indigenous *mestiza/os* may seem an anomaly when seen from the perspective of taxonomies built upon classificatory notions defined in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which, allowing no room for uncertainties, rigidly moved between purity and impurity, city and country, literacy and illiteracy, and thus yielded *"mestizaje"* as a concept inserted in the dichotomies" (*Ibid.*, p. 317).

It is important to observe in de la Cadena's text that when she describes anti-indigenous racism, she is not talking about racism only by white people against indigenous people, but about a *mestizo* society that wants to modernise itself and finds in indigenous people an obstacle, an insistence from a past that does not wants to pass, a lower stage of humanity (*Ibid.,* p. 308). On the other hand, she also talks about indigenous people in movement and change, appropriating the education offered to them in their own way, not allowing themselves to be

led into denying their indigeneity, but breaking with the stereotypes and expectations imposed on them. In this way, racism appears to be a great delusion completely alien to any reality that concerns who indigenous people are. Racism is a neurosis that distorts the image of others or oneself.

Describing how analytics of raciality were formed in social sciences to give an account of human differences, Silva describes how the anthropological understanding of *mestiçagem* (the word used in Portuguese for racial mixing) in Brazil was oriented towards the whitening of the population, as Silva argues (Silva, 2007, p. 233). Considering this, to recognise oneself as indigenous also has to do with a refusal of this colonial process that erases not only our indigenous ancestry and memory but also that which this memory and ancestry could teach about a different relationship with the land – one that is not defined by property – and about ways of coexistence with human and non-human beings – ways that are not defined by separated and hierarchised political institutions and by the destruction of other species habitats. Here is where indigenous knowledge and traditions are important. In this way, indigenous ancestry is not only an ethnopolitical issue – since it implies an alliance with other people – but also a cosmopolitical project of ecologising social forms, of landing ourselves on the Earth, realising that we are also part of the nature that we are destroying.

The inclusion of other cultural identities in the same colonial, racist and capitalist machine that devastated indigenous worlds is not enough to produce justice. The cultural erasure promoted by colonial violence also has to do with the capitalist deterritorialisation that breaks with traditions that preceded its social forms and expands the latter over the world. When Marx and Engels (2015) wrote that in capitalism *"everything solid melts into the air",* they were talking about how the process of industrialisation and the ensuing transformation of modes of production broke with previous social forms such as feudalism. For Marx, the original act of the capitalist relation is what he called primitive accumulation,[62] which involves the conversion of land into property and this, in turn, defines the labour relation between those who own the means of production and those who must sell their workforce to survive. Capitalism has never been detached from colonisation and racism either and the slavery of black bodies and genocide of indigenous people are in its genesis (Silva, 2022). Following Silva (2007), I want to pursue a form of justice that is not a mere inclusion of *"the others of Europe"* into the position of the rational subject coined by Western modern thinkers and from which black and

[62] Marx describes this process in chapter 27 of *Capital* (Volume I), titled *"The Expropriation of the Agricultural Population from the Land"*.

indigenous bodies were excluded. Such rational mind underpins Western forms of liberal democracy and the justice that I seek here is not an extension of these latter forms to these *"others"* either. Rather, it is this ideal of a rational subject, which Silva called a *"transparent I"*, and the normative and institutional forms that it institutes that should be questioned.

In this topic my focus was showing how indigenous ancestry can point toward other forms of social assemblages that confront the spatial order of capitalist extraction and accumulation of wealth. I am from a place that was largely Christianised. Despite the forms of solidarity very present in my community, there was never any political mobilisation oriented to confront the relations of power that I described above. It was elsewhere that I found the ethnopolitical connections that I mentioned here. This research led me to connect with activists of landless workers' movements and indigenous people in southern Bahia. Their practices and stories brought a political dimension to my research and showed me a horizon of justice that became a path of political reflection for me.

As an academic working in the UK, I needed to reflect on these connections in a way to avoid an epistemological extractive posture concerning how to approach their practices in my research. It is quite a tenuous line to walk in a writing that refers to the practices of a community that is not the one you find yourself writing in. Those who write tend to benefit more from the work they do than the community described and today it bothers me to refer to the struggles elsewhere while I do not feel myself politically connected and mobilised collectively where I am living. However, I should say that collectiveness is not an easy thing to find in a so lonely and neoliberal city such as London when you are an immigrant.

I do not pretend that one more doctoral thesis or paper could bring any contribution to the struggles for land in Brazil. I had the opportunity to talk to indigenous leaders about my work and this made me rethink my pretensions. Instead of going to an indigenous community to do once again another ethnography about these people, I questioned traditional forms of ethnography made by white researchers, their implicit hierarchy between who describes – and under which perspective – and who is objectified and described, besides their consequences in exoticising and representing native peoples. Thereafter, I decided to do an autoethnography of my native village through an approach inspired by indigenous perspectives. On the other hand, I also do not believe that research should only confirm the analyses and positions of social movements because research can discover and evaluate other ways of understanding and explaining the contexts in which such struggles take place. Researchers need to expose themselves to these struggles, to take seriously the knowledge, reasons and demands of those who directly face the tensions and difficulties of the struggles with which they want to

collaborate. Here ethnography becomes a strategy of dialogue and collaboration rather than a mere description of the lives of others.

As a researcher, involved in a network of knowledge production, I look at this network in which I insert myself as a field of action and conflict. My research is not a mere description of what other people are doing and saying, but rather an effort to take seriously what these people do and say in order to re-elaborate ways of explaining law, social order and justice, which are the areas in which I work. If I insist on this work, it is not because I believe that such struggles need a thesis, but because they make me believe in something. Because I believe in these struggles, I try to channel what affects me in them and extract from my relationship with them perspectives that show their contribution in a global perspective to face problems on a planetary scale, as is the case of climate change.

Moreover, in the position in which I find myself I face a double difficulty, as I try to defend and affirm the contributions of such collectives that are not taken seriously enough while I am also someone who came from this place I describe. My ethnography implies an autoethnography. Land struggles politicise my theoretical elaboration, but these struggles take place in the context not so far from where I grew up, where my parents and a large part of my family live, which is the cocoa region of southern Bahia. However, in doing this research in London, I need to articulate my discourse in at least three dimensions in relation to the context from which I draw my work: global, political and personal. These dimensions are interweaved and take place altogether. It demands an ethical reflection but it says about the compositions that a body meets while being dispersed in the space. This is not about the weight of history falling on one's consciousness. It is freedom, movement, composition, and lightness that I need and not history's tribunal. I am not here to synthesise global dialectics, to judge history and to give a sentence about what I cannot control. I only can do what a little being can do: to flow through diverse places, composing with other little beings along my way; to float and traverse breaches that some too big heads cannot fit in. History imposes necessities that condition our positions in society and it is not by chance that I am bringing in this work the conflicts that it implies. But the weight of duty and guilt never made me write any good poetry. It is by the desire for lifeforms that racial, colonial and patriarchal capitalism cannot offer and by seeking a form of justice that allows for these lifeforms to be realised by bodies that are obliterated in that social order that I dive into this inquiry.

5. The Entropies of Modernisation

The times we're living in are expert at creating absences: sapping the meaning of life from society and the meaning of experience from life. This absence of meaning generates stringent intolerance toward anyone still capable of taking pleasure from simply being alive, from dancing, from singing. There's still a whole constellation of little groups of people who dance, sing, make it rain. The kind of zombie humanity we're being asked to join can't bear so much pleasure, so much fruition in life. So they holler on about the end of the world in the hope of making us give up on our dreams.

Ailton Krenak

In this chapter, I had inspiration in *The Three Ecologies (2014)* written by Félix Guattari to think of three forms of entropy – which is a concept derived from thermodynamics that designates the tendency of a system toward disorder – that mark the experience of the world produced by modernisation. It produced a world that tends to trigger entropy in three different dimensions: psychic, social and environmental. Modernisation and its time oriented toward progress and better futures, its expansion of technical interventions over all the dimensions of life and over the globe, produced an experience of the world marked by mental illness, social violence and environmental collapse, mainly for non-white people in poor situations.[63] When the future is cancelled and the present conditions are already drastically degraded, hope is not about better futures but it is the affect that is enacted by actual actions and events that make possible a different way of inhabiting the present. With the inspiration of indigenous cosmologies, I point towards forms of ecological recomposition of these three interrelated dimensions of our lives – mind, society and environment – that could contribute to this kind of engagement.

The first section discusses how the ecological knowledge of cocoa workers is a rich practice of multispecies composition that can be reoriented towards horizons of decolonisation, already indicating the ecological recomposition that is discussed at the end of this chapter. The second section approaches the psychic and social dimensions as two interconnected parts. It

[63] Concerning how racialised people in poor economic conditions can be more affected by mental health issues, see Williams (2018) and McGuire & Miranda (2008). Concerning their higher vulnerability to extreme natural events and social violence, I have already shown evidence of this in the introduction of this thesis.

describes how our subjective experiences are increasingly mediated by technical devices and the impact of this on our mental health. Considering how it has become part of our ways of working, I take into consideration the situation of non-white populations that are affected not only by mental entropy caused by the overflow of information and visual stimuli but also by racialised and militarised social contexts that are marked by a social entropy. In the second section, although not separated from the psychic and social dimensions, I focused on the discourses on the Anthropocene and climate change, which are key contemporary narratives on the future mobilising hope and fear, as descriptions of environmental entropy. These three forms of entropy are unfolding and unplanned consequences triggered by the new technologies of working, producing, communicating, controlling, policing, and killing created by modernisation. Each of these dimensions will be discussed with further references and evidence below. Thereafter, I take modernisation as the conjunction of these three entropies in the third section. By the end, I sought to look at Latour's proposal of ecologisation as an opposite vector of worldmaking in dialogue with indigenous cosmologies. With this, I intended to point towards paths of ecological recomposition able to oppose the modernisation front and recreate our forms of inhabiting the planet.

With this, I want to explore how the ecological practices around cocoa could respond to these entropic processes caused by modernisation and recompose these spheres of existence in relation to planetary challenges. Florestal has an environment surrounded by cocoa planted in the traditional *cabruca* system, which is a cultivation technique in which the cocoa is shaded by taller trees. I grew up helping my father with cocoa. I have childhood friends who work with cocoa until nowadays. This is an activity commonly seen as merely manual and perceived with much prejudice[64] in a world whose hegemonic centre of perspective is that of modernised places. The technique also functions as a vector for the hierarchisation of human experiences and different social forms.

However, the practice of cocoa cultivation also involves the intellectual ability and ecological knowledge of the workers who manage the crops, without which the crops will not prosper. It is necessary to have an accurate and trained perception to enter a cocoa crop and identify the demands that the trees express in the colours of their leaves and fruits, in the shapes in which their branches grow; to perceive the distribution of other plant species and how they condition the cocoa, in addition to the insects, snakes, birds that contribute or not to the

[64] See the discussion of Albuquerque Jr. about the stereotypes and stigmatisation of people coming from rural origins in the northeast of Brazil (Albuquerque Jr., 2014). This is also part of how Northeastern people are represented in Brazilian media, as Serrao showed (Serrao, 2020).

production of the crops. On this point, cocoa farming ended up reducing the diversity of fauna,[65] but the practices of landless workers movements and indigenous communities with agroecology seek to remedy this problem. Cocoa workers are also multispecies intellectuals who have important skills to contribute to the invention of collective alternatives of multispecies coexistence.

Books such as *The Falling Sky* (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013) have inspired me to talk with more curiosity to my father, who has been working with cocoa since childhood, and to be amazed by his ecological knowledge. When I go into the crops with him, it is an even more joyful learning experience. He understands everything that goes on around him there. He knows how to name the trees, birds, snakes, insects that make up that universe. And to compose a world it is necessary to describe and tirelessly list the many agents that make it up. Besides my father, I learned to talk with more curiosity with all the other cocoa workers in my community and they became interlocutors in this research. Our social recomposition involves rediscovering and recognizing the potential of communities like this one, which need more material support to carry out such important work as bringing to our table that which sustains our bodies.

5.1. Decolonise implies ecologise

"Cocoa culture" is an expression that cocoa workers use very often and which connects ecology and culture. Their work and time are unfolded together with the cycles of cocoa crops. This also involves an interesting cosmological aspect because these workers have a deep knowledge of cocoa ecology. Talking with my father, my uncles, or anyone else from my community who also works with cocoa is always interesting because of the way they understand the cycles of nature, seasons, soil, and other plants coexisting in cocoa's crops and what the implications of all these aspects in cocoa production. This knowledge comes from their own experience with the crops, their observations, their exchanges and conversations among themselves and sometimes from their attendance in training and workshops provided by cocoa's market organisations or research institutes such as the CEPLAC.

To look at the agriculture practice is a way to learn about the ecological knowledge of cocoa workers, which are usually disregarded in the intellectual dimension of their work. This

[65] Alarcón refers to the report of Mercês (2004) for the National Indian Foundation (Funai) where the latter informs how the expansion of cocoa agriculture over Tupinambá lands reduced the biodiversity (Alarcón, 2019, p. 46). In another moment, Alarcón recognises how the traditional system of cocoa plantation, the *cabruca*, contributed to the conservation of part of the native Atlantic rainforest.

is expressed mainly in the low salaries and precarious conditions of working to which they are subjected. Cocoa workers labouring on someone else's land usually do not even have a regular monthly salary and many of them work on daily paid journeys (Dantas, 2014). Around twenty years ago, the daily payment of a cocoa worker was around R$10,00 (Brazilian reais), equivalent to £1.58. In 2024, this value is R$ 60,00 (Brazilian reais), equivalent to £9.48. The payment for a daily journey of a cocoa worker is lower than the salary for 1 hour of working at a pub or cafe in London. Cocoa workers' knowledge of the land is not taken into account as the knowledge of agronomists, for example, and they are only expected to do the manual labour of mowing, harvesting and so on.

I would like to describe the work with cocoa in a way that shows how this practice is also intellectual. My father has worked with cocoa for more than fifty years, working in the crops since he was 12 years old, and he always amazes me for his knowledge of the land. Neither he nor any cocoa worker is a mere mechanical body using its force to extract the vital energy of lands and trees for the benefit of capital and its owners. The work with cocoa articulates knowledge with sensibility, perception, and corporeal ability for acting on nature and modifying a landscape. It is not a kind of human intervention in the environment that can do whatever the human intends to do. At least not always, considering that cocoa ecology has its demands in this deal. With accurate perception, sensibility and knowledge, those cocoa workers can understand the needs of cocoa, and what it says without words but through non-verbal signs. The colours of its leaves, the texture of its fruits, the signs of the land: a good cocoa worker can read the environment and interact with this, negotiating with the trees the shaping of the landscape.

There is an ancestral ecological knowledge whose sources have been forgotten and erased, but which has been passed down from generation to generation. Although cocoa workers have learned agricultural techniques from techno-scientific organisations like CEPLAC to increase the productivity of the plantations, there is a living, practical knowledge generated over years of living in close contact with the plants and their various forms of life and this knowledge is also important for recomposing our relationships to the land. It was not CEPLAC that taught these workers the names of every insect, tree, bird, fish, fruit, snake or plant they come across in the crops. It was not CEPLAC that taught them how each of these living species acts on the environment, affects the human body or how the ecology of the crops works. This knowledge is generated through many years of everyday coexistence with other species. And I would highlight the ancestral transmission of ecological knowledge in this context. When I talked to my father about how I could identify in our native region some

elements that could be linked to indigenous ancestry, he soon mentioned the techniques for sowing cocoa seeds or grafting cocoa seedlings, which should obey the moon phases. Both should happen in the period of the crescent or full moon, before the winter or in a rainy period. Also, he explained that when they need to take wood, it needs to happen in the new moon. Otherwise, the wood can be infested by the borer, which weakens it and leaves it eroded. When I asked my father where he learned it, he answered in a way that it seemed a usual thing to learn in the context where he grew up, and which was taught by older people.

This living knowledge of the workers is of paramount importance for the recomposition of other worlds and the regeneration of living conditions. Cocoa workers know that other beings in nature have agency in the composition of worlds. They know that if they deforest at the top of the hills, the springs at the foot of the hills can dry up. Many of them know which ecological composition of the gardens and their plants can drive away or bring in certain species of birds and animals. When I used to go to the fields with my father, we would sometimes find snakes. Some venomous snakes ended up being exterminated when they did not escape. But my father never killed other species like the two-headed snake or the *serra velha*, because they were important for the soil, creating oxygenation channels with their underground pathways. These workers already practised their own cosmopolitics in multi-species collaboration, but the problem is which world they are forced to produce in order to live under the impositions of the capitalist market. Cocoa agriculture has been mostly pushed forward by agribusiness tendencies in southern Bahia, which in different contexts of agricultural production has historically functioned as a generator of violence against indigenous peoples, landless workers' settlements and other forms of inhabiting the land that go against the ways of agribusiness and its practices of extractivism. The latter has always worked as a continuation of the colonial history that persists in Brazil. Despite this, there are cocoa growers who have a relationship with the land that is not only oriented by these tendencies. There is still an ecological sensibility alive among these people and this should open new conversations, alliances and apprenticeships among them, as it was possible between me and my father, who also accompanied me when I visited the Terra Vista settlement and was one of my main interlocutors in this research.

There are also some contradictions that puzzle me about this research. I was studying about a population that is not cultural alterities but my own people. They do not have an extraordinary cosmology that radically differs from Western cosmologies. Instead, they are a people who have been Christianised and who have modern dreams. As I have mentioned in Chapter 4, around four decades ago, the presence of Candomblé and other non-European forms

of spirituality were present in this region and my interlocutors used to narrate it as a space of socialising that made part of their lives. This was no longer the context where I grew up. Together with Christianisation and modernisation, the dreams of progress and capitalist development also flourished in people's minds, such as those described by Anna Tsing (2015), that is what they were made to believe, and that is what I seek to think against. However, they are also a people in which Christianity and capitalism have never been fully realised. I think that the social relations there exceed neoliberal individualism with its atomised way of thinking and living, and Christian moralism with all its guilt imposed by ideals working against the rhythms of our bodies, although these things are very present there too. Either in European or South American territories, the suffering caused by Christian morality was denounced. In his *Genealogy of Morals,* Nietzsche criticised how the "ascetic ideals" of this morality imposed a mentality of self-denial, self-discipline and renunciation of worldly pleasures that became a form of devaluation of life itself (Nietzsche, 2013). In South America, indigenous intellectuals such as Davi Kopenawa denounced how the invasion of evangelical missionaries in Yanomami lands brought unbearable violence against his people and worked as a denial of their immanent relationship with the forest and its spirits (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013). Moreover, in his critical reflections on the letters written by European fathers during the first centuries of colonisation in South America, Viveiros de Castro showed the malleable resistance of indigenous people to receive the message of the gospel (Viveiros de Castro, 2011a). Instead of refusing or accepting in fullness the announcement of God's King, they listened to it with astonishment and negotiated what could be interesting for them in this discourse, but soon they returned to their proper forms of living featured by polygamy, polytheism, wars and cannibalism, what caused great confusion in the European missionaries (*Ibid.*). This latter case referred mainly to the Tupinambá people, the ethnic group that inhabited my native region and who are still there. When I read it, it also reminded me how people lived the Christian experience so contradictory in my village. They feared God, but they did not fear the sensuous experience of worldly pleasures. Going to church on Sunday nights could be more a form of social convenience than a real conversion of the soul, although the church worked hard for the latter.

These contradictions bring me to a curious problematic field and I would like to explore what non-Christian, non-western and non-capitalist practices and ways of living still resist in the communities of cocoa workers. I do not want to look at this context through the lens of shortage, which presupposes capitalist and colonial standards of civilisational development. Instead, because the capitalism of development was not radically realised there, I can look at this context as a place of other possibilities. However, these possibilities are constrained by the

material and economic impositions of capitalism that limit and repress other possibilities of coexisting with the land. Private property and capitalist extraction still have the last word. But there is something that leaks these constraints. For instance, there is still in this place an abundance of natural wealth, space and time, which conditionally allows an experience of freedom. I did not grow up confined in walls but running across cocoa crops, swimming in rivers, riding horses, cycling through tracks and dirty roads. However, nowadays I know that all these things are under the threat of violence, pollution, and deforestation. Despite these threats, there is still the possibility of experiencing something opposite to what capitalism produces in the metropolis, mainly in its neoliberal face: contraction of space and time, management of scarcity, monetisation of experience and pleasure, isolation, loneliness, insecurity, uncertainty, instability and its psychological consequences: anxiety and depression.[66]

Capitalism is very present there and the cocoa trade is proof but there are other interesting stories… One story my father tells is a practice that people called *"roubo"* (theft), but not as we know it in capitalist societies. Some decades ago, when someone had some laborious work to be done on their farm, such as a large amount of coffee to crunch or cocoa to break, sometimes people living around would get together and plot the *"roubo"*: many people got together and arrived at that person's house at sunrise and did all the work that needed to be done. In exchange for this, the host needed to prepare lunch and all the care for those workers. And it all ended in a party at the end of the day. This is a beautiful story of a non-capitalist working relationship. I asked my father when was the last time he saw this happening and he said it was in his childhood, around the end of the 60s.

Now, in my research, with inspiration from indigenous studies, I have sought to rescue these stories. Maybe I cannot find them happening specifically in my village. But moving a little further to southern Bahia, I found in the experiences of the landless workers' movement and indigenous communities a different experience with cocoa. Not exempt from conflicts but which are struggles to reinvent collectively the relationship with the land and other living beings. Ailton Krenak, an important indigenous thinker in Brazil, has a phrase that sums up a lot of what I have learned from indigenous cosmologies: *"we must have the courage to be radically alive and not to bargain for survival"* (Krenak, 2020). A society in which most of the time we are desperate and terrified, running to support a life that we hate, consuming things

[66] These consequences produced by the neoliberal capitalist are better described in the works of Mark Fisher (2009), Franco Berardi (2015), Maurizio Lazzarato (2012), and Verónica Gago (2017).

that only harm our mental and physical health, is a sick society – and how strong to say it after a global pandemic. Indigenous thought questions this situation deeply, pointing toward other possible ways of living free of the artificial needs created by capitalism and its insane consumerism. It makes us rethink the concepts of wealth and abundance. It is about what we have had and lost, and how capitalism devours and transforms it into scarcity. Rivers that once we could swim are turned into toxic water; time that could be spent in learning and leisure is stolen in precarious jobs that produce excess but do not attend to human needs; vast areas of land that could be the basis for more ecological communities are turned into huge plantation systems technically managed, when are not only unproductive lands serving only for purpose of financial accumulation; and people are forced to crowd in big cities where they usually live in tight spaces and are stirred to consume more and more, feeding this infernal cycle of capitalist accumulation. Indigenous cosmologies bring a deeper question regarding our cosmological relationship with the planet and other living beings, reorienting our perspectives towards the future and reshaping our desires and expectations towards a less utilitarian, productivist, and destructive way of inhabiting this planet.

5.2. Psychic and social entropy

What to say about the future when the very present conditions are already degrading for millions of people and we feel it haunting and surrounding us, ever closer to the possibility of reaching a cataclysm and general collapse? How can we write about the future when we experience a growing deterioration in the quality of time lived, which is accelerating more and more, and a compression of space, which squeezes us into ever smaller and more expensive cubicles in big cities? That is, how to write when the *a priori* conditions of our sensibility and perception, time and space, are drastically contracted? (Viveiros de Castro, 2019). The future has concrete present affections felt by the body, such as anxiety, depression, and stress, besides their consequent somatizations. The body feels the time that presses upon it.

Already in the 1980s, Donna Haraway elaborated a perspective on the human body as a cyborg, a cybernetic organism that couples to various technical, pharmacological, electronic, and mechanical devices to expand its capacities for action and production (Haraway, 1991). Four decades later, this seems even more present in contemporary life and most of the time these technical assemblies and interventions on the body itself serve to fulfil heteronomous demands imposed by the need for survival and the desire to prosper in better living conditions. This body constantly connected to these various objects is also bombarded all the time with a

flood of information and stimuli that the brain is unable to process. An overexcited brain, addicted to visual and sound stimuli, instead of amplifying its cognitive capacities, ends up paralysed, exhausted, and frustrated, leading the body to a lethargic state that in the capitalist temporality will have to rest a few days to be subjected to this perverse cycle again.[67]

These are not only the conditions of the forms of entertainment, interaction and contemporary communication, but also of the ways of working and producing in which the digital image, subjectivity, creativity, knowledge and information are resources invested in the production of values, services, visual identities, advertising, and imaginaries. Something that the Italian Operaist tradition has called cognitive capitalism and immaterial labour (Lazzarato; Negri, 2001). Depending on the colour of your skin and the geographical space where your body is located, the spatio-temporal conditions can be even more degrading when subjected to forms of necropolitical power (Mbembe, 2019), going beyond contraction and reaching the point of total suppression, death. This can be caused either by direct State action through the police – a public institution funded by the same wealth produced by these bodies that the State kills, as the funding invested in armament, ammunition and military resources comes from the taxes paid by the population – or by the social diffusion of violence in gangs and militias that completely pervert the liberal legal principle of monopoly of violence by the State.

It is important to note how necropolitics is not concentrated in a sovereign's power to kill, possessed by the State, but is a form of power that configures worlds in which death circulates unrestrictedly, creating a hellish state of war among the same population. Necropolitics is also a form of fratricide (Galdino, 2021). People subjected to this kind of reality have to cope not only with the excessive and infinite demand for professional qualification and production to survive in precarious jobs, but above all they have to cope with surviving the state of war to which they are exposed on a daily basis. This creates unbearable social and psychological pressure that can always spill over into new cases of violence at different levels of aggression, whether verbal or physical. In addition to inheriting the consequences of the trail of destruction left by colonial and slavery history, black populations are cast to their fate in a social and political configuration in which the State mechanisms of protection and mediation of conflicts are not present and the law in force is that of necropolitics: to make die and let die (Mbembe, 2019).

[67] See, for example, the works of Zeira (2022) about the impact of neoliberal conditions of living and working on mental health and the ethnographic work of James Davies (2022) criticising the individualisation of mental suffering and how this latter is indeed structural in capitalist societies.

With this section, I sought to show how the experience of modernised worlds is affected by entropy either in our subjective and psychic experience or in a social dimension. These two dimensions are not detached and both are linked to the presence of technical devices shaping our experience of the world. On a corporeal, subjective and psychic dimension, technologies of communication, the overflow of information and audio-visual stimuli, the turning of human experience into data and other experiences mediated technologically have been turning the ways of working overwhelmingly for many. I tried to describe it as a form of psychic entropy that alienates us from our subjectivity, imposing us to a technical time and rhythm that exceeds our mental capacity. Berardi has discussed in different texts how the imposition of the accelerated times of capitalism and its technical infrastructure causes a psychological and subjective implosion (Berardi, 2011; 2013; 2015). Stiegler also developed a seminal work on how technology structures our experience of time (1998). Besides this, although technological development also improved working conditions by facilitating the realisation of certain activities, as is the case of the use of electric brush cutters in cocoa agriculture, it did not improve the social condition of the black population who are the most affected by unemployment (Bento, 2022; Kaufman, 2010; Austin, 2021). Automation is a tendency in the future of work, mainly after artificial intelligence, and it will also liberate a huge mass of unemployed workers (Srnicek & Williams, 2016). In the case of Brazil, the automation of agriculture has forced a high number of rural workers to leave their lands and emigrate to the peripheries of big cities in search of work (Baccarin et al., 2020). And if it was not enough, studies show that automation has not reduced the work hours for a high number of people (Bavafa & Terwiesch, 2019).

This is not separated from the precarisation and impoverishment of the forms of living in neoliberal societies, in which the subjects cannot count on the protection and guarantees of the welfare state. For black populations in post-colonial countries, welfare states were not even present at any time. For them, these new forms of working under pressure without any granted future coexist with the social insecurity of militarised territories where the State can be the main perpetrator of violence. This is also intensified by military technologies brought by modernisation, as is the case of the use of drones, for example (Allinson, 2015). Life is then surrounded by different technologies of control, either the images, sound and screens that capture our subjectivity and desire from the inside or the military apparatuses that control our bodies externally and physically, for example, by using facial recognition and exploiting personal data. These latter practices also reproduce racial forms of discrimination (Pele & Mulholland, 2023). That is the world modernisation made, which as demonstrated above, did

not reduce the intensity of labour, especially in the case of non-white people. Instead, the impact of modernisation on the environmental conditions of the planet, and the increasing technological improvement of militarisation, among other problems discussed above, mostly intensified the violence against non-white people and exposed them to more degraded environmental conditions. The seminal thesis of Saidiya Hartman (2022) argues that after the abolition of slavery, black people did not see their living conditions improve, instead, they were left on their own after a long history of degradation of their lives. In an interview about her book, Hartman says:

> The promise of emancipation was the transition from being the property of another to the property of oneself. The liberal narrative of slavery's end celebrates and fetishizes this transition: "Now you are a free worker!" But as Marx observed, the worker goes to the market, trades his hide, and needs to prepare for a tanning. That made me think, "Was this the liberatory horizon of freedom? It was so impoverished." As we know, the domination of the ex-slave required direct forms of violence and of racist terror; the control of the Black laboring classes continued to employ forms of extreme violence, and the spectacle of terror never disappeared. Racism is a distribution of death, controlled depletion, and a brutal allocation of chances at life. The forms of direct, extrajudicial, and extra-economic modes of violence remained dominant after emancipation. Racism, as Du Bois notes, gave every white person the power of police over Black folk. This is to say nothing of the psychic dimensions of anti-Blackness (Hartman, 2022).

What I sought to show here is that the narratives on catastrophic times that usually mark contemporary discourses on the future are instead the already present for these populations. To think of hope in these contexts should be a radical engagement with the present. Hope is the affect enabled by each little action or event that opens a breach for a new tomorrow. Although, the physical transformations of the planetary conditions do not respect human times. And the tragedy to which these populations are cast is aggravated by extreme natural events. I will move to this topic to show it as part of the experience of the world shaped by modernisation.

5.3. Environmental and climatic entropy

The discourse about the Anthropocene has been a key narrative to approach climate change and the future of human life on Earth. In this section, I take it as a description of a third form of entropy – environmental, climatic and cosmic – triggered by the modern and colonial forms of inhabiting and modernising the planet.

If it was not already insane enough to maintain this sickening rhythm of life in cities, the geographical form that concentrates most of the human population today, we are also stunned by the information that all this rush can have its time even more compressed. We

discover that capitalism not only gives rise to a social entropy that is increasingly difficult to control by neoliberal modes of governing (Foucault, 2010) – and that increasingly needs to make use of military violence to enforce the fulfilment of its economic and legal needs (Silva, 2014) – but also a cosmic entropy (Valentim, 2018), leading the entire planet and its human and non-human inhabitants to collapse. Considering the anthropogenic origins of the ongoing planetary transformations, the climate change, Valentim coined the term *anthropy* to name the kind of cosmological and planetary disruption caused by the *Anthropos* (*Ibidem*), the same prefix to qualify the geological epoch that many scientists say we have entered: the Anthropocene.

The Anthropocene is a concept under dispute either about its nomenclature or its original landmarks. The concept became popularised mainly through the work of Dutch chemist Paul Crutzen, who in his famous article *Geology of Mankind* (2002) used the concept to designate how human activity on the Earth's surface has gained causal proportions of a geological order. Atmospheric changes that could take thousands of years to happen in geological time, come to happen in the time of a human life. The Anthropocene is the time when humanity becomes a geological agent. However, critics of the concept such as Jason Moore (2015) says that the concept of the Anthropocene is a generalisation that conceals the differences and inequalities between the portions of humanity most responsible for deforestation, energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere. Therefore, Moore suggests the concept of the *capitalocene* as more appropriate to name the current epoch, arguing that it is not humanity in general that caused climate change, but a certain historical configuration of human life that is capitalism and whose command centre is in the rich countries of the northern global north.

Malcom Ferdinand (2019) employs the term *negrocene* to designate the intimate relationship between environmental destruction and slavery. For Ferdinand, Western modernity is marked by a double environmental and racial fracture that works in conjunction. The environmental destruction of colonised territories is a continuity of a colonial mode of inhabiting the land, exhausting its resources, extinguishing the ways of life of indigenous peoples inhabiting it and employing enslaved labour of black bodies to carry out the colonial enterprise. It shapes the modes of production characteristic of colonial plantation systems. In a world fractured by racism, the extreme consequences of the exhaustion of the planet, such as extreme natural events, end up aggravating already existing social inequalities. The populations most vulnerable because of the world shaped by colonial history are also the most vulnerable

to climate change (Ferdinand, 2019; Abimbola et al., 2021; Sealey-Hughins, 2018).[68] Moreover, before tragedies caused by this same colonial mode of land habitation, a selective and exclusionary politics is put in place to protect the most privileged human parcels and abandon the non-white populations to their own fate even after expropriating them of their territories, their bodies and their wealth. To name this, Ferdinand used the metaphor of Noah's Ark. The *negrocene* expands to a planetary scale a mode of inhuman and perverse treatment that was applied to enslaved black bodies, sucking every last drop of blood from the strength and energy that these bodies could offer.

Donna Haraway (2016), in turn, affirms the variety of names to designate such an era that involves so many layers and proposes the term *cthulhucene* to activate a tentacular imaginary that evokes the multi-species relations that make up the diverse ways of life that are made in *sympoietic* coevolution. With the concept of *sympoiesis*, Haraway conceptualises how life forms coevolve in interaction with diverse organisms and not as closed systems that self-produce as in the conception of autopoietic systems. Furthermore, Haraway says that the concept of the Anthropocene has a dubious effect by putting too much focus on humans and placing us as the main agents of geological transformation, thus invisibilising our implication with other living species that are also producing history. Naming the catastrophic agency of humans would also produce the effect of making us feel powerful enough to modify the planet with miraculous geoengineering projects. Therefore, the solutions to the mess caused by a certain part of humanity would not be so far out of reach for this same portion with privileged access to the most advanced techno-scientific means. The solutions would come from the same creators of the modern fable of total techno-scientific control over nature and its consequent technical and economic imposition over all regions of the planet, that is, the developed countries of the global north.

Alf Hornborg (2019) discusses the colonialism implicit in the Anthropocene and how it involves the complex between money, energy and technology, which are fundamental to building infrastructures necessary to tackle the challenges of climate change, for example, the energy transition to abolish fossil fuel. Articles 9 and 10 of the Paris Agreement envision that developed countries should support developing countries through the transference of

[68] Such inequality between the global north and post-colonial countries in the global is of such evidence that many climatic policies at the international level are oriented to remediate this problem. For example, how the Paris Agreement demands the transfer of funding and technology from developed countries in the global north to developing countries in the global south to help the letter tackle the challenges posed by climate change. Although, this requirement does not have a coercive force to be reinforced. Concerning the limitations of the Paris Agreement, see Allan (2019).

technologies and funding for implementing policies of energy transition.[69] However, the way this supposed transference happens can also reactualises colonial interventions in the global south. The ethnographic research of Dunlap and Laratte shows how the technological infrastructure of energy transition mobilised under the European Green Deal in a line crossing between France, Catalonia, Southern Spain, Morocco and occupied Western Sahara has been used to implement new forms of colonial extraction (Dunlap & Laratte, 2022). Also, research made by Alkhalili et al. (2023) approaches the same context of occupied Western Sahara and demonstrates how new discourses of ecological modernisation used in the name of energy transition are instead ways of prolonging illegal military occupation in this area.

Deborah Danowski and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2016) develop a critique of the not-so-veiled ethnocentrism of proposals to recycle the modern Western tradition that has no more than technology and science to give them a sense of the future. Their book explores different articulations of the relationship between humanity and the world. They discuss different perspectives in which humanity finds itself able to transcend the physical limitations imposed by an inert world amenable to techno-scientific manipulation. Here, a humanity without a world that leads paradoxically to a world without people, ultimately empty and dead. That is the experience of the Moderns. On the other hand, there are those people for whom the world is inseparable from the diverse agencies that populate and constitute it as always being made of relations, such as in indigenous worlds. In the first case, a modern delirium in which human reason can transcend the physical barriers of the earthly environment. In the second, a humanity immanent to the world and its innumerable non-human agencies. The authors take seriously what the indigenous peoples have to say about the end of the world, which for them is not a future condition but a tragedy in progress since the beginning of the colonial invasions in which their worlds were invaded by aliens, those who come from outside. In this context, the most probable future is not the diffusion of the dreams of Californian ideology from Silicon Valley to the rest of the world, but the increasing precariousness and exhaustion of the conditions of existence that first arrived for the black and indigenous peoples and will also arrive in the large capitalist centres. Confronted with this, the indigenous practices and knowledge become examples for imagining futures after the catastrophe that has already happened and is in progress: the progressive disarticulation of the space-time that make up the world and from which humanity cannot separate itself. In other words, the end of the world.

[69] United Nations / Framework Convention on Climate Change (2015). Adoption of the Paris Agreement, 21st Conference of the Parties. United Nations.

Taking into account indigenous discourses and politics, Danowski and Viveiros de Castro's book shows how politics in the Anthropocene always imply a diplomatic relationship between diverse peoples, including non-human peoples. Since there is no society without environment and peoples are never separated from their nature-cultures, every cosmopolitics implies an ethnopolitics. In their words:

> What the Anthropocene pre-empts is precisely the notion of an *anthropos*, a universal subject (species, but also class or multitude) capable of acting as a single people. The properly ethnopolitical situation of "human" as intensive and extensive multiplicity of peoples must be acknowledged as being directly implicated in the Anthropocene crisis. If there is no positive human interest, it is because there is a diversity of political alignments among the various world peoples or "cultures" with several other non-human actants and peoples (constituting what Latour calls "collectives") against the self-appointed spokespeople of universal Human. The multiverse, the *ante-nomic* or *pre*-cosmic background state, remains non-unified, on the human as well as on the world side. All unification lies in the future, under what we could call a multiple hypothetical mode, and will depend on negotiating capacities once the "war of the worlds", as Latour has called it elsewhere, has been declared (Danowski & Viveiros de Castro, 2016, p. 90).

It is an important contribution of this book to make us question not only the conditions of possibility of maintaining life on Earth, but about what life is, what quality of experience of time and space it makes possible, not only as a future problem but already in the present. The whole book unfolds in a questioning of the deterioration of the space-time conditions of existence under capitalism, which produces increasingly austere, suffocating, depressing, unhealthy and unhappy ways of living. The alternatives pointed out by the authors are not reduced to technical alternatives to contain the physical causes of climate change, such as the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere and the extinction of energy sources based on fossil fuels. Technical solutions are not enough to dismantle capitalist monocultures, especially mental ones, which reduce the diversity of forms of life and impose an overwhelming homogenisation of ways of living. The possibilities of what we eat, the environments we can enjoy and breathe, how we cohabit and with whom and which species we share space, how we communicate, are all reduced and homogenised under the globalisation of capitalism. In contrasting to this, indigenous cosmopolitics point towards a cosmological re-involvement with the diversity of life forms that make up existence.

A very pertinent formulation of the indigenous perspective on the end of the world is that of Davi Kopenawa in his book in collaboration with anthropologist Bruce Albert, *The Falling Sky* (2013). The title itself names a mythical discourse on the disintegration of the cosmic arrangement that sustains existence and prevents the sky from crashing down on us, leading the earth back into chaos. The Yanomami concept to designate what we call the sky is *hutukara*, but in Yanomami language it is more than the sky as an atmospheric and physical

dimension. The *hutukara* is something that covers and envelops our existence like the mantle of a mother who accommodates her offspring who rest and breathe under her bosom. Also, the *hutukara* cannot be separated from the *urihi a* that is her hair (Gomes; Kopenawa, 2016). *Urihi a* can be translated as land-forest or world-forest, in which the forest is not a set of entities external to our existence but the very composition of the world in which we are immersed. *Urihi a* is a cosmic arrangement composed of different living species, organic and non-organic beings, such as rivers, minerals, rocks, and air without which organic forms cannot subsist (Albert; Kopenawa, 2013). The destruction of the *urihi a* is not the mere destruction of an external environment that can be discarded given the possibility of existing in any other environment or even existing without the forest. The destruction of the *urihi a* is the destruction of the world(-forest) and the matter of which existence itself is made. Since the *urihi a* and the *hutukara* make up this cosmic arrangement that encompasses us and involves us in relationships with other living species and inorganic elements – an arrangement that shamans are responsible for protecting and constantly preventing from being derailed into chaos –, the fall of the sky is the name of a cosmic entropy that undoes the ecological webs that sustain life.

In the current geopolitical context in which the Amazon rainforest is becoming a focus of international concerns, it is necessary that the peoples who inhabit it have an active voice in the decisions that affect the forest – which is a world-forest for them. And for us too, if we understand that forests are important technologies for the thermodynamic maintenance of the planet. Otherwise, we run the risk of repeating once again the genocidal history that threatens the existence of these peoples. Amazonia is not an uninhabited and unexplored wilderness as those interested in exploiting, plundering and destroying it would have us believe. The Amazon rainforest is home to many societies that have developed ways of coexisting with it and have refused to follow the capitalist recipe that is putting the human species at risk, as well as extinguishing many other living species. These societies that live there also have an intellectual tradition with their own languages and ontologies. They must have a voice in the discussion on the direction of the planet that has Amazonia as its axis.

Anna Tsing shows in her ethnography on mining and illegal logging in Indonesia how capitalism always operates maintaining a threshold that separates civilisation and non-civilisation (Tsing, 2005). Law, for example, has a crucial function here, as it marks the distinction of a society that sees and describes itself as rationalised (Fitzpatrick, 1992). Outside this threshold that law distinguishes as de facto civilisation, there would exist untouched nature, an uninhabited space not yet exploited by human action, a limit to be crossed in civilisational expansion. Not being a space demarcated by civilising codes, this wild space is free for the

unrestricted use of force and violence, elements that would also be externals and excesses of culture and civilisation. The bodies which are outside these limits are also exposed to this (Silva, 2007).

The discourse that presents the Amazon rainforest as mere jungle, wilderness, uncultured, untouched nature, is a strategy that sustains the violent practice of depredation of the territories of other societies living there for thousands of years. It is a discourse that justifies colonialism and denies the humanity of indigenous peoples. But there, where in indigenous languages the category that refers to the human is not exclusive to one species, but a common mythical background to the formation (taking form) of all species, more symmetrical forms of coexistence were also formed. To repeat Gregory Bateson (1972), the species that triumphs over its environment endangers itself. The history of capitalist expansion over the planet and technical domination over nature is the greatest proof of this. The Amazonian societies teach another way of composing with the planet, which is forcing us to change our ways of living collectively. Or rather, human life has never ceased to be made in relation, including multi-species relations, but the planet is forcing us to find ways of understanding ourselves collectively and not merely huddle together in large urban centres that can manage the feat of isolating us among millions around us.

5.4. Modernisation as the conjunction of psychic, social and environmental entropies

The critical contexts described above, affecting the subjective, social and environmental dimensions of existence, are experiences of a world shaped by Western modernisation. The latter is historically inseparable from a process of globalisation of its ways of life and mentality to other regions of the planet. For the philosopher of technology Yuk Hui, modernity and modernisation are intertwined but differentiated, the former being a historical event that marks a specific epoch in Western society and the latter a global historical process that expands to other societies (Hui, Olmos & Villafuerte, 2021). Hui recognises that there were modernisation processes on different continents, but for him modernity was a properly European historical event (*Ibidem*). For Hui, modernity is characteristically marked by a strong "technological consciousness" (Hui, 2021). I add to this that such consciousness is oriented towards progress as a historical and temporal horizon, has science as its legitimate form of knowing, secularisation as its relation to a supposedly disenchanted world, presupposes an inanimate and

inert nature to be manipulated by science and technique, and takes order as a value to be rationally achieved (Tsing, 2015; Latour, 1993; Stengers, 2017).

Modernisation, in turn, also has technical development as a key feature, with technique being a mode of externalisation of human reason and memory that modifies human and non-human modes of existence and reconfigures possibilities for action (Hui, Olmos & Villafuerte, 2021; Santos, 2006). Techniques produce objects, shape landscapes and architectures, and alter the environments in which one lives and the conditions of doing. Human actions cannot be separated from the objects and instruments that condition them and provide new possibilities and limits for altering space, which becomes increasingly artificialised as it modernises, transforms and develops technically (Santos, 2021).

Milton Santos, a geographer who studied the processes of urbanisation in the so-called third world countries, preferred to speak of modernisations rather than of a single modernisation as a unique process and he lists some historical moments in which such processes took place, starting with the colonial invasions that imposed their techniques and modes of production on other peoples and territories (Santos, 1981). Machado explains that for Santos modernisation was characterised by a process of imposing technical systems on so-called underdeveloped countries, producing in these countries what Santos called derived spaces (Machado, 2019). The spatial transformation caused by Western modernisation and globalisation makes that the geographical means of non-Western countries - including their techniques, their cultural forms, their traditional ways of living and producing - were increasingly replaced by technical means that express the hegemonic mode of production, in this case, capitalism. This converted these derived spaces into distorted images of the hegemonic spaces (*Ibidem*). This process also produced divided spaces in which the modern and the archaic are not completely separated from each other, but cross and blur each other mutually, both being affected by modernisation.

Keeping the proper distances between Santos and Hui, I want to put them in dialogue around these problems common to their works: technique, modernisation, and globalisation. Hui explains that techniques are not neutral and anthropologically universal but always imply a certain conception of the world and nature, so they are always *cosmotechnics* (Hui, 2016). If techniques mediate our relationship with matter, the ways of intervention and manipulation over it, the ways in which we configure the ways of inhabiting and circulating in space, allowing us to make information, bodies and objects cross geographical distances in much less time, then techniques will be impregnated by the ways of experiencing and thinking spacetime and the conceptions of nature of the subject that builds the technique and acts technically on

the world. For Santos, in turn, techniques never exist in isolation. In fact, there are always technical systems that act together (Santos, 2021). For example, the construction of an industry in a certain location will also require the construction of logistical transport infrastructures that circulate raw materials and the goods derived from them between different locations, as well as means of communication that allow the remote control of this production network.

Santos coined the concept of *verticalities* to describe the spatial dynamics created by the intervention of global economic or political agents in local contexts. Communication technologies play a crucial role in these dynamics of globalisation because they allow the immediate and simultaneous circulation of information across several global regions and the synchronisation of the actions of international agents such as large corporations or financial institutions. These interventions always clash with the already configured local dynamics, the established relationships, the modes of living, the rhythm that life happens in that place, which needs to be integrated into the process of expansion of these hierarchies. These local networks are restructured according to the needs imposed by the production and control demands of these agents. The local is put in contact with other points in space that are not in that same locality. As Santos describes it: *"The vectors of modernization within this vertical integration are entropic. They bring disorder to the subspaces where they take root and create new orders that serve their own interests*" (Santos, 2021, p. 196). *Verticalities* always operate in parallel and tension with what Santos called *horizontalities*, which are the collaborative networks formed by aggregated continuous points in the space. These can be the result of the conformation of local dynamics to disciplinarisation imposed from outside, but also, as Milton highlights, allow us to describe how local networks resist adapting to the rhythm and spatial ordering imposed from outside (*Ibidem*). While *verticalities* function in a centrifugal manner, disrupting local arrangements and forcing them into interdependence with command centres elsewhere, *horizontalities* produce centripetal dynamics, aggregating lateral relationships and collaborations which may spread and produce other socio-spatial arrangements.

Considering all this, the globalisation of technical systems over the planet is a configuration of the world which has as its directional vector the imposition of hegemonic spaces over peripheral spaces. In the last five centuries of colonial and imperial expansion of the Western world on the planet, this vector was directed from this Western world – above all the rich countries of the global North – towards others subjugated by its domination and relations of dependence. This vector entered into crisis, either by the emergence of other global economic powers such as China, or by the intense migratory processes reshaping the countries

of the global north with their cultural forms, what Mbembe called “the repopulation of the world” (Mbembe, 2019).

These processes of planetary modernisation and capitalist globalisation that unfold in clash with other temporalities and geographical configurations end up causing a vectorial reversal of globalisation. If, on the one hand, these processes, which stem from the great centres of capitalism, have not been able to completely homogenise the different spaces where they have intervened, producing no more than spaces that are violently and racially segregated, on the other hand they have brought about a reverse globalisation that now falls upon their fortresses. The technical and predatory expansion of colonial capitalism over the planet is also producing what Mbembe has called “the black becoming of the world” (Mbembe, 2017). The degrading conditions that capitalism has imposed on black bodies are also expanding globally and progressively under neoliberalism. We increasingly work hard to secure the little we have without much expectation of upward social mobility. We become more and more indebted, working with flexible bonds that ensure each time less guarantees and protections under a State that dismantles more and more its public services. With rates of mental illness also on the rise, we continue to become more and more anxious, depressed and pharmacologised, struggling to reach a level of security and stability that economic capitalism and liberal politics can no longer provide even for the white peoples of the countries where these technologies of government were created, much less for those who were looted and enslaved by these same economic and political forms.

The modern project, guided by rationalisation and disenchantment of the world with the aim of ordering it, produces more and more chaos, disorder, entropy, especially for those on whom modernisation was imposed under military force and who today live in a social disorder that is increasingly less governable by the State, and where the State has never really had the monopoly of violence, for example, as in the case of armed militia hired by landowners who have been acting in Brazil for centuries, the so-called *jagunços*.[70] And if some would argue that all this is the effect of a specifically capitalist modernisation, let us not forget the other monstrous dimension of modern entropy. The vertical imposition of modernising technical systems not only clashes with the traditional *horizontalities* of non-modern peoples, but also disturbs the ecosystems and non-human forms of life of the territories devastated by the extraction of the physical materials of which every technical device is made. If these technical

[70] This is only an example of something that happens very often in Brazil: https://www.refworld.org/docid/4ecf37e52.html. In his elaboration on the concept of necropolitics, Mbembe also discusses it in the context of African countries (Mbembe, 2019).

systems continue to operate and expand over the planet under socialist command, this will not save us from the environmental and climatic consequences they entail. It is not enough to only change the forms of controlling the means of production by socialising the means of production. Indeed, it is also needed to transform the technical means of production and how we produce. As Hui said, techniques are not neutral and universal. If they are geared towards the complete domination of humans over nature, they will not lead us to a different future from what capitalism is causing on the planet.

As argued by Latour (2018), the Moderns ignore that the planet upon which they act is not merely a passive recipient of their actions but reacts to them in unpredictable ways. Modernisation projects intervene in environments that are populated by other life forms that are active and that are part of the chemical, biological and ecological composition of such environments. Insisting on modernising the planet, submitting it to the techno-scientific and rationalised domination of the human, will intensify the process of environmental and climatic entropy in which the planet already finds itself. Valentim argues that the modern project that excludes all agency from nature and non-human ways of life in the production of history and the world, these horizons being exclusive to human realisation, has as its reverse effect the monstrous re-intrusion of nature on a different scale, the "intrusion of Gaia" (Stengers, 2015). No longer the nature that the human could domesticate, but the super-nature of catastrophe.

It is impressive how the indomitable multiplicity of countless forms of life that make up the pluriverses of non-modern peoples - these considered by the moderns to be lacking in reason and history - was never a reason to unleash the cosmic entropy as the one caused by the project of globalising modernisation. It seems that the more the forms of life intensify and diversify, the more the Earth breathes, vibrates, colours itself and recomposes itself; while the physical and ontological elimination of all other non-human forms of life is what causes the Earth's degradation. Curious paradox: it is the intensive multiplication of agencies and life forms that can decrease cosmic entropy, not their reduction to the mental and economic monocultures of those who feel able to say to whom reason really belongs.

5.5. Ecological recomposition

Authors such as Latour and Viveiros de Castro propose that the alternative to this front of incessant modernisation and extensive development - which imposes on us a frantic pace and pressure to produce with much pain along the way that will ultimately lead us to catastrophe

- is a cosmological reinvolvement with the Earth (Latour, 2018; Viveiros de Castro, 2011). As Latour says, the path is inwards into the Earth and through a politics in composition with other terrestrial beings; recognising the relations of codependency with them that condition our freedom. How to compose from the limits of scarcity that the capitalist depredation of the planet has already inflicted on us?

I see in the work of the artist, teacher, researcher and indigenous leader Glicéria Tupinambá a great example of this. Glicéria recomposed a Tupinambá mantle based on another one that she saw in the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris. She discovered that there were several mantles like these that were stolen by European colonisers and that can be found in Europe today (Françozo & Velden, 2020). For example, there is also a 17th century mantle in the Royal Museum of Arts and History in Brussels. However, as Glicéria explains in her account (Tupinambá, 2020), the mantle could not be made of just any material. It should express the territory from which the mantle emerges and with which it is related. But birds that existed 600 years ago and that provided the feathers used in the composition of the cloaks are no longer present in the region of southern Bahia where the Tupinambá people live. Mainly because of the environmental destruction promoted by colonisation and capitalist expansion on indigenous lands. Unlike the work of an engineer who has a previous project and orders the material to carry it out, Glicéria had to act as a bricoleur, working from the limited materials available and creating from the possible combinations among them.

Glicéria's recreation of the Tupinambá mantle is also an example of what Yuk Hui called *cosmotechnics*. Her technique of composition derives above all from a relationship with her territory. The way she describes how she obtained the feathers to compose the mantle demonstrates how the material is not merely available to human interest but is a donation of what the territory with its diverse forms of life can offer. Her artistic practice is not separated from her struggle to recompose her territory and a diplomatic negotiation with other forms of life that inhabit it. Her account of the mantle is linked to her history of struggle for the retaking of ancestral lands with the Tupinambá people (*Ibidem*).

The paintings of Jaider Esbell, an artist of the Macuxi people, are also a strong expression of a universe in which beings always exist in relation. His works echo something similar to what I find in the concept of *urihi a*, the world-forest of the Yanomami that Kopenawa describes so well (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013). As I explained earlier, *urihi a* refers to the forest as a world that surrounds us, is made up of diverse life forms and is populated by spirits. Esbell painted pictures that are like galaxies or meshes composed of diverse beings that intertwine with each other forming other beings that encompass them. The parts do not disappear in the

whole, they do not lose their own detail, but the collective body that they form also gains its own contour. We see this, for example, in the painting *"Curandeiro Trabalhando Com Tabaco"* (Healer Working with Tobacco), 2020, in which the panoramic image of the painting shows us the healer smoking his pipe wrapped in the night. He is propped up by what looks like a bush if we seize the painting as a whole. But moving our gaze through the details, we see a composition of birds, frogs, wolves, people, rodents, peacocks and plants. In the painting *"Festa na Floresta"* (Party in the Forest), 2018, we seem to stand on a hill with a panoramic view over the forest, which is entwined with snakes, turtles, dragonflies, owls and flowers. Esbell's paintings express an earth that moves, we enter it and it feels as though we are being seen, her beings seem to move and interact with those who see. Looking at his canvases is like entering a forest populated by spirits, where the visible beings of the trees and animals hide a spiritual double that only shamans can see, but that still gives us the feeling that we are not alone. These canvases are like a cosmic cartography of the agencies that make up the indigenous worlds.

When Kopenawa describes what he understands by ecology, he begins to list a set of beings and elements that coexist in relation, starting with the Yanomami people themselves – *"In the forest, we human beings are the 'ecology.' But it is equally the xapiri, the game, the trees, the rivers…"* (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013, p. 393). It is indeed interesting that in describing ecology by saying that it is made of humans – and as much as them, the spiritual and non-human beings of the forest – Kopenawa shows how his concept of ecology is not distinct from a sociology. To describe the Yanomami community is to describe also the non-human beings with whom it coexists in co-dependency. Every human society is also an ecosystem of non-human life forms, no matter how invisibilised they may be. Bringing these agencies within the reach of our sight, hearing and touch is not separate from what they can sensorially cause us, be it delight or astonishment. As long as this happens within a community that collectively welcomes this experience of being terrestrial and composing together with the Earth, this recomposition will be corporeal, collective and planetary, taking place on the three levels I have tried to consider here.

5.6. Moving towards a change of cosmology

In this chapter, I followed an ascending movement considering the previous chapter. We moved from the rudimentary processes of modernisation of cocoa agriculture on a local scale towards the entropic derailment of the modernised world. I sought to show how the world

produced by modernisation became unbearable mentally, socially and environmentally. The increasingly technical modification of all dimensions of our existence brought us to a world where the number of people suffering from mental illness is escalating. According to the census of 2021, 1 in 6 people in London suffer from depression,[71] and this number was also related to people struggling with the cost of living in this city. In Brazil, the number of self-reported cases of depression is much higher in the northeast region, which is also poorer and blacker (Brito et al., 2022). Socially, I sought to demonstrate that this modern world also implemented its technologies of killing, for example, by the use of drones, missiles and bombs with a capacity for destruction never witnessed before in human history. The spread of military technologies over the planet also fed internal conflicts in different countries. As I have argued throughout this thesis, black people are the most affected by these conflicts (see topic 1.3 in the introduction). This geographical distribution of violence configures what Mbembe called *necropolitics* (Mbembe, 2019). Black people and other people of colour in global south countries are also the most affected by the consequences of the devastation of nature caused by capitalist modernisation and industrialisation. The latter work of Bruno Latour (2017; 2018) is a long battle against this horizon of insatiable modernisation.

This chapter worked as a conjectural analysis of the current world in which we inhabit. In the next chapters, I seek to explore other horizons to guide different ways of inhabiting the planet and this also passes by a change of cosmology in how we understand the planet as well. The concept of viscosity that I seek to develop intends to reimagine this relationship with nature – or the planet, which is nature indeed – in a less normative and more sensible and corporeal way. We are still going to cross a deeper engagement with the concept of lawscape as well, as this thesis moves toward a new conception of the law that is also inseparable from a conception of nature. If the law is spread on the space as lawscape (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015), so the multiple beings of which nature is made can also partake in the lawscaping and the law would be as viscous as nature. Cocoa, especially.

Sticking to cocoa, we move back to the local of southern Bahia, but no longer the same one oriented towards modernisation. Instead, in the companion of the Tupinambá people and the Web of the People, I will explore the slower horizon of *ecologisation.* It is a counter-current in relation to the modern temporality. It may be even a bit agonising to inhabit this slower time of multispecies entanglements. There are no hypercomplex structures here except for nature

[71] More information available here: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/mentalhealth/articles/costoflivinganddepressioninadultsgreatbritain/29septemberto23october2022

and people who decided to come together with *them* – nature is a plural word for a pluriversal world. Also because of this, this path is not the only one possible. And through it, there is no granted paradise neither there is certainty of a perpetual peace. But we have certainties enough to give a chance for this path, at least. If we take seriously the work of thousands of scientists part of the scientific community of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, about the catastrophic times to come, the evidences abound.

PART III

6. Cocoa Knots

I prefer the people who eat off the bare earth
the delirium from which they were born.

Antonin Artaud

6.1. Outlining the lawscape

How does cocoa produce the law? This is a troubling question that challenges many established conceptions in social sciences, legal theory and political philosophy. Firstly, it brings into question the agency of a non-human being producing something part of society, which was explained by modern social theories as a domain ruled exclusively by human will. Secondly, together with the hypothesis that law is not only produced by humans, it also defies the concept of law itself, which is traditionally linked to the State and its norms and institutions ordering society and mediating human relationships. And since the production of law is also an exercise of power, it also implicates that power relations are not only defined exclusively by human agency.

Of course, these questions are too complex and go beyond the limits of a single method and discipline. Specifying it a bit more, I would prefer to ask: what lawscapes emerge from cocoa ecologies? The concept of lawscape was developed by Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos in his book *Spatial Justice* (2014) and refers to how the law is materialised in the space through signs and utterances that determine the positions, distribution and movements of bodies. Since bodies are spatial entities and space is not a void waiting to be filled by them, the concept also speaks of how space also conditions how bodies can move, ordering them in some way. Space here is a dynamic and curved texture of relations between human and non-human bodies. These latter also carry space within them and their interactions are not only conditioned since they are also ordering the arrangements that emerge in space (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 55). The bodies are never isolated parts. Instead, they are always arranged in assemblages, heterogeneous compositions of different material and immaterial elements, matter and signs, bodies and discourses.

I also see the concept of lawscape as an expression of the new sciences of complexity and complex systems. The influence of Niklas Luhmann, one of the main references in system theory, in Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' work is suggestive of this. Although, there is nothing hidden here about this. Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos describes the configuration of space and of law, or better to say, the lawscape, as something that is not made by the intentional and conscious action of human subjects acting on non-human objects, but as a co-emergence of these different qualities of bodies composing their own self-emergent organisation. The concept of autopoiesis plays an important role here, which is a concept derived from cybernetics and system theory. It was used by biologists to explain how living organisms self (*auto*) create or produce (*poiesis*) themselves, producing an internality and differentiating their internal arrangement from the external environment (Maturana & Varela, 1980). The explanation of social systems by Luhmann will follow a similar path, although with its particularities (Luhmann, 2008, p. 41). However, as Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' concept of lawscape is developed through the readings of several other contemporary theories – such as speculative realism, new materialisms and so on –, the lawscape is not just a system and is not so normatively codified in fixed and stable rules that determines how it works. It is quite the opposite. The lawscape speaks of formations that are perpetually changing as their constitutive bodies are moving, withdrawing from assemblages to other assemblages, leaking their previous forms and reconfiguring into new ones. It is unstable, non-linear, non-determinative, and contingent; it is a space that escapes a measure, and despite the norms and its logocentric side being part of this, the latter cannot control the process, as they are also made by this.

Despite this, though, the lawscape has a conceptual partner, which is the *atmosphere*. The latter refers to the crystallisation of these whirlwind processes and how the forms engendered by them can also get fixity. The atmosphere then cuts from itself certain bodies, signs and affects, suppressing them in favour of others that are engineered in a fixed order that invisibilises its formative process (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 107-109). Airports, shopping malls, and courts are examples the author gives to explain these striated spaces where the movements of the bodies and their possible action are pre-determined, their behaviours and affects are more or less expected, and their conducts are already coded in established points of departure and arrival. His conception of spatial justice is the next step here since it is a rupture with the atmosphere through which the bodies withdraw and reopen the process of lawscaping. The movement here is close to the movement of deterritorialisation and the lines of flight in Deleuze & Guattari – another important reference in Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' work. These concepts also describe a movement in which bodies are assembled in a certain form of

territorialisation that configures their relations, affects, modes of life (in the case of living beings) and their semiotic expressions (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

The concept of lawscape came as a reaction by Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos to his realisation that legal theories used to ignore the discussion about space and were getting stuck in the abstract, normative and institutional conceptions of the law; on the other hand, geographers in their turn also did not take the reflection on the law as their theoretical concerns (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2021). But for our commented author, the law can never exist outside of the space where it is realised and the space is never a completely smooth environment, free of conflicts and frictions, where the bodies can move freely according to their intents (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 66). The lawscape is indeed the tautology and inseparability of law and space.

When I found this concept, it opened me up to the possibility of thinking about the law that I could not find in the critical theories that I used to read. Besides the theories, living in a country such as Brazil, I saw the legal institutions and the State more as perpetrators of injustice than protectors of justice. A question raised by Judith Butler in *Frames of War* remained in my mind for years: how can we demand the protection of rights from the hands of their main violators? (Butler, 2009). For most critical theories, take for example the work of Giorgio Agamben (1998) which is very influential in legal theory nowadays or the classical Marxist legal thinker Pashukanis (2002), the law is always handed to conservative forces, always an expression of class hierarchies and a tool of biopolitical forms of control. By mentioning these theories, I do not intend to bring about a critique but a complexification of the problem. What the concept of lawscape allowed me was to liberate the conception of the law from the hands of the State and the monopoly of modern, liberal and Western understandings of the law. Together with this move, it afforded me the question of how could it be possible to reimagine the law from non-Western perspectives. On the one hand, the concept of lawscape is very helpful in indicating the materiality of the law as always realised in a spatial ordering that distributes the bodies unequally, determines borders and spatial limits, and so on. But what intrigued me more was another side of this concept, which is the one referring to how the activity of bodies in space can reshape it and turn it over in such a way that another order can emerge. The bodies are not only spatial entities but also legal ones carrying the law in themselves and producing in the meeting with other bodies the ordering of the assemblages and collectives in which they partake. Of course, there are asymmetries among these bodies but the hierarchies curving the space around centres concentrating more power are not absolute and the bodies can find their lines of flights towards new formations (Philippopoulos-

Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 62). This was what afforded me to reflect critically on the law through the struggles for land and the experiences of people producing new territories by experimenting with multispecies practices such as agroecology, or how indigenous people understand their relationship with non-human agents and coexist with them in their lands.

The post-humanist approach of Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos gave me a path to develop these reflections in the context of the Anthropocene, which is also taken into account by the author. Two aspects of the concept of lawscape are of great importance to developing this discussion in that context: First, by conceptualising the space as populated and made by multiple agencies, it breaks with a distinction between animated agents acting on a void and inanimate stage that receive their actions passively (*Ibid*., p. 45). Second, the lawscape has no outside, no redemption, and no perpetual peace. It is an agonist spacetime changing according to the flow of its bodies. In these two points, the work of Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos meets Bruno Latour in his reflections on how the Anthropocene should change how we understand our connection with planet Earth (Latour, 2017; 2018).

In dialogue with the Gaia Theory of James Lovelock, Latour understands the planet as an active, self-emergent and self-regulating system. It does not mean the Earth is alive and endowed with personhood, but that it is composed of a great number of agents – humans and non-humans, organic and non-organic matter – that receive and react to our activities and co-produce the environments together with us. The planet resists being modernised and fully shaped by human technical manipulations and there is no outside to flee. The path, Latour says, is toward a deep involvement with the Earth and its multiplicities (Latour, 2018, p. 81). For Latour, the Anthropocene is a "new climatic regime", referring to 'regime' as a new political order. Considering that it imposes over the Earth so many requirements and restrictions to tackle the catastrophic consequences of modern, industrial and capitalist development, mainly in global northern countries, I would also add that this new political regime also comes with its laws. The Anthropocene becomes a planetary lawscape, that makes visible a redistribution of responsibilities across the planet and the international human community. It demands a thorough transformation of the modes of inhabiting the planet and even though it also triggers new normative treaties, such as the Paris Agreement, the way it sticks to our everyday life is not so normative. It is viscous, entangling us involuntarily to the transformations of the planet, this hyperobject that can also stick to our bodies through the floods climbing our legs or intruding beneath our doors, drying the air we breathe or blowing away our houses, burning our skin or blocking the roads with fires.

6.2. An ontological maze

The concept of lawscape is ontologically relevant to demonstrate the materiality of the law operating in space and through the bodies, which allows us to move away from abstract and normative conceptions of law that limit it to rational procedures realised in the official spacetimes of legal institutions. The lawscape banalises the law, throwing it in amongst the vulgar and agonistic movement of bodies making the space and ordering themselves spatially. By doing this, it also blurs the different normativities – and there are normativities, but it does not mean that we should let it guide our thinking – in space, either legal, social, moral, religious, geographical and so on. The modern legal theory, positivism mainly, sought to give to law its proper and pure substance by differentiating it from these other forms of rules and norms operating in society (for example, Kelsen, 1934). Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos breaks with an official centre of emanation of the law. Hence, the law is not only produced in the courts or legislative assemblies. The law is produced in each moment of everyday life through the way bodies negotiate, dispute or impose their places in space before each other. For those bodies who experience the social asymmetries imposing their places so unfairly, these asymmetries never go unnoticed. The institutional, normative and logocentric manifestations of the law are formalisations of these diffused processes of lawscaping, but not as a Marxist super-structure as they are not only formed by the consolidation of class hierarchies. For those bodies that experience in their everyday lives these asymmetries and hierarchies, what can they expect from the law, or better to say, the lawscape? The latter never comes alone. It also brings its spatial justice, through which bodies irrupt the atmosphere enveloping them and reorienting the process of lawscaping toward other horizons. The lawscape is this eternal ocean of waves overlapping one another endlessly in new maelstroms, as the world itself is for Nietzsche in the last aphorism of his last and posthumous book, *The Will to Power*.[72]

[72] *"And do you know what "the world" is to me? Shall I show it to you in my mirror? This world: a monster of energy, without beginning, without end; a firm, iron magnitude of force that does not grow bigger or smaller, that does not expend itself but only transforms itself; as a whole, of unalterable size, a household without expenses or losses, but likewise without increase or income; enclosed by "nothingness" as by a boundary; not something blurry or wasted, not something endlessly extended, but set in a definite space as a definite force, and not a space that might be "empty" here or there, but rather as force throughout, as a play of forces and waves of forces, at the same time one and many, increasing here and at the same time decreasing there; a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing, eternally flooding back, with tremendous years of recurrence, with an ebb and a flood of its forms; out of the simplest forms striving toward the most complex, out of the stillest, most rigid, coldest forms toward the hottest, most turbulent, most self-contradictory, and then again returning home to the simple out of this abundance, out of the play of contradictions back to the joy of concord, still affirming itself in this uniformity of its courses and its years, blessing itself as that which must return eternally, as a becoming that knows no satiety, no disgust, no weariness: this, my Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying, this mystery world of the twofold voluptuous delight, my "beyond good and evil," without goal, unless the joy of the circle is itself a goal; without will, unless a ring feels good will toward itself—do you want a*

It is not a surprise that the word “disorientation” appears so many times in the book *Spatial Justice*, and for the author, this is also a proper feature of space itself (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 187). I remember an experience I had in the east of England when I went with some friends on a hike going from the small and old city of Rye towards Camber Sands beach and from there to the peculiar house of the already diseased English filmmaker Derek Jarman, the famous Prospect Cottage. The house is in the region of the only desert in England, the Dungeness. Part of our walk was on an area covered by shingles. It was so exhausting to walk there and as much as we walked it seemed like our destination got more distant. This lawscape did not allow us to move faster and by letting us in a completely open space, it made us much more disoriented. It reminded me of Borges’ short story *The Two Kings and the Two Labyrinths*, where a dispute between two princes for the crown was resolved through a challenge. They would need to create a labyrinth for each other, the most difficult possible. Who was able to get out alive, would be the new king. Summarising it, one of the princes managed to escape the maze created by his brother but instead of creating another maze even more difficult to escape, he took his brother to a desert tied in a camel. After three days of riding randomly, they abandoned the prince to his own luck. In Borges’ unique narration, there were *“no stairways to climb, nor door to force, nor wearying galleries to wander through, nor walls to impede thy passage"* (Borges, 1999). In that desert, the prince died of hunger and thirst.

This is more or less how I feel that I am navigating the lawscape sometimes, with its everlasting twists reshaping its forms without reaching a way of positing and confronting the material structures of injustice in the context where I situate my research. That is true. There is no redemption, no outside, no final solution, no glimpse of a light indicating the way out of the maze, not even mirages of an oasis where we could rest. Only the perpetual movement of unbridled forces making the space and its immanent laws. Therefore, if this is ontologically true and this dizzying play of uncontrollable forces is what we need to deal with anyway, I need a place to land first. My body needs to be prepared before jumping into this sea. I have no idea about how it may be the experiences of refugees and immigrants trying to cross the sea and being dragged by its waves, but this wondering may be enough to know that it is agonising to be thrown into the ocean. Maybe my ancestors felt something similar when travelling across forests to find a place to settle. In the middle of the forest, the first thing you do is a small

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name for this world? A solution for all its riddles? A light for you, too, you best-concealed, strongest, most intrepid, most midnightly men?— This world is the will to power—and nothing besides! And you yourselves are also this will to power—and nothing besides.” (Nietzsche, 1968, pp. 549-550).

wooden tent, Deleuze and Guattari would say, as it is the first step to demark a territory, a point of reference to orient yourself in the middle of chaos and turn it into cosmos, a little world for you to *"reorganising functions and regrouping forces"* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 322). It is as the whistle in the middle of darkness to establish some rhythm, some refrain, that creates some reference. Though for these authors there is no completely formed *cosmos* at all, but only processual formations of *chaosmos* (*Ibid.,* p. 313). The formed territorialisations always keep some blurred margins and are always threatened by the lines of flights crossing them from within. Here, I also need to find some improvised embarkation to cross this oceanic and disorienting lawscape.

In my master's degree, researching in law and literature, I found in the classic Brazilian novel *Grande Sertão: veredas*,[73] written by João Guimarães Rosa, the character of Riobaldo, a young man who found himself thrown in the middle of nomadic bandits' bands travelling aimlessly in the immense geographic space of Brazilian backlands. Riobaldo needed to go through conflicts with bandits, journeys in dangerous areas, passionate loves without any certainty about the future, with no moral basis to judge what his band needed to do for their survival. Thrown into this antagonistic reality, he needed to negotiate with unknown forces which led him to make his diabolic pact and find his will to power – to remember Nietzsche again – over his existence. Any control, of course, is an illusion. The world around him did not stop being a chaotic conflagration of forces conducting history away from human-designed plans, but in the middle of this madness, he managed to build something for himself. He needed to compose with forces beyond him, invisible forces, to open within the actual space of his existence the gap through which another reality came into being.

That there is no outside of the lawscape and its planetary form, the Anthropocene, either in the voices of Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos or Latour, would it also mean that there is no outside of the global capitalism that produced the environmental disaster of the Anthropocene and the increasingly suffocating architectures and technologies of social control that are used as examples for the concepts of lawscape and atmosphere? I understand that the concept of lawscape is not restricted to a certain economic and political configuration of society, but the concept is developed within the limits of capitalist spaces and experiences, which are, of course, the enveloping atmosphere involving most of the planet nowadays, the ecumenical organisation of Capital, as Deleuze and Guattari say (1987, p. 454). The parallel concept of spatial justice seems to operate in reorientations of the lawscape but within the margins that do

[73] An English translation was published with the title *The Devil to Pay in the Backlands* (1963).

not disturb these configurations and neither does it point toward other possible configurations. Important to say that the other side of capitalism does not need to be communism or any other singular, unique, monolithic alternative. But which other possible realities do these concepts allow us to imagine when they dive us into the depths of their perpetual agonistic waters of immanence? It seems as though the lawscape is complicit to what Mark Fisher called "capitalist realism", in which to be a realist is to play with the rules and possibilities given to us and there is no alternative beyond them. Capitalist realism is about how we became incapable of imagining a world radically different from our capitalist world (Fisher, 2009). Its leitmotiv is the famous phrase attributed to Frederic Jameson: *"It is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism".* What could help us get our heads out of these turbid and shaken waters to see how the world could be otherwise?

There are lawscapes outside the urban spaces of capitalist cities, but the parks, plantations, crops or forest reserves are all regulated within the limits of capitalist interests. All are conditioned to public (State) or private regimes of property and they exist either as material resources to feed capitalist needs (mines and plantations, mainly) or where they do not bother the interests of capitalism. The cocoa crops covering the huge region of southern Bahia, for example, are a geographical transformation oriented by capitalist extraction and the cocoa produced there was always oriented to exportation, as I showed in Chapter 4. And if on the one hand, there is no outside of capitalism, capitalism in turn always needs an outer space to colonise and expand its limits, as Harvey argued (2005). Tsing also shows in her ethnography of logging and mining extraction in Indonesia how capitalism operates creating an outer space where it uses indiscriminate force to implement its forms of extraction (Tsing, 2005), where violence does not constitute a crime and an ethical violation (Silva, 2007).

As I said before in this chapter, the concept of lawscape and also its counterpart, spatial justice, give me a path to explore a conception of law-making not reduced to the modern law of the couple liberal State-capitalism. Mainly because of this side of the lawscape in which the bodies as spatial entities are also making the law as they make new spatial assemblages emerge. However, to do so, I need to stretch the limits of these concepts as they are presented by Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos. Here I am seeking a form of law and justice that can help us to confront the operations of global capitalism and point towards forms of (co)existence and collective formations able to produce justice for black and indigenous people in global south territories. A form of speaking of the law that affirms black and indigenous ways of being in the world. And I am not referring just to skin colour or ethnicity but to a thoroughly other way of reordering the modes of existence on the land and the relationship with its other multispecies

partners. These modes of being and their way of understanding their relationship and attachment to the territories where they take place should also be named and described through the categories and languages of these people. I do not make the case for humanism nor a moralistic demand for justice before the multitude of victims. Instead, this movement is as ontologically propelled as spatial justice. It is an ontological need to persist in existence, to keep alive our being, to refuse to disappear. My research started from a context where we no longer can speak indigenous languages and, besides this, I am also writing it in English, this imperial language that imposes another structure of reasoning and expression. I did not arrive here to forget all my path until here. I already lost the connection to my ancestors, to my past. I do not want to lose the connection to the future if our lands, forests, rivers and non-capitalist forms of life disappear.

I could use the concept of lawscape, Anthropocene, meshwork, among others created by European scholars as Silva uses quantum physics to dismantle the pillars of modern thought that deem indigenous forms of knowledge as artefacts from the past and does not make sense in the modern grammar (Silva, 2020, p. 44). Decomposing the pillars of modern logic (separability, determinacy and linearity) that also sustain legal normative reasoning and deem indigenous rationality and demands for justice incomprehensible, Silva exposes the link connecting what happened in early periods of European colonisation and what is ongoing in current capitalist accumulation. She makes it possible to show how human labour (black labour) and non-human labour (indigenous lands invaded by white settlers) were and are materialised in the accumulation of wealth by global capitalism. By decolonisation, she understands the return of this wealth to the people and lands that produced it (Ibid., p. 40). It is, indeed, an unpayable debt. In this way, she makes possible the indigenous and black claims for justice trespassing the colonial history.

If the concepts mobilised here have any ontological consistency that serves as a map of how materiality behaves to configure the worlds where we live, so I can use the map to navigate these worlds groping their structures until finding where they crack and open a breach towards another image of existence no longer ruled by the eternal return of the law. As one of an indigenous inhabitant of Pindorama – an indigenous way of naming the territory where Brazil was instituted as a nation-state – walking through the forest in a cosmic dance with its multiple forms of life without having to think about, at least for a moment, that her existence was ruled by laws and normativities, the world presenting itself as an unmeasured flow of life. This was not a paradise and they had to deal with challenges and wars as well, but there was indeed a

moment of history where life could unfold "*sem fé nem rei nem lei"* (without faith nor king nor law).[74]

6.3. Cocoa lawscapes

After this conceptual digression, let us move forward in the outlining of cocoa lawscapes. Some clarifications are needed to develop the question of which lawscapes emerge from cocoa ecologies. When asking about the agency of cocoa, I do not want to reproduce the duality of subjects and objects that is foundational to the modern Western tradition and sustain other dualities such as society and nature, human sciences and natural sciences, among others (Latour, 1993; Viveiros de Castro, 2002). To invert the positions between subjects and objects and treat cocoa as a subject or agent able to create law would be just a way of anthropomorphising it, attributing to cocoa human forms that I want to avoid here. Or better to say, western human forms, since human is not a universal and stable concept with the same meaning for all different humans (McKittrick & Wynter, 2015). Wynter argues how the Western conception of what it means to be human was part of a colonial mentality that placed racialised people in a position below this ideal (*Ibidem*).

To speak of the co-emergence of multiple agents instead of human production of lands and territories can avoid the *hylomorphism* around the concept of production as a process in which the subject acts upon natural resources and turns them into products. Tim Ingold brings the concept of *hylomorphism* from Aristotle and uses it to critique the usual understanding of creation as a process in which an agent gives an intended form (*morphé*) to a passive matter (*hyle*) (Ingold, 2017). This critique of *hylomorphism* is important in this discussion because the law is not conceived here as an ideal order coming from above, applied by human subjects and shaping society accordingly to an idealised model; it is not confused with institutional norms created to mediate conflicts and guide political and legal decisions – which are part of the law,

[74] In 1573, a Portuguese missionary called Pero de Magalhães Gândavo wrote a *Treatise of the Land of Brazil* (Tratado da Terra do Brasil), where he said that indigenous people lack in their language the phonemes of the letters F, R and L as it is pronounced in Portuguese, and with this, they could not say *fé* (faith), *rei* (king) and *lei* (law). Viveiros de Castro investigated many of these letters and texts written by European fathers and missionaries where they expressed their confusion about how indigenous people lived and how these people received the gospel message about the Christian God and his moral rules (Viveiros de Castro, 2011a). The fathers were consternated and bewildered. Also, in one of his last books, the American anthropologist David Graeber together with the Archaeologist David Wengrow explored how different forms of social organisations not configured by centralised power and political hierarchy existed several times in the past (Graeber & Wengrow, 2021). Yet, about the political organisation of indigenous peoples in Brazil, the texts of French Anthropologist Pierre Clastres are remarkable in showing how these indigenous societies did not lack a State. Instead, they worked in a way that avoided the separation of power from the socius and the political centralisation (Clastres, 1989; 2010).

but not its totality (is there a totality?). I want to understand the law here as a spatial assemblage emerging from the way bodies compose the space creating a lawscape (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015).

On the other hand, cocoa is neither an object nor merely a passive thing. It is a living being in interaction with other beings in a certain ecology. It is actively modifying soil conditions and the lives of insects, birds and other animals; it expresses its own condition through its colours, textures and fruits, which are signs that determine how birds, animals and cocoa workers interact with them (Kohn, 2013); it also affects and it is affected by its connections with other trees and smaller plants. It needs taller trees to offer shadows, worms and snakes to soften the soil, and rivers or some water stream to refresh and humidify the land. Cocoa does not like arid regions. The remaining area of the Atlantic Forest in southern Bahia is conserved partly because of these features of cocoa, which allowed it to be a less aggressive form of agriculture production. However, though it is less aggressive ecologically than other forms of monoculture, historically it shaped an economic and political system very aggressive to human beings, mainly black people working in the crops or indigenous people removed from their lands because of the expansion of cocoa agriculture (Alarcón, 2019; Mahony, 1996). Despite these problems, cocoa also shaped other stories when it played together with these people other games of multispecies collaboration, agroforestry, *retomada* (retaking) of indigenous lands and so on. Cocoa is an active agent co-producing its landscapes. If there are no humans there, these landscapes will change according to the interactions of different species among them, as multispecies ethnographies have shown (Tsing et al., 2021). The space is shaped through the interaction of these different species and not only by cocoa. Thus, instead of just reversing the positions between subjects and objects, taking cocoa as a subject or centralising the agency around it, I want to explore how a viscous *lawscape* emerges in the middle of this ecology and how it is shaped not by a central agent but by multiple agents composing the space together (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015).

Therefore, my focus of investigation is centred neither on cocoa nor on the people working with cocoa, but on the viscous knots that stick those bodies together in the same meshwork. Borrowing the concepts of knots and meshwork from the works of Tim Ingold (2011; 2015), I want to speak of alive assemblages composed by lines holding them together; lines that are not fixed but always in movement. Other anthropologists inspiring the theoretical approach I am employing here are Bruno Latour and Anna Tsing and their methods to describe assemblages between human and non-human bodies, which are the actor-network theory (Latour, 2005) and multispecies ethnography (Tsing, 2015). These authors are usually in

discussion among themselves and are part of the same theoretical trend in contemporary anthropology dedicated to studying assemblages blurring the division between nature and society. This has also been called environmental humanities.

Ingold develops his concepts of lines and meshwork in tension with Latour's concept of network. For him, the image of a network linking different points in the same arrangement is not suitable for thinking of a world in movement, where beings are always changing (Ingold, 2011). He conceives of things as entities open to their exteriority. They are not closed in on themselves but are knots entangling lines coming from the interaction with their environment. They leak their own surfaces and they are alive materials moving, growing and circulating through these lines, which are not connections but flows of life constantly making and transforming itself (Ingold, 2017).

Tsing's book on mushrooms (2015) gave me helpful tools to think of cocoa and its connection with workers, global markets and landscapes. Tsing describes different assemblages around mushrooms. She follows them and investigates the ways of living of mushroom foragers, the supply chains entangling different countries through mushroom markets, the composition of more-than-human landscapes through symbiotic connections with other trees, and the different forms of knowledge on mushroom ecologies, either scientific or popular knowledge. The book's subtitle is *"On the possibility of life in the ruins of capitalism"* and it investigates how mushroom foragers live without certainty about the future – mainly because of their precarious work conditions that are not assured by any contract. She discusses alternative temporalities that displace the horizons of stability promised by modernisation. Exploring how the mushrooms make life flourish in inhospitable areas through symbiotic exchanges with other plants, she thinks of collaborative ways of survival before the degradation of life in capitalism.

In a similar direction, I want to show how the ecological connections between cocoa crops, indigenous communities, cocoa workers and the native Atlantic rainforest sustain multispecies collectives. My focus is on these connections around cocoa, which is a sticky knot glueing these parts. The context where I approach this problem is around the cocoa crops in the northeast of Brazil; or more specifically, the southern region of the state of Bahia, where I grew up in a family of cocoa workers. In this region, cocoa is a hub entangling different relationships and conflicts on different scales. I want to show how these heterogeneous connections stick together in more-than-human composts making their viscous laws.

6.4. Viscosity

Ingold uses as an example of meshwork the spider whose webs are not merely connecting points but are made of a material expelled from the spider's body and arranged according to its movements. Thus, the web extends its body through the environment (*Ibid*). When a meshwork changes, the bodies that were part of it carry with them the memory of their last compositions, as Ingold says here:

> Comparing the chain and the knot, I have already noted that the chain has no memory. When you release the tension in a chain and let it fall to the ground, it comes to rest in a disordered heap. But if you untie a knotted rope, however much you try to straighten it, the rope will retain kinks and bends and will want, given the chance, to curl up into similar conformations as before. The memory is suffused into the very material of the rope, in the torsions and flexions of its constituent fibres. So it is, too, with timbers that have been joined. They may be pulled apart, and used in other structures, but will nevertheless always retain a memory of their former association. When we say that, in separating, something has to give from the inside, we mean that it is necessary to forget. An articulated structure, since it remembers nothing, has nothing to forget. But the knot remembers everything and has everything to forget. Untying the knot, therefore, is not a disarticulation. It does not break things into pieces. It is rather a casting off, whence lines that once were bound together go their different ways. Thus, it is with siblings in the family: having grown up together, their leaving home is not a disassembly but a dispersal, a shaking out of those lines of interstitial differentiation otherwise known as relations of kinship. And in the knot of the navel, every one of us retains a memory of that originary moment when we first came into the world, only to be cast off with a cut (Ingold, 2015, pp. 25-26).

To approach cocoa, I want to add to the concept of meshwork the stickiness of viscosity, considering how cocoa's meshworks mark the bodies that it sticks together. Cocoa is something that occupies an important and affective place in my memory and history. I know its texture, bitter flavour, weight, colours, smell. I know its cycles, people, work, pleasures and pains. Cocoa's yellowish and brownish colours and its strong smell impregnate all the space where cocoa is put to drain, to dry, to rest. Many stories gather around cocoa and its viscosity sticks many bodies together. Stories of colonels' power and their debauchery, ostentation of luxury and violence against workers; stories of conflicts around lands and ethnic conflicts with indigenous peoples; but also stories of people resisting the local structures of power and recreating solidary ways of living. A movie that caught my attention to these connections around cocoa was one titled *Of Gods and the Undead.*[75] The movie made me think of cocoa as a seductive fruit that attracts a global delirium around it. This movie brought me the awareness that London was also one of the main destinations of the wealth produced in my state, Bahia. The movie shows a mythological and political conflagration of conflicts around cocoa farmers

[75] The movie was released in 1970 and produced by Ruy Guerra, a filmmaker born in Mozambique and living in Brazil.

in southern Bahia with bodies looking like in the threshold of death and life while big farmers flaunt their richness.

Cocoa can smear and smell your skin for days with its yellowish colour. Its stains on clothes sometimes cannot be washed away. The hands of cocoa workers get thick and calloused. Cocoa also marks bodies with social prejudices referring to where they come from, how they speak, and how they behave. And when those bodies move away, they bring together these marks that codify them socially in some way. I know the reaction of some people, mainly white southern and south-eastern Brazilians, when they seem unable to reconcile the fact that someone could simultaneously hold an academic or intellectual achievement, such as a PhD in London, and come from a background associated with manual labour, such as being a son of cocoa workers in northeast Brazil. And the only way many of them dealt with this was through paternalism, which presupposes a hierarchical gaze and inferiorisation.

When those bodies withdraw from cocoa's meshworks, the lines that hold them to cocoa do not untie the knots that link them to their native lands. They will bring memories of that sun gleaming on the crest of the water swaying when they float in the river looking at the sky and the trees around. Their dogs and cats remember them immediately each time they return to visit their families. When living abroad, people look at them and seem to see their native landscapes burned on their skins. Sometimes they suffer from this because people confuse them with a cocoa tree and reduce them to those landscapes placed outside of what would be properly the civilisation. Their bodies are perceived through signifiers that refer to their native land. They are exoticised, underestimated, and sometimes even feared, and those who do it still think they could please them as chocolate, giving to them that passive sweetness which is expected from their lands. But cocoa trees are so crusty and tricky. People love their stories of that tropical world, but they are not expected to make theories and create concepts to take part in a global conversation. They can only speak of and through their particularity. However, if cocoa changes when it moves abroad, why should they remain stuck to their places of origin? Yet, even in their changes, those viscous knots will always stick them to a broader history involving a geographical location. Their history will always be a geohistory, a viscous one that knots their singular trajectory involving the paths of many other people on different continents.

Viscosity here seems like what Morton describes in his commentary on an autobiographical poem of Wordsworth where he narrates an episode of his youth, when the poet stole a boat: *"As he rows away from a mountain, it seems for a while to loom ever larger in his field of vision, as if it were pursuing him, due to a strange parallax effect in which more of a suitably massive object is revealed as one goes farther away from it"* (Morton, 2013, p.

51). Morton is referring to the viscosity of the planet and how it makes itself inescapable to us. But since this planet is also enmeshed with the diversity of the global and their cultural meetings, it could be interesting to move it out of context a little bit, as the global capital also makes up our lives. So, what Morton describes also happens when we move away from our native lands and suddenly the places where we came from can gain much more dimension in our lives. Either because of the sharp contrasts of weather, culture, sociability, and food that make us miss home and seek in a foreign country that which we love in our countries but without ever finding it in the same way; or because of the different forms of racism, prejudices and exoticism that makes of our geographical origins a mark that codifies our places in the foreign society. For this reason, cocoa's viscous aspect can be a way to speak of the asymmetries involving cocoa landscapes and the lines glueing it to global meshworks and its hierarchies of places.

Arun Saldanha uses the concept of viscosity to describe how bodies stick together to particular spaces and times. For him, viscosity has to do with how an aggregate of bodies holds together and how they collectively shape this aggregate in which they partake (Saldanha, 2007). Besides this, he explains that viscosity is also related to the capacity of this aggregate to affect and be affected by external bodies (*Ibidem*). In his ethnographic work, Saldanha observes how the viscosity of race sticks white bodies together in Goa trance parties in India. In the cocoa landscapes, on the one hand, this kind of viscosity sticks to racialised bodies as targets of violence, as it happens to indigenous people who have been historically suffering violence from cocoa farmers. On the other hand, when those bodies rise in a rebel and bold attitude to appropriate their own lives through the taking of lands, they compose aggregates able to bring back the vitality of lands and forests, as I will discuss further in the next chapter. In the state of Bahia, cocoa landscapes are sites of the struggles of black and indigenous people. Around cocoa crops, they compose aggregates of bodies able to reshape these violent landscapes into a *lawscape* that turns their territories into a more liveable configuration of space-time. Viscosity is also about how non-human bodies take part in this composition, as Saldanha says here:

> The concepts of viscosity and machinic assemblage reveal the profoundly geographic imagination that is required to appreciate the materiality of race. From the perspective of viscosity, as Deleuze noted in his reading of Spinoza, a "body" such as race can be mapped with some precision. A machinic geography of race maps the physical connections that constitute racial differences, and considers language, attitude, feeling, and media representations only in their properly spatial functioning. Although my ethnography applied the term "viscosity" only to human bodies, it should be clear that humans only become viscous through nonhuman things and forces in their midst. When many bodies become viscous, they together acquire what

> Deleuze called a kinetic and dynamic dimension, that is, an aggregate's way of holding together, and its capacity to affect and be affected (Saldanha, 2007, p. 191).

In this quote, viscosity comes close to the concept of the atmosphere in Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos' work, where Saldanha is also cited (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 120), as both authors designate a form of sensorial and affective connection that holds human and non-human bodies together through and against each other in a spatial configuration that does not depend on conscious apprehension (*Ibid.,* p. 124). For both authors, the references of Spinoza and Deleuze, and their concepts of affect and assemblage, play an important role in the construction of these concepts, viscosity and atmosphere. However, the latter cuts off much more drastically the surrounding environment, producing an engineered interiority that moves away the conflicts and even the desire for disruptive change (*Ibid.,* p. 139). This internal differentiation excludes some affects and selects other ones in the shaping of a controlled atmosphere with pre-determined directions and predictable movements. Again, Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos draws on Luhmann's system theory to conceive of this sharp distinction between interiority and exteriority, to the point that the outside is completely dissimulated (*Ibid.*, p. 142).

The concept of viscosity that I develop here does not designate the same things and does not have the same concerns as the concept of atmosphere. I am not speaking of an enveloping, engineered and controlled ordering of the bodies and their affective arrangements. There is no enclosed interiority formed by a distinctive rupture with the outside. Inversely, the viscosity of cocoa forms a meshwork woven by dispersive and chaotic lines made by the different trajectories of the bodies involved. When they move away to other contexts, their marks and memories come together, not only subjectively since these contexts mark them socially as well. However, these marks do not only produce segregation and exclusion. They also produce confluence among these bodies and the lines traced by their diverse trajectories can converge in new collective compositions. In a more empirical approach, in the experience of the Web of the People and the Terra Vista settlement in southern Bahia, for example, people with diverse histories come together in a collaborative practice among themselves and with their co-emergent territory. The rivers crossing the settlement, the cocoa crops, the diverse birds singing around, other species of native trees and other forms of plantations cultivated by them, all of these forms of life have their existence viscously woven. Moreover, this local assemblage is also trespassed by the material and immaterial conditions imposed by the economic, legal and political structures of capitalist society and a global trade market, as it is also enmeshed in the webs of the planet and its mutations. The trajectories of these people and these other

forms of life are always somehow entangled in the histories of other people, territories and geographies that cannot even know about their existences. Following this direction, I come close to Glissant's relation forming a chaotic and inapprehensible whole, the *"Chaos-Monde"* (Glissant, 2005).

Could viscosity be a way of extending Glissant's concept of relation to non-human beings that also make up the assemblages in which we live? Glissant was concerned with the meeting between diverse cultures in a global space marked by colonial modernisation and diaspora (Glissant, 1997). Viscosity here could be a way of imagining the interaction between diverse natures-cultures instead. The meetings between people from diverse origins do not happen without ignoring the geographies and landscapes, either technical or natural, that these people carry in their bodies. The fact that a human body is judged as modern or non-modern, civilised or savage, from a developed or underdeveloped society, or in the worst case as properly human or less than human, is a problem that is at the same time geographical, technical and anthropological. Saldanha identifies it in his ethnography when he observed that being white was not enough to stick together into the white bubbles in Goa trance parties. To get into this, the body of the new-comers needed to seem "cool", which in that case would mean possessing an appropriate look, having money to stay in India for months, being experienced in travelling, being closer to other "cool people", among other markers that indicated that the person had access to a world that usually only white and upper-class people could have access to (Saldanha, 2015). Race and class here are inseparable and the possession of merchandise (clothes, accessories, money and other gadgets) also works as a social marker. This is just an example among many other possible. What I want to highlight is that when one enters a social interaction, the imaginary through which a body is apprehended involves many elements and can bring together presuppositions and stereotypes that shape how minds apprehend bodies.

To conceive of viscosity as an involuntary relation with all other terrestrial dwellers in their multiple forms of inhabiting the Earth can also be a perspective that unmakes this differentiation of bodies. I do not think it going toward a harmonic, happy, humanistic sense of otherness, but to unmake the world of only one world of capitalist monocultures – either mental or natural – is a path toward a more pluriversal comprehension of our terrestrial staying.[76] It will not be possible, though, without a material rupture with these monocultures, and, moving towards another direction, a new diversification of socioecological practices able to repair the exhaustion inflicted on the planet

[76] About this, see for example the works of John Law (2011) and De La Cadena & Blaser (2018).

Although Glissant was focused on cultural issues, it is curious that to explain cultural relations he referred many times to physics and the sciences of chaos (Glissant, 1997; 2005). In a text prepared for a conference, he referred more specifically to the notion of an erratic determinist system (Glissant, 2005, pp. 100-101). He finds in this a form of describing certain dynamics of objects and landscapes marked by unpredictability and the impossibility of measuring with certainty, prediction and control these physical and natural entities. He mentions for example the difficulty of measuring the cost of Brittany because of the sea activity. Glissant finds in this an exemplary image that he uses to describe the meetings and hybridisations of cultures. He blurs the epistemological thresholds between nature and culture. This relation with a chaotic and unpredictable reality described by him is becoming even more important nowadays as we need to learn how to interact with a planet that now can undergo drastic mutations at whatever time. These sudden shifts in the planetary dynamics, which can change in the lifetime of a human generation what would normally take thousands of years to happen, were called by Clark and Szerszynski as *planetary multiplicities,* which also demand a redistribution and new dynamics of the *earthly multitudes* populating the planet (Clark & Szerszynski, 2021).

If the Earth is now so unpredictable even for scientists, imagine us who can only have the science of its smells, textures and colours, if and when we are lucky. Only through the body can we know the Earth with intimacy, either its splendour or terror, the soft breeze messing our hair or its oceans drowning us.

6.5. Local webs, global trades, planetary meshworks

Cocoa is also a knot that intertwines a wide network of global production that is linked to local configurations of power and social hierarchies. It is also an axis of ethnical conflicts, as exemplified by the case of indigenous peoples such as the Tupinambá or Pataxó in southern Bahia.[77] In the recent decades, these peoples have been struggling to take their ancestral lands back. In this conflict, different perspectives on lands and agriculture also come up and it can be a way through which we can explore how indigenous agriculture brings practices more attentive to how we share the land with other species. These practices have also been inspiring new forms of struggles for land, such as the network called *Teia dos Povos* (The Web of the

[77] Although I could not develop further the case of the Pataxó people, they lived a similar history of violence moved by cocoa workers against them, which is still going on, unfortunately. However, their experience in retaking their ancestor lands back and their practice with agroforestry are also very inspirational. About this, see the work of Thiago Mota Cardoso (2018).

Peoples) which connects the MST – Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (Landless Workers' Movement) to indigenous people and maroon communities. Cocoa agriculture is a common activity among these groups in southern Bahia and using the traditional cultivation practice called *cabruca,* in which cocoa is cultivated under the shadow of other trees, they manage to conserve part of the native forest and recover deforested lands and their biodiversity. I am interested in how through cocoa work they compose non-capitalist territories, more horizontal forms of collaboration and find ways of coexisting with other species in such a way that assert their freedom and collective autonomy. Their practices are an experience of spatial justice answering not only the dispossession produced by colonial history but also anticipating the political horizon put by the Anthropocene.

The local action of these groups is entangled in a planetary condition. The consequences of climate change have already been affecting the region of southern Bahia. For instance, this region was heavily affected by strong floods at the end of 2021 and 2022, which left dozens of thousands of people homeless and many families lost all they had.[78] The forests are important agents to avoid events like this, since they prevent soil erosion, absolve water in their roots and regulate the cycles of rivers. However, the causes of climate change are not local but systemic. The deforestation of the Amazon rainforest, the melting of north pole glaciers, the rising of sea levels and the collapse of the Gulf Stream, all of these events span across large-scale geographies and are not even delimited by national borders. Despite this, it is only locally that we can act to rebuild in the ruins caused by capitalism the conditions for tackling the drastic consequences that these climatic mutations will bring. The conservation and recovery of forests through *cabruca* planting system make the agroecological practices with cocoa a planetary knot. According to Chakrabarty, the Anthropocene contextualises social processes within geological timescales that exceed human measures and it calls *"for thinking on very large and small scales at once"* (Chakrabarty, 2021, p. 50).

Cocoa farmers, in turn, are mainly moved by how the global trade of cocoa behaves and the indigenous communities or landless workers' settlements working with cocoa are also subjected to the conditions imposed by capitalist markets. The local ecology of cocoa production is linked to global supply chains. Important companies involved in the exportation of cocoa in Brazil and settled around the cities of Ilhéus and Itabuna are international companies such as Olam International, which had its headquarter based in London until 1996;

[78] There were several reports about this in Brazilian and international newspapers. One example can be found here: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/12/27/death-tool-in-northeast-brazil-flooding-rises

Barry Calleabout from Switzerland; and the American company Cargill. The industries located around these cities are also important producers of derived products made of cocoa (cocoa butter, cocoa powder, among others) and they also receive raw cocoa from West African countries to be processed there.[79] This brings attention to the globality in which this context is inserted. To ignore the influence of these international agents in the local conflicts would lead me to dismiss an important factor in configuring the landscapes of this region.

These three different scales are connected here: local, global and planetary. There is a difference important to highlight between the global and the planetary, which is made by Chakrabarty (2021, p. 71) who explains how the former concept is made by human relationships whereas the latter goes beyond the human. The planetary scale refers to the physical, environmental and geological composition of the Earth and it decentres the human. The globe is the one of globalisation, which is made by human connections over the global space, but the planetary goes beyond that and it also includes many organic and non-organic matters, living and non-living beings that influence in distinct ways the planetary behaviour. These two dimensions are entangled in each other, but they face a desynchronisation. The globalisation processes happen within the short limits of human time whereas geological transformations of the planet can exceed largely the temporal limits of humanity (*Ibid.*, p. 86). It also puts challenges that exceed human politics and demand new ways of thinking. Our human concerns about democracy, climatic justice, race and gender inequalities, and so on are part of the global politics but they are completely indifferent to the planet as a physical entity. In the words of Chakrabarty:

> But the planetary as such, disclosing vast processes of unhuman dimensions, cannot be grasped by recourse to any ideal form. There is no ideal form for the earth as a planet or of its history or for the history of any other planet. While the planetary mode of thinking asks questions of habitability, and habitability refers to some of the key conditions enabling the existence for various life-forms including *homo sapiens*, there is nothing in the history of the planet that can claim the status of a moral imperative. It is only as humans that we emphasize the last five hundred million years of the planet's life—the last one-eighth of the earth's age—for that is the period when the Cambrian explosion of life-forms occurred, creating conditions without which humans would not have been. From the viewpoint of anaerobic bacteria, however, which lived on the surface of the planet before the great oxygenation of the atmosphere about 2.45 billion years ago, the atmosphere might look like a history of disasters (*Ibid*., p. 86-87)

In relation to our all too human circumstances, it means that our actions will unfold in environments that are no longer static as mere stages where human life acts. The background

[79] See, for example, the news of local newspapers about this: https://g1.globo.com/ba/bahia/noticia/2023/01/09/porto-no-sul-da-ba-recebe-13-mil-toneladas-de-amendoas-de-cacau-da-africa-e-produtores-denunciam-ausencia-do-controle-de-pragas.ghtml

is now an active agent of the play and it will disturb our scripts very often. As scientists have already reported that the planet is already 1.5°C warmer in comparison to the pre-industrial levels,[80] the chances of extreme natural events are now more likely to happen. At this point, the consequences are already inevitable and at the same time we need to act to remediate it ecologically, we will also deal with how these disruptive events will reinforce and aggravate the existent inequalities among humans (Ferdinand, 2019).

The viscous law that I begin to develop below takes place in between these scales described above. The local practices of indigenous people, landless workers' activists and cocoa workers are conditioned by the impositions of global capitalism and entangled with planetary processes. By confronting these global structures, the local struggles need to find new ways of living together in the face of climate change. They are viscously enmeshed in this meshwork together with the non-human forms of life that collaborate with them in the making of new modes of inhabiting the Earth – which are not so new if we remember the indigenous ways of living that were mostly vanished by the brutal colonial violence. Between the local practices of agriculture, global trade and the planet, cocoa is a viscous mediator that sticks these different scales together. The many species composing local ecologies, the human collectives, the global infrastructures that make cocoa travel across national borders, the legal structures of the State regulating them and the climatic and geological transformations of the Earth are all stuck together around cocoa and these assemblages condition, shape and order the collective forms of life involved in this meshwork.

6.6. A viscous law

Throughout this thesis, cocoa has been a viscous mediator of relations and connections on different scales crossing local to planetary entanglements and putting in contrast and dialogue different forms of knowledge. I sought to trace machinic and enunciative assemblages configuring the worlds made around cocoa, which mean assemblages of matter/bodies (machinic) and discourses (enunciations/utterances). The arrangement of these assemblages is far from producing a totality and it would be impossible to give an account of all elements involved in this. As I am also part of this arrangement, it was traced from my embodied and situated perspective. Therefore, it is also a partial perspective stitched together with other theories and discourses articulated here. The different parts composing this arrangement affect the different assemblages in a viscous way, which means that these parts repel or capture each

[80] As informed by the Nature Journal here: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-024-00281-8

other, moving away or sticking together. It also means that the influence between these parts – the planetary climatic mutations, the impositions of cocoa global trade, the local conflicts for land, the multispecies relationships composing local ecologies and so on – are not normative and causally determined. As I have mentioned in Chapter 2, to determine it normatively is a way of giving to it an identifiable and more or less fixed form. Consequently, this would be tantamount to determining the specific positions of each part and their functions in a system with predictable causalities and patterns of behaviour. Methodologically, though, it proceeds otherwise. Instead of producing an organic system of determined relations between bodies with formalised functions, it works more like a *body without organs* populated by multiplicities in movement (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 3). The parts assembled are alive and flowing throughout their proper lines of flights, making other unexpected connections and this processual movement of life unfolding cannot be frozen by theory and determined normatively. What makes these heterogeneous flows of aggregates of bodies with different tendencies of movement converge and coil around a certain gravitational point that holds them together is the viscous law, which here is also cocoa. The viscous law is what sticks together an association of heterogeneous bodies in an involuntary relation and it also brings ethical issues, it triggers a demand for justice that makes it different from a lawscape or a network – the influence of Latour is evident here, mainly his actor-network theory (Latour, 2005).

Another element assembled in this thesis and a core force pulsating underneath this discourse is the indigenous ancestry as well as the lived memory engraved in my body of the place where I came from, the history of my family and how I have arrived here. The viscous law also sticks persistently to the present spectral times informed by indigenous ancestry, and I am not only speaking of my identity. I am speaking of socioecological forms and ways of inhabiting the world which were swept away by colonisation and have also been obliterated by global capitalism in the present. This ancestry though is not a past thing but a source of ancestral futures to be reactualised in new compositions with the planet, opening possibilities to imagine collective ways of (co)existence otherwise. The erasure of this ancestry, instead of having done with this and despite all the efforts to do that, keeps alive the demand for justice before the tragedy caused by slavery and colonisation. This justice should be one able to unmake the assemblages of global capitalism over indigenous lands and to reposition indigenous and black bodies and territories in the global correlation of forces. In other words, this justice needs to unmake the world as we know it and rebuild it through the restoration of the value expropriated from black labour and native lands without which the West would never be what it is today (Silva, 2019, pp. 96-97). However, this demand can only make sense if we break with the

separability that orders modern thought in a linear sequence and which also bases the post-enlightenment political and legal architecture, putting it as the teleological horizon to be followed by all societies, as the ideal pattern of realisation of human reason. Before such a horizon, indigenous forms of life can only be seen as an outdated obstacle troubling the unfolding of Western *Geist*.

To oppose this modernist horizon of development, the viscous law sticks together with the *quilombola* thinker Antônio Bispo dos Santos and his proposal of involvement. For him, modern development is part of Euro-Christian and monotheist humanism that treats humans as creators intending to overcome and master nature instead of being creatures of nature (Bispo dos Santos, 2023, pp. 19-20). The involvement here is cosmological. It is a *confluence* with the cosmos, its forests and multiple species. Through the *confluence*, beings can share their existence with other beings without losing their essence but expanding it in a wider form of existence: *"[...] a river does not stop being a river because it confluences with another river, on the contrary, it becomes itself and other rivers, it becomes stronger. When we confluence, we do not stop being us, we become us and other people – we yield. Confluence is a force that yields, that increases, that expands [...]"* (*Ibid.*, pp. 8-9). For Bispo dos Santos, the city, as the proper geographical locus of development, is a space marked by what he called *cosmophobia*, which is the distancing of humans from nature and the elimination of any other form of non-human life from the environment. The city is also a space of material accumulation as people no longer can trust nature to provide what is needed to live, as there is no common land to share a common life. Cosmophobia is liable for this systematic disconnection that also underpins expropriation and unneeded extraction (*Ibid.*, p. 17). This cosmophobic space is also one of sanitation in which everything that comes from nature is seen as dirty and should be swept away from the human environment, including the other human bodies that refuse to disconnect from nature and are not well seen in the city. Their bodies are signifiers of an exotic and outer landscape.

Ailton Krenak also remembers how the city (*polis*) is the proper space of citizenship and what configures the experience of politics, however, it happens as a gathering of equal parts with convergent experiences (Krenak, 2022, p. 40). Of course, there are differences between the people participating in politics but following Krenak a bit further we see that the differences he is speaking about are much wider. The city, he says, is also the proper space of culture, the realisation of human capabilities and creativity, in opposition to its outer environment where nature is located as an exterior element (*Ibid*, p. 41). Breaking with this separation between nature and culture, he questions the limitation of the concept of politics to think of the collective

practices in the forest where there is a relationship with many other forms of life. To inhabit this space, he proposes the concept of affective alliances, which presupposes affective connections between non-equal worlds and does not reclaim equality as a basic principle. Instead, it implies an intrinsic alterity between each being and a radical inequality that does not mean disadvantage but a plurality of worlds. The experience in this context is one where it is possible to open oneself to other perspectives and pluriverses, and one where the human is not the central subject (*Ibid.,* p. 42). Instead of citizenship (*cidadania*), Krenak speaks of a *forestzenship* (*forestania*) as a way of taking part in this pluriversal composition of worlds.

In one of his novels approaching the history of cocoa farms in southern Bahia, *Terras dos Sem Fins,* which was translated into English with the appellative and questionable title *The Violent Land*, the well-known *baiano* writer Jorge Amado narrated how people living in these contexts had their fate involuntarily stuck to the cocoa world. Even people from other regions that came to work there got involved in such a way that, when they realised, their lives were already deeply entangled and marked by that context. They could not move away letting it behind so easily. To describe this sticky nuisance, Amado used the viscosity of cocoa, as something that was always staining the skin or the clothes, glueing to the shoes' solo, inevitably appearing when it was expected that they were already removed (Amado, 2008).

With the inspiration of these authors mentioned throughout this chapter, and reflecting on my personal memories and experiences, I was led to think of the viscous law as this insistent and even invasive intrusion of other worlds into our worlds. It is different from how Isabelle Stengers speaks of the intrusion of Gaia (Stengers, 2015), although it also includes our ontological entanglement to the planet as I also described above. But the viscosity puts us in relation to other times and spaces that even though we intend to forget they reappear in our realities. The immemorial ancestral times of the genocide of indigenous people in South America, despite the centuries of colonial enterprise to control or erase their presence, resurge as a demand for justice and transformation of our relationships with the other forms of life. The bodies that are marked by their geographical origins, as my body, and our viscous relation to worlds that we will always bring together with us. The unhappy conditions imposed by global capitalism, such as the global trade of cocoa, and how they impose forms of working, inhabiting the land, and dealing with cocoa. What kind of justice could answer these viscous conditions?

6.7. A cosmopoetics of justice

To answer the question above, before moving to my final chapter, I will take inspiration again from Denise Ferreira da Silva. When thinking about how the enslaved bodies of black women figured in a double position as object (merchandise) and subject (person), doubly a Thing and a Human, Silva does not rely on the tools of critical racial theories that would expose how these bodies were prevented from the position of subjects (Silva, 2019; 2022), considering that the model of this position was the one forged by modern philosophers in opposition to the 'affectable bodies' of Africans and Indigenous natives supposedly unable to determine themselves (Silva, 2007). The position of this rational subject is also one of the elements through which the legal and political architecture of Western modern societies is assembled. The one that will enter as a citizen in relation with the State, which will protect their rights. The inclusion of the 'Others of Europe' in this position from which they were excluded is also the imposition of the legal-political-economic configuration of the Western world to these Others.

But instead of following this path, Silva questions the proper framework through which these non-white bodies are apprehended. She looks into the elements that make it possible to deem their forms of being in the world as irrational, inferior, and backward (Silva, 2020). Instead of accepting the given model of subjectivity forged by Western philosophy, she moves toward the level of matter and the flesh. Rather than seeking to liberate the imprisoned and unrecognised subjectivity of the enslaved female body in the scene of subjection, she uses *black feminist poethics* to liberate the matter, the Thing, from the categories that sustain the separation between the thinking subject and the passive world appropriated by him as property and merchandise (Silva, 2019). Mainly the Kantian categories of apprehension of the world that proceed by collecting the chaotic manifold of sensible experience and imprint on this dispersive matter a form. Challenging this, she seeks to liberate matter from the imposed forms and unmake the world as we know it (Silva, 2019; 2020). The relation to the world will be no longer one that posits it as an exterior thing detached from the interiority of the subject. Now we are thrown into a more immersive and implicated entanglement to matter which is also read in its quantic composition. Silva calls this method *raw materialism.* In her words:

> *A black feminist poethics attends to matter in the raw, that is, as that which has been appropriated (extracted, violated) but not fully obliterated by the practices and discourses that describe what happens and what exists as determined by form (as abstraction) or law (efficacy), something akin to Hortense Spillers's flesh. In the raw, The Thing, as a referent of undeterminacy (∞ − ∞) or materia prima, hails blackness's capacity to release the imagination from the grips of the subject and its*

> *forms, which is but a first gesture in regard to a mode of thinking that contemplates virtuality and actuality all and at once* (Silva, 2018).

So, considering this, what if instead of elaborating on a form of justice that would turn around the recognition of other forms of collective modes of existence, I seek to liberate cocoa? If the viscous law is the one that assembles economic, political and ecological relations around cocoa, which is the sticky mediator of these associations unfolding in different geographical scales, what could liberate cocoa from this enslavement to global capitalism? If cocoa is such a mediator, and if the parts entangled never pre-exist the entanglements as isolated parts – which means that the parts and their connections are always apprehended together –, therefore, the transformation of the condition of cocoa will also redistribute the parts connected to it. Instead of thinking of a form of justice for a human community, I will move further to explore a form of justice for nature, although taking into account that humans are also creatures of nature. This justice will not be expressed through the determinative and normative tools of science and history that constitute the legal theory but, differently, through a cosmopoetics elaborated in dialogue with indigenous conceptions of nature and following the sticky connections of human bodies to their lands and their multispecies collaborations.

7. Composting the Collectives

"There is reason, after all, that some people wish
to colonize the moon, and others dance before it
as an ancient friend"

James Baldwin

What is the problem with the law that impedes it to materialise the contents of the rights present in its norms? Radha D'Souza writes that *"rights belong to the normative world"* (D'Souza, 2018). Rights are concrete things whose actualisation demands public policies that mobilise an economy of material and human resources. For example, building hospitals and schools and employing doctors and teachers to actualise the rights to health and education. The law legitimises these expectations coded in rights. However, turned into an abstract normative ideal, the law loses its connection to the material world in which the rights are materialised, turning material needs faced by people into abstract promises waiting to be fulfilled or protected by the State.[81] In its abstract and normative form, the law becomes a logical and technical discourse that dissimulates the real situations to which its norms refer. Thinking through the struggles of the Munduruku people for the legal demarcation of their lands in the state of Pará in northern Brazil, Molina writes that these people see the law as a "war of papers" and a "make-believe game" as the State postpones endlessly the process to recognise their rights (Molina, 2017, pp. 48-49). Rights also create viscous bonds sticking people's lives to social institutions. These latter were not a choice of native peoples that saw them being imposed on their territories and had their lives linked to a colonial institution as the modern nation-state, which imposes another logic of managing the lands according to economic interests of production and accumulation; it also redistributes the organisation of territories and borders, and reorganises identities as these are no longer based on native ethnicities but on the national

[81] D'Souza connects the rights to political economy, and she says: *"For rights to remain connected to the real world at all times, our understanding of rights must remain tuned into and sensitive to the changes in the political economy without dissolving one into the other or treating them as distinct unrelated domains. Interventions for structural economic and political changes presuppose an understanding of the 'nature of the beast' as it were, how capitalism functions, how it responds and what makes it tick. Knowledge of the linkages between the normative world of rights and the real world of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism is necessary for social movements to evaluate what is necessary and what is possible in actions for transformative social change" (D'Souza, p. 51, 2018).*

identity, all of these process happening in a way extraneous to how indigenous people organise their lives and political organisation (Quijano, 2000; Fitzpatrick, 2001).

What would the case be if we forsook all vocabulary of order, institution and norm that dominate the legal discourse – and which always keeps an implicit relation with violence to enforce itself (Silva, 2009) – and try to investigate other parameters and vocabularies that allow for the actualisation of other modes of collective existence in a complex society? This chapter intends to investigate this through the experience of the Web of the People and indigenous struggles for lands and territories in Brazil. Looking through the experiences of reoccupation of ancestral lands and recovery of native forests in the last decades, I explore new legal and political concepts of social organisation that do not pass through the liberal idea of normativity. An idea that was strictly conceived for the white, male and European subject, but applied coercively upon other populations without considering their participation as political subjects.

My purpose is to move away from this liberal conception of the law and investigate how these struggles for lands can allow for a way of conceiving social formation based on the co-emergence of viscous entanglements between human and non-human bodies; between the humans and their environments but where the former does not triumph on the later ending up by destroying itself as warned by Gregory Bateson (1972);[82] entanglements that are not controlled by human reason, but with which we can compose together in a more ecological existence. I believe that such an investigation can point to alternative ways of thinking about the law and politics before the challenges posed by climate change and the current geological era named as Anthropocene by the scientific community. An era in which human activity on the Earth's surface became a geological agent able to modify the thermodynamic conditions of the planet (Crutzen, 2002).

These experiences and practices of coexistence with the land, the forest and other forms of life also express a composition of collectives not ordered by determinative norms and the centralised power of the State, but instead co-emerging through their viscous attachments to the land. However, they also have to deal strategically with these institutions in their realities. But here, I explore a more open-ended and sympoietic[83] process of collective formations and assemblages between humans and non-humans composing their territories. Or better to say,

[82] *The creature that triumphs over its environment destroys itself"* (Bateson, 1972).

[83] I take the concept from the work of Donna Haraway (2016), who uses it to describe the co-evolutive processes of life and how there are no individuals as isolated beings, but instead symbionts co-evolving through dynamic relationships. Differently from the concept of autopoiesis, these sympoietic formations do not have a cut with their surrounding environment. Instead of being formed by a self-making process, these formations emerge through collaboration and co-dependence with their environments.

composting, as these modes of existence are enmeshed into the rhizomatic meshwork of life evolving and germinating from the land. This non-determinative and corporeal unfolding of collectives also points towards a liberation of nature and its creatures from the domain of the sovereign human subject, that is, a cosmopoetics of justice.

Since humans are also creatures of nature, we remain viscously involved in their webs of life co-evolving together. In the experiences narrated below, people have their lives woven with other forms of life and experience them without the normative and deterministic tools of science or of the law, which are based on separability, determinacy and linearity (Silva, 2022). The confluence of these different human and non-human trajectories of life come together viscously. The viscous law is this slow movement of confluence between heterogeneous trajectories – or lines of life, to say with Ingold (2015) – that compose new processes of associations. They do not form new States, legal systems or any other determined formation with fixed norms, borders and utterances, but they trespass through these rigid formations and flow towards the recreation of new territories and modes of coexistence.

7.1. Urihi a: the land-forest, or an Amazonian dialogue

Indigenous struggles for lands are not about the right to property. These struggles do not fit in the grammar of the commodification of lands. Instead, lands are webs of lives composing a liveable territory. D'Souza is pertinent when she writes:

> Land is, quintessentially, a *relationship*. Land is not a 'thing'. It is a bond that ties people to nature and to each other. Land is the glue that holds people and nature together to form places. Historically, rights transformed places into property. It transformed a relationship into a thing, a commodity. The transformation characterises capitalism as a distinct type of social system. […] The breakup of feudal land relations and the transformation of land into a commodity exchangeable in the market place was an essential condition for capitalism to advance in systemic ways (D'Souza, p. 5, 2018).

Thinking through the perspectives of indigenous nations in Canada, Glen Coulthard, who is also a member of the Dene nation, distinguishes indigenous comprehension of lands from Western ones and writes about how lands are not objects passive of appropriation but instead, it is an ontological framework to understand relationships. As he writes:

> […] it is a profound misunderstanding to think of land or place as simply some material object of profound importance to Indigenous cultures (although it is this too); instead, it ought to be understood as a field of "relationships of things to each other." Place is a way of knowing, of experiencing and relating to the world and with others; and sometimes these relational practices and forms of knowledge guide forms of resistance against other rationalizations of the world that threaten to erase or destroy our senses of place. This, I argue, is precisely the understanding of land that grounded

> our critique of colonialism and capitalism in the 1970s and early 1980s. In the Weledeh dialect of Dogrib (which is my community's language), for example, "land" (or *de*) is translated in relational terms as that which encompasses not only the land (understood here as material), but also people and animals, rocks and trees, lakes and rivers, and so on. Seen in this light, we are as much a part of the land as any other element. Furthermore, within this system of relations human beings are not the only constituent believed to embody spirit or agency. Ethically, this meant that humans held certain obligations to the land, animals, plants, and lakes in much the same way that we hold obligations to other people. And if these obligations were met, then the land, animals, plants, and lakes would reciprocate and meet their obligations to humans, thus ensuring the survival and well-being of all over time (Coulthard, 2014, p. 61).

For Yanomami people, the word for land is *urihi a*, which is better translated as 'land-forest' or 'world-forest'. In his book *The Falling Sky,* Shaman Yanomami Davi Kopenawa shows how the *urihi a* is never empty. The word refers to land and forest at the same time and also the living beings inhabiting them and composing them.[84] The book was conceived by Kopenawa and written in collaboration with French anthropologist Bruce Albert, who explains in the book notes that the word *urihi a* also has the meaning of territory. The land-forest is first of all a cosmological complex in which human lives are involved and entangled together with other beings. It is what sustains the forests and sticks their multiple forms of life together.

The book of Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert was an important companion during my research. My original research project was focused on their book, but all of this changed when cocoa and my personal history viscously entangled with cocoa were included in the project. However, Kopenawa and his fascinating imagination did not leave my process of thinking untouched. The reading of his book was a cosmological turn in my studies and the Yanomami concept of *urihi a* also afforded me to think of cocoa's viscosities. I want to present this concept and how it expresses the Yanomami ways of making worlds without normative reason.

It is part of Kopenawa's discursive strategy to translate his concepts into white people's languages asymmetrically and comparatively without establishing an equivalence between the different terms and conceptions. As explained by Albert (2002), the political discourse of indigenous leaders is based on a double movement in which the ethnical categories used by white people such as territory, culture, environment, etc. are appropriated by indigenous leaders in their reflection, but reshaped in a cosmological re-elaboration. In this way, these leaders refer

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[84] *"In our very old language, what the white people call 'nature' is urihi a, the forest-land, but also its image, which can only be seen by the shamans and which we call Urihinari, the spirit of the forest. It is thanks to this image that the trees are alive. So what we call the spirit of the forest consists of the innumerable images of the trees, of the leaves that are their hair, and of the vines. It is also those of the game and the fish the bees, the turtles, the lizards, the worms, and even the warama aka snails. The image of the value of growth of the forest we know as Në roperi is also what the white people call 'nature'. It was created with it and gives it its richness. For us, the xapiri are the true owners of 'nature', not human beings"* (Kopenawa; Albert, p. 389, 2013).

to that which white people are describing in anthropological discourse but they do it by mixing the anthropological categories with their mythological discourse and cosmological references. Therefore, the ethnical discourse of anthropologists is legitimised by the cosmological knowledge and this later is reshaped accordingly to the former. For Albert, this is important because the mere appropriation of white people's categories would turn the indigenous speech into hollow rhetoric, and the sheer cosmological speech would be stuck in cultural solipsism. So, it is the ability to articulate these two dimensions, the ethnical diplomacy with other peoples and the cosmological tradition of their own people, that makes the great inter-ethnical leader. Albert describes it as "*a passage from a 'speculative resistance' (discourse about the other for themselves) to a 'resistant adaptation' (discourse about themselves for the other): from a cosmological discourse on the alterity to a political discourse on the ethnicity"* (Albert, 2002).

Kopenawa does it many times in different moments of his speech. There are two paragraphs in chapter 23 of his book that I would like to focus on here. This chapter is a key moment in my discussion since it is where Kopenawa describes his conceptions of ecology and land-forest – or *urihi a* in the Yanomami language, which is not symmetrically translatable into Christian or Western conceptions of nature as a passive matter. These two concepts of land-forest and ecology have their meanings entangled to each other in such a way that they bring a very different conception of nature.

In this paragraph, Kopenawa presents his conception of ecology:

> Since the beginning of time, *Omama* has been the center of what the white people call ecology. It's true! Long before these words existed among them and they started to speak about them so much, they were already in us, though we did not name them in the same way. For the shamans, these have always been words that came from the spirits to defend the forest. If we had books like they do, the white people would see how old these words are! In the forest, we human beings are the "ecology." But it is equally the *xapiri,* the game, the trees, the rivers, the fish, the sky, the rain, the wind, and the sun! It is everything that came into being in the forest, far from the white people: everything that isn't surrounded by fences yet. The words of "ecology" are our ancient words, those *Omama* gave our ancestors at the beginning of time. The *xapiri* have defended the forest since it first came into being. Our ancestors have never devastated it because they kept the spirits by their side. Is it not still as alive as it has always been? The white people who once ignored all these things are now starting to hear them a little. This is why some of them have invented new words to defend the forest. Now they call themselves "people of the ecology" because they are worried to see their land getting increasingly hot (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013, p. 393).

Firstly, Kopenawa discusses ecology in contrast to the way in which ecology and nature are often understood by white people. For Kopenawa, the land-forest is never detached neither from the social constitution or the spiritual experience, as forests are populated by spirits. Ecology appears here as the cosmological composition of the land-forest itself. It is described through the mention of human and non-human bodies that compose the forests. Ecology is the

maintenance of the entanglements of these bodies composing that universe. But he also considers ecology as the word that white people created to defend forests, and he welcomes the ecological discourse as it made it possible for their words could be considered in the cities.[85] Kopenawa accepts the word but he refuses the concept of environment used in conservation speeches. For Yanomami people, he says, it has a sense of a remaining piece of forest to be delimitated, preserved and kept as an exterior dimension of human life. For him, the idea of environmental conservation has to do with what remains of the forest that was hurt by white people and their machines, and the earth cannot be split apart as if the forest were just a leftover part (ibid, p. 397). Kopenawa suggests that nature must be thought of as an entire body that is alive and when we cut it down, intending to protect only some parcels, we turn it sterile.

In a lecture given at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Brazil), Kopenawa explained another important concept for understanding what Yanomami people mean by nature. He explained what Yanomami people call *hutukara*, which would be that which white people mean by world or universe. He says that "[…] *there is only a hutukara. And we are sat here on the belly of our motherland. The hutukara stays together with the rocks, the land, the sand, the river, the sea, the sun, the rain, and the wind. Hutukara is a body, a body that is united, it cannot stay apart"* (Gomes & Kopenawa, 2016, my translation). In the same lecture, Kopenawa said that the *urihi a,* the land-forest, is the hair of *hutukara.*

In the paragraph below, Kopenawa describes nature in the following way:

> In our very old language, what the white people call "nature" is *urihi a*, the forest-land, but also its image, which can only be seen by the shamans and which we call *Urihinari,* the spirit of the forest. It is thanks to this image that the trees are alive. So, what we call the spirit of the forest consists of the innumerable images of the trees, of the leaves that are their hair, and of the vines. It is also those of the game and the fish, the bees, the turtles, the lizards, the worms, and even the *warama aka* snails. The image of the value of growth of the forest we know as *Në roperi* is also what the white people call "nature." It was created with it and gives it its richness. For us, the *xapiri* are the true owners of "nature," not human beings. (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013, pp. 388-389)

To understand this paragraph, an important point must be considered in Yanomami cosmology: all beings in the world bring with them a double dimension that is spiritual and which they call *xapiri*. For Kopenawa, what white people mean by nature *"is the forest as well*

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[85] *"My ideas on the forest continued to develop little by little until, much later, I listened to Chico Mendes's words. This is how I learned to know the white people's words about what they call "nature." My thought became clearer and higher. It spread a lot. I began to understand that it was not enough to protect only the small area where we live. So I decided to speak up to defend the entire forest, including the one human beings do not inhabit and even the white people's land very far beyond us. In our language, all this is urihi a pree—the great forest-land. I think it is what the white people call the entire world"* (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013, 396).

as all the xapiri who live in it" (*Ibid.,* p. 389). He explains that the *xapiri pë* (in plural) are the images of the ancestor spirits (*yarori,* or the ancestor animal) who turned into animals at the beginning of time (*Ibid.,* p. 55). These ancestor spirits were all humans that were differentiated into different species; some of them turned into games, others into plants, others into people, and some lost their bodies and were turned into forest spirits. Kopenawa says that *"yet in the beginning of time they* (animals) *were as human as we are. They are not different. Today we give ourselves the name of 'humans', but we are the same as they are. This is why in their eyes we still belong to their kind"* (*Ibid.,* p. 62). Hence, all beings in the world still keep with them a relation to a virtual past when the beings were not individuated into different species; they share a common ground.[86] The *xapiri pë* are the images of these ancestor spirits that appear for shamans in their rituals, dreams and trance, and the shamans are the people able to cross these limits between species and access the perspectives of other beings. As Viveiros de Castro says, the shaman is a cosmopolitical diplomat between different societies (Viveiros de Castro, 2014, p. 151).

The conception of this common ground shared by all beings in a mythological time is a pertinent point that turns upside down the Western cosmologies in which only specific beings were created as humans, such as in Christian mythology, or became humans through an evolutionary process, such as in evolutionary biology. It has deep implications for the ecological comprehension of the relationship between humans and non-humans. If non-humans share with us a common past, if they can also occupy the position of a subject and the category that designates a person in indigenous languages can also be attributed to them (Viveiros de Castro, 2002), the interspecies relationship will also be a relationship between different societies.

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[86] For Viveiros de Castro, it also explains the way mythic discourse works. For him, *"mythic discourse can be defined as first and foremost a record of the process of actualisation of the present state of things out of a virtual pre-cosmological condition endowed with perfect transparency – a 'chaosmos' where the bodily and spiritual dimensions of beings did not as yet reciprocally eclipse each other. This pre-cosmos, very far from displaying any 'indifferentiation' or 'originary' identification between humans and nonhumans, as is usually formulated, is pervaded by an infinite difference, albeit (or because) internal to each persona or agent, in contrast to the finite and external differences constituting the species and qualities of our contemporary world. This explains the regime of 'metamorphosis', or qualitative multiplicity, proper to myth: the question of knowing whether the mythic jaguar, to pick an example, is a block of human affects in the shape of a jaguar or a block of feline affects in the shape of a human is in any rigorous sense undecidable, since mythic metamorphosis is an 'event' or a heterogenic 'becoming' (an intensive superposition of states), not a 'process' of 'change' (an extensive transposition of homogenic states). The general line traced by mythic discourse describes the lamination of the pre-cosmological flows of indiscernibility as they enter the cosmological process" thereafter, the human and feline dimensions of jaguars (and humans) will function alternately as potential figures and ground to each other* (Viveiros de Castro, 2007).

Although in a different way, some contemporary discourses on evolutionary biology are bringing up the role of interspecies collaboration – evolution is always co-evolution, a symbiotic *becoming with* (Haraway, 2016; Tsing, 2015) – and showing how other species also partake in the making of the worlds in which we inhabit. However, this still differs from Amerindian perspectives about how other species are endowed with perspectives and play the role of subjects in mythic narratives.

Albert explains that all inhabitants and constituent beings of this "land-forest" are endowed with an essential image that shamans can invoke under the way of auxiliary spirits. These are spirits liable for the cosmological order of ecological and meteorological phenomena such as the migration of games, the fertility of sylvan plants, and rain control, among other events (Albert, 2002). Albert says that, for the Yanomami people, protecting the forest or demarcating the land does not mean only guaranteeing an indispensable territory for the Yanomami people's existence, but it is above all a way to protect it from the destruction of a web of social coordinates and cosmological exchanges that constitute and ensure their cultural existence (*Ibid.*). For them, *"the forest is wise, its thinking is the same as ours"* (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013, p. 409). The latter also finds resonance in contemporary scientific studies about the thought and intelligence of plants and forests, for example, the works of botanist Stefano Mancuso (2015) and anthropologist Eduardo Kohn (2013).

Therefore, we can partially conclude that what Kopenawa calls u*rihi a*, the land-forest, is an intelligent complex of beings communicating among themselves, where the position of a subject of perspective is not exclusive of humans and the quality of 'humanity' is a continuum among all living beings;[87] in opposition to a concept of nature as passive and inert matter available as a resource to human will. Despite the anthropomorphism of this assertion, when we read Kopenawa's discourse we do not find a formal identification between human and non-human but instead a myriad of diverse beings populating the world. The fact that they share the same substance as humans does not equalise all beings to a certain image of the human, but it breaks with the hierarchy of the human. Indigenous worlds are pluriverses (De La Cadena & Blaser, 2018). This assertion has deep political implications because if all beings are humans, thereafter, they would also demand their political rights and their ownership in a land that

[87] This thesis is sustained by the theory of Amerindian perspectivism developed by the Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, and it is based on his ethnographic studies with indigenous people in the Amazon rainforest. Regarding this claim, look at chapter 2 of his book *Cannibal Metaphysics* (2014).

should be shared with other species. And we know from our own history how many conflicts arose around the possession of lands and territories. This breaks whatever Edenic image regarding the relationship between indigenous peoples and forests, once that those people are constantly negotiating their position in the forests with other living beings; and it also shows how indigenous cosmopolitics is always a more-than-human politics.

For Isabelle Stengers, cosmopolitcs has to do with the practical composition with divergent worlds, and it is a term fully charged with instability and conflict:

> "In the term cosmopolitical, cosmos refers to the unknown constituted by these multiple, divergent worlds, and to the articulations of which they could eventually be capable, as opposed to the temptation of a peace intended to be final, ecumenical: a transcendent peace with the power to ask anything that diverges to recognize itself as a purely individual expression of what constitutes the point of convergence of all" (Stengers, 2005).

Considering this, the cosmopolitics that we can find in Yanomami cosmology is one that seeks to compose worlds in collaboration with a plurality of other beings that make the cosmos: humans, non-humans and spirits. This can find a parallel in the cosmopolitics of Andean peoples, as described by Marisol de la Cadena's work. As she says:

> This appearance of indigeneities may inaugurate a different politics, plural not because they are enacted by bodies marked by gender, race, ethnicity, or sexuality demanding rights, or by environmentalists representing nature, but because they bring earth-beings to the political, and force into visibility the antagonism that proscribed their worlds (De La Cadena, 2010).

Moreover, it would have further consequences in our political thought. For example, the conception of nature as a passive matter is the basis for the legal concept of property that conceives land, forests and animals as appropriable objects by human subjects. This anthropocentric concept of nature is also the basis for the extractivist way of production in capitalist societies, where the land is led to exhaustion, heating, drought, and sterility by monocultures cultivated with intense use of toxic fertilisers and burnings. Such a conception cannot be possible when we relate to forests and lands as cosmological and alive arrangements in which we are also involved, and which are populated by multiple agencies that produce our whole surroundings.

The *urihi a* is not an exterior object that should be protected, but the composition itself of existence and its condition of possibility, which must be diplomatically negotiated in a constant relation to other beings and their spirits. Such diplomacy is led by the shamans. This cosmological web of beings should be equilibrated to prevent the cosmos from derailing into an entropic process that would turn it into chaos. So, ecology here has to do with the cosmic composition itself and the maintenance of the entanglement of its components, keeping them

together. However, this is not only a secular and indifferent description, for this cosmology is also a form of spirituality and this way of conceiving nature is also a way of living immersed into this cosmological web and its beings; aware and sensible about them, composing our existences together with them, knowing that history is also produced by non-human beings (Fausto, 2002); and, as Donna Haraway says, stitched together with them (Haraway, 2016). This is a practice of avoiding the falling of the sky, which is a catastrophic event that would turn the cosmos into chaos. As Albert says, the mythologies of these indigenous peoples are a narrative knowledge against the cosmic entropy, which has mainly been produced by the predatory alterity of white people and capitalism in the last centuries (Albert, 2002).

The Yanomami people have been going through a harsh time in their struggle to protect their lands in the northwest of the Amazon rainforest, which has been invaded by illegal miners. This has also triggered other forms of violence against Yanomami women and disturbed Yanomami's livelihoods to the point that hundreds of children died because of malnutrition.[88] After a long process of struggle, they had their lands recognised by the Brazilian state on 25 May 1992. However, they carried on dealing with the invasive intervention of illegal miners and other invaders. Their cosmology and history are narrated by Kopenawa in his book in collaboration with Bruce Albert, *The Falling Sky* (2013), and also in the movie produced by Luiz Bolognesi in collaboration with Kopenawa, *The Last Forest* (2021). Either in the book or the movie, Kopenawa speaks of a forest that is alive and intelligent, populated by enchanted spirits that are the spiritual doubles of every existent being, these spirits are the *xapiri*. Kopenawa describes the forest with a poetic discourse as though it was a loved person with whom he had coexisted for a long time. The forest is also presented as a meshwork of multiple physical and spiritual presences weaving together the cosmos. His way of describing and thinking through the forests in a way that liberates them from the subjection to the human reason that turns them into objects, considering how the forests have their way of making the world and are not restricted to human projects and temporalities, is a great example of a cosmopoetics that reclaims a justice that cannot conceive of humans detached from their cosmological attachments to their territories.

In southern Bahia, a very different context as it makes us move to northeast Brazil, other people are also learning to deal with forests in a liberating and collaborative way. In the next section, we move back to cocoa.

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[88] See the report of the Sumauma, a newspaper specialised in the context of the Amazon rainforest: https://sumauma.com/en/nao-estamos-conseguindo-contar-os-corpos/

7.2. For land and territory

In the southern region of my state in Brazil, the state of Bahia, new landless movements have been learning from indigenous traditions a new way of understanding lands and territories. In the book *Por Terra e Território* (2021), written by two activists of the network and articulation of territories *Teia dos Povos* (The Web of the Peoples), Joelson Ferreira and Erahsto Felício, it is shown how a territory is not a mere demarcated area, but a place full of symbols of belonging based on the abundance of life; what they call *"beyond the fences"* (my translation). For them, it is not enough to concede lands through the distribution of individual properties, which later will become machines to destroy lives in agribusiness' hands. What they reclaim as territory are places full of life, with community, where rivers, forests, animals, and water sources can be respected and maintained with care. For them, a territory cannot be divided into isolated pieces by fences. They say, *"If we keep fighting from the fences, they will keep separating us, dividing us; they are what allows someone to degrade the river in one corner and the other people who don't to be impacted by the destruction of that same river in another place"* (Ferreira & Felício, p. 44, 2021, own translation).

It is important to mention the inspiring experience of the *Terra Vista* settlement instituted by the Web of the Peoples after a long struggle for land (Lima, 2017). This settlement is completing 32 years of existence in 2024. During this time, they recovered a large area of deforested land through the practice of agroforestry and the cultivation of cocoa with agroecological methods. There are dozens of families living there and the settlement counts with a local school of sustainability and a chocolate factory managed by the local residents. The settlement is a hub connecting activists from different regions of Brazil who go there to learn about agroecology and the Web of the Peoples is also constantly collaborating with indigenous people.

Therefore, inspired by indigenous perspectives on land, they understand a territory as a space of realisation of life in fullness. They are in close collaboration with the Pataxó and Pataxó Hãhãhãe peoples, whose territories are also located in southern Bahia, and the Maxakali people, who live in the northern region of the state of Minas Gerais, bordering the state of Bahia. This indigenous knowledge on land is also registered in the books published by the Web of the People's own publishing house, such as in the books *A Escola da Reconquista* (The School of Reconquest) by Mestre Maria Muniz (2022) and *Saberes dos Matos Pataxós* (Knowledges of Pataxó Jungles) by Antônia Braz Santana (2022). Learning from this ancestral knowledge, the Web of the Peoples understands the territory can give materially that which the

law promises with its abstract rights but never realises: the material conditions of living well. These indigenous perspectives on land can also make us question the conditions in which we live in our cities. I would not like to let these perspectives be just a singular case that sounds distant, exotic and peculiar whereas we carry on reproducing a way of living indifferent to the fact that those indigenous territories are destroyed mainly to feed the capitalist lifestyle in these cities.

In big cities, where the concentration of capital's productive forces in a given territory is more evident, most people live in a rush of time and little space, often anxious and insecure, as I seek to demonstrate in Chapter 5 when discussing the mental and social entropies caused by modernisation. Capitalism is a contraction of space-time (Viveiros de Castro, 2019), but not only because its technologies shortened the times and distances to make information, commodities, goods and bodies cross the space – technologies that are not accessible to everyone (Santos, 2021a). It also compresses the spaces where we inhabit and the time that is not dedicated to work. Fast food is a good example of how we even neglect our health to invest more of our lives to survive in this vicious cycle that exhausts the energies of our bodies and the planet to produce wealth for a few people. Modernity, which has progress as a measure of not only economic but also aesthetic and social value, is a promise with no concrete basis to back it up, as the planet is a limited and exhausted source of matter. The uses we can make of knowledge, science and techniques can be much richer than the submission of these forms of knowledge to the rule of capitalist profit and the depletion of the planet.

From the point of view of capitalism, communities like the one where I grew up can be considered poor. Being this economic poverty produced by the history of capitalism itself, which is inseparable from slavery and colonisation, as Silva argues (Silva, 2022). There is a long tradition of critical political economy demonstrating it since the *Capital* of Marx in the nineteenth century. See for example the seminal thesis of Eric Williams in economic history, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), which demonstrates through a large amount of detailed information how colonialism and slavery gave financial conditions for funding the emerging industrial capitalism in Britain in the nineteenth century. Or the largely cited paper of Anibal Quijano on the coloniality of power and how the formation of Euro-centred and American capitalism is inseparable from forms of racialisation, inferiorisation and extraction of resources in Latin America (Quijano, 2000). Gurminder Bhambra also reconstructed how colonial relations underpinned the formation of the global economy (Bhambra, 2021). The forms of impoverishment produced by capitalism do not only affect the global south but also the big capitals of capitalism in the global north, such as the US and the UK. Srnicek and Williams

show the increasing precarisation of life and working conditions in these countries, and how this also triggers a massive state of mental illness in their poor populations (Srnicek and Williams, 2016, pp. 94-95). Added to this, the big cities of capitalism are also featured by a deep inequality that is also expressed in their urbanisation. The work of Mike Davis shows how more than a billion of the world's population live in slums without adequate conditions of habitation, such as basic sanitation and housing infrastructure, and they form a multitude of informal proletariat (Davis, 2007). Considering all this, it is possible to invert the capitalist perspective that sees a rural village like the one I came from only as a place of poverty since the urban centres of capitalism are becoming miserable places for the majority of their populations. In rural communities like the ones in southern Bahia, there is still an ecological wealth that gives better conditions of living to their local populations, but this wealth is also under threat because of the insatiable predation of global capitalism. In this region, the increasing advance of mining, mainly led by the company Bamin (*Bahia Mineração Limitada*), and the expansion of logistical infrastructures of transportation, such as the construction of the port complex *Porto Sul*, are threats to the remaining biodiversity of the Atlantic rainforest and to indigenous and maroon territories located around this area.[89]

The experiences of those movements of land discussed here (indigenous peoples, landless workers, maroon communities) are not magical recipes or models, but examples that can inspire practices elsewhere. They indeed struggle and resist many difficulties to keep living in their lands, but in their lands, they cultivate a way of living that does not lead to the collapse of the planet and the blood of so many people. Their first win is to make it possible to dream of a life beyond capitalism, as I learned from an activist from the Web of the Peoples with whom I talked when I visited the Terra Vista settlement. These land movements – and I like the idea of lands moving together with their peoples in a cosmic dance – are just ahead of time before the predictable catastrophes that we are about to face with climate change.[90]

One of the main challenges that I identified in this context of cocoa production – including the region of my native village, Florestal, which is around 3 hours away from the settlement by car – is how the imposition of economic conditions of the global trade of cocoa make it much harder and trickier that people could cultivate their lands and collaborate with their ecological potential in a way oriented towards their own liberation and benefit, increasing

[89] More information about this available here: https://dialogochino.net/en/infrastructure/33559-bahias-porto-sul-pits-activists-against-the-government/

[90] The sixth report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) foresees serious consequences as global warming keeps rising (IPCC, 2022): https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/

the biodiversity of the local ecology, cultivating other species and letting lands flourish again. In this case, I am thinking mainly of cocoa growers not linked to social movements or indigenous communities, as is the case of the people in my village. The imposition of the demand for selling cocoa in a market that pays low prices for the commodities and is oriented and controlled by the international companies of chocolate – such as Barry Callebout, Cargill, Mondelez International and Olam International – conditions people's autonomy to cultivate their lands as they want.

An example of the consequences of this demand to produce more, sell more and profit more, is the use of strategies to intensify cocoa production. To increase the productivity of cocoa crops, some farmers use the so-called full-sun cocoa, a species of cocoa more resistant to the sun that is not dependent on the shadow of taller trees as in the *cabruca* system. Thus, it makes it possible to enjoy more space in the crops and plant a higher number of cocoa trees. Consequently, it reduces the presence of native trees and biodiversity. However, studies show that full-sun cocoa proved unsustainable over time and led to the exhaustion of the lands while the *cabruca* system is more favourable to the natural regeneration of the soil (Piasentin et al., 2014). The cabruca system also contributes to the resilience of lands regarding the impact of climate change (Heming et al., 2022).

The experience of the Web of the Peoples goes in the opposite way of this global order and resists this capitalist imposition. It can be harder to cultivate cocoa with agroecology and go in the counter current of the capitalist market, but even harder can be living in a land exhausted by capitalist forms of production. They avoid farming techniques that are only focused on the increase of productivity and the proposal of their work is to make possible the conditions for an autonomous collective existence on the land in collaboration with the forests. Cocoa is cultivated with attention to its relationships with other species of trees, insects and animals. The experience of agroecological transition in the Terra Vista settlement by allying the cultivation of cocoa with the recovery of native forest has shown very successful in recovering a damaged land and producing a collective territory abundant with life. They have learned to compost their collective life with the viscous law of cocoa, which sticks their lives to other indigenous communities living in southern Bahia and to the ancestral times of this land; and it is also cocoa that sticks them together to the native Atlantic rainforest and its different temporality that cannot attend to the rushed pace of the capitalist global trade and its eagerness for productivity.

7.3. To deal with the law

After Jair Bolsonaro took hold of the Brazilian presidency, instead of public policies to enforce indigenous rights, we saw proposals of laws such as PL490, PL2633 and PL191 that intended to legitimise the exploitation of natural resources in indigenous lands and delegitimise indigenous rights already established in the articles 231 and 232 of the Brazilian constitution. The rush effort of politicians linked to agribusiness and mining companies to approve these laws actualises the colonial violence implicated in the law (Raposo, 2021). On the other hand, the law also plays a strategic role in indigenous struggles once they reclaim rights and the legal demarcation of their territories. Rather than a facilitator and protector, the law is a hurdle that these populations need to face and deal strategically with. The rights granted by law are far from being ideal, but the law is there working in these conflicts. This does not mean a reproduction of the law's self-justification in its theoretical discourse that puts the state as a necessity to control violence, for example, as in the theory of the social contract (Hobbes, 2017), or as it is lately reproduced in modern legal theory (Kelsen, 1934). As I have argued before, in post-colonial contexts the violence is often triggered by the State itself (Robinson, 2016). Instead, I want to think of that which the law is supposed to deal with, but not following the paths given by modern legal theory. Moving away from the modern understanding of the law, we can learn from the indigenous practices of reappropriation of lands as a way of dealing with the challenges around the conflictive coexistence of heterogeneous populations in the same territory, which is a problem at the core of the legal theory. However, the indigenous experiences show how the modern law and the State resolve it in a disadvantageous and asymmetrical way for indigenous people.

Analysing the relationship between indigenous nations and the Canadian state, Glen Coulthard criticises how politics of recognition that seek to accommodate indigenous people in the framework of the colonial state place these people in a subaltern position. In his words:

> […] in relations of domination that exist between nation-states and the sub-state national groups that they "incorporate" into their territorial and jurisdictional boundaries, there is no mutual dependency in terms of a need or desire for recognition. In these contexts, the "master" – that is, the colonial state and state society – does not require recognition from the previously self-determining communities upon which its territorial, economic and social infrastructure is constituted. What it needs is land, labor and resources. This, rather than leading to a condition of reciprocity the dialetic either breaks down with the explicit *non*recognition of the equal status of the colonized population, or with the strategic "domination" of the terms of recognition leaving the foundation of the colonial relationship relatively undisturbed (Coulthard, 2014, p. 40).

Indigenous rights are not effectively protected by the State, and this limitation can be seen in the case of how invasions of indigenous lands were reported more often after the

election of Bolsonaro in Brazil.[91] Moreover, when the need for a new right emerges, it is often because its object has been already violated. But without the law, the risk of an asymmetrical imposition of force by farmers, miners and other invaders is more likely to happen. Unfortunately, this is a concrete danger even though under legal protection and it is important to think of indigenous struggles beyond the reclaim of rights and recognition by the colonial framework of the modern law and the State. Although the violence against indigenous people is a continuum crossing the history of Brazil, the threats to indigenous lands increased expressively after the effort of Bolsonaro's government to weaken environmental law and indigenous rights. Several researchers have published about how the former environmental minister of Bolsonaro's government, Ricardo Salles, enjoyed the tumultuous situation triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic to weaken environmental laws and *"pass the herd"* – as the former minister has said – over indigenous lands in the Amazon rainforest (Souza et al., 2022; Raposo, 2021; Ferrante & Fearnside, 2021). For instance, this is the case of Yanomami people in the northwest of the Amazon rainforest who were suffering again with the invasion of illegal miners.[92] Therefore, this is a paradoxical and complex situation. We cannot bypass the institutional and normative aspects of the law played within social conflicts and negotiations, but, on the other hand, we should not be stuck to the limited horizons offered by the law. In Brazil, indigenous peoples have been struggling intensely for their rights and the legal demarcation of their lands, and the massive mobilisations of the Free Land Camp (*Acampamento Terra Livre*), which occupies Brasilia annually with the gathering of thousands of indigenous people is an evident demonstration of this.[93] However, at the same time, the negligence of the Brazilian state concerning the protection of indigenous rights is recurrent. In January of 2024, while I was finishing the writing of this thesis, a group of farmers – including cocoa farmers – self-named *Invasão Zero* (Zero Invasion) gathered hundreds of people to attack the territory of the Pataxó Hãhãhãe people in southern Bahia, leaving an indigenous woman killed and an indigenous chief severely injured. This attack happened with the collaboration and connivance of the military police, that is, the State.[94] Zero Invasion was accused for the

[91] As it is reported here, for example: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02644-x

[92] After Bolsonaro's election, it was reported that an estimated number of 20 thousand illegal miners have entered the Yanomami territory for exploitation of their lands: https://news.mongabay.com/2019/07/yanomami-amazon-reserve-invaded-by-20000-miners-bolsonaro-fails-to-act/

[93] More about the Free Land Camp here: https://amazonwatch.org/news/2022/0419-annual-indigenous-free-land-camp-occupies-brasilia

[94] This was widely reported in Brazilian newspapers. A report written by journalists, activists and indigenous leaders was published here: https://news.mongabay.com/2024/02/attack-on-pataxo-hahahai-indigenous-leaders-must-be-investigated-commentary/

formation of an armed militia and police officers have also been investigated for the collaboration with the group.[95]

The law is a set of practices that includes on the one hand normative and discursive practices that link needs and organise causalities and expectations through fixed utterances (Sutter, 2015). It works like this: always that we have the event *x,* then we should have the consequence *y.* That is the way the normative law captures life through representation and analogy in its codes and determinative, linear and causal way of reasoning (Silva, 2022). This is also the way the law creates agreements to mediate conflicts, by stabilising expectations and reducing the complexities of the future (Luhmann, 2008). However, as the work of Silva shows, these expectations easily fail to comply when the law deals with black and indigenous bodies (Silva, 2007; 2009). More than being negligent with the violation of racialised bodies, legal agents and institutions are constantly threatening to criminalise, prosecute, persecute, or even explicitly attack violently with their police force the social movements, and racialised bodies of marginalised communities that struggle for their territories (Rarsh, 2017; Doran, 2017; Selmini & Di Ronco, 2023).

During my years of PhD, I constantly dealt with this conflictive paradox regarding the possibilities and limits of legal institutions. My conclusion is that a strategic relationship with them is a practical necessity, but it should occur in parallel to the struggles of recovering indigenous territories and recreating the ways of inhabiting the land. In the Canadian context, Coulthard dealt with the same dilemma and his work was a great contribution to my research. His answer to this is that, given the fact that in the foreseeable future indigenous rights will still be interpreted and judged by non-indigenous judges and policymakers, he speaks of the need for "word warriors" capable of engaging with legal and political discourse and interject indigenous perspectives into the conceptual spaces where their rights are framed (Coulthard, 2014, p. 45). In Brazil, indigenous lawyers such as Eloy Terena, Ivo Macuxi, and Samara Pataxó, among others, have played an important role in the defence of indigenous rights. However, in a country where agribusiness is the main economic activity, indigenous lands become an obstacle to capitalist expansion. As the State is complicit with these forms of production – see for example the massive presence of the so-called "ruralist bench" (Canofre, 2017) –, the frameworks of the institutional law and the State, as they are given until the present, will not be enough to protect indigenous futures. Recalling the discussion on

[95] This was reported by Al Jazeera internationally: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/2/29/a-legend-for-our-people-inside-an-indigenous-activists-death-in-brazil

necropolitcs as a form of social entropy in Chapter 5, it is important to remember how the situation of indigenous people is surrounded by a diffused form of violence that is not contained by the monopoly of the State.

The possession of land is at the core of these conflicts, as it is a material basis for political power. The legal recognition of indigenous autonomous territories is of great importance here. Legal abstractions produce concrete effects on the bodies and they are a part of political conflicts that we need to deal with. The ambiguity remains: it is not all, but it is part of a broader struggle, and it matters. Tensioning and disputing in the legal dimension, these same marginalised groups can also reach important wins that increase their possibilities of existence and resistance. The law does not redeem, but it legitimates conquers and pretensions through rights. Political struggles go beyond the law but they also pass by it. Nevertheless, they cannot have it as a final horizon once material changes in living conditions are not fulfilled by normative abstractions, which do not work separated from other relations of force and constraints that shape society. As Coulthard argues, *"the problem with the legal and political discourse of the state is not only that they enjoy hegemonic status vis-á-vis Indigenous discourses, but that they are also backed by and hopelessly entwined with the economic, political, and military might of the state itself* (Coulthard, 2014, p. 47). The distribution of land and reestablishment of indigenous territories can change the balance of these other relations of force and opens the way for other lawscapes – see how the law and the land are intersected here – not subjugated to capitalist and colonial forces.

The normative law, as a supposedly formal, amoral and technical language used to formalise political decisions and program institutional practices, is not neutral politically. This would presuppose that formality is a neutral aspect that can be used with different purposes when instead this already establishes a way of positioning oneself into reality and a way of dealing with other beings in the world. As I have argued in Chapter 2, the formalism of normative law is already based on a certain conception of the rational and human subject positioned before the non-human world as objective, inert and passive of appropriation. It brings different consequences by itself. For instance, the relationship between anthropocentrism and ecological disaster or between ethnocentrism and racial violence. In his critiques of the colonial politics of recognition of indigenous rights into the framework of the settler-state, Coulthard demonstrates how the form of modern law already brings in itself an asymmetrical relation to indigenous worlds (Coulthard, 2014). But, is the law completely reduced to its institutional arrangements? The indigenous forms of coexistence with the land and its non-human forms of life open the way to investigate new ways of conceiving the law.

The law has to do with the practices of collective coexistence and it is achieved through bodies composing together in the same space, either by agreements or conflicts, expressed discursively or not. The law is also produced within the agonistic compositions of embodied forces in friction reshaping the forms in which they coexist spatially, co-producing their own space according to their move (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015). Hence, I reject "the Law" in inverted commas and initial capital letters. With this rejection, I want to signal that this is not something essentially given and unitary, but a terrain of different practices producing the spatial assemblages of bodies, including non-human bodies that compose our different ecologies. Taking this claim into consideration, I will move forward to bring the experience of the Tupinambá people in retaking their ancestral lands and how they give materiality to their rights through this action. By doing this, they are spatially producing law beyond the horizons of the State and legally constituting their territories agonistically dealing with State institutions through the grammar of rights. Their relation to the law is strategic, going within legal structures but exceeding their limitations. Here, the institutional law also becomes viscous.

7.4. Composting rights

Cocoa cultivation is also a practice of *Tupinambá* people, an indigenous people living in several villages around the region of Olivença. Cacique Babau, an important *Tupinambá* leader, wrote about how their way of planting cocoa differs from the practices of cocoa farmers in that region: *"To produce, the farmers have to buy what is made by the industry. Fertilize soil and combat plagues. Thus, they damage all of us"* (Babau, 2019, my translation). He explains how the use of pesticides by farmers kills the bees that pollinate and make cocoa produce on a larger scale. He says that *Tupinambás* let bees live and work in partnership with them for they do the work that people cannot do: fecundating flowers, producing delicious honey and collaborating with cocoa trees. But, thereafter, loggers came and took off all hardwoods, destroying *Tupinambá*'s traditional agriculture and food chain. He says:

> They killed and destroyed our traditional agriculture. With their arrogance, they broke our food chain, which we had in perfect condition until the end of the 1980s. We asked: *"how are we going to live without the close and harmonious partnership with the animals?"* When they started cutting down *jussara* for industry, it was degrading for *Tupinambá* people. They hit hard at our food source, as the *jussara* was the basis of our food and that of the birds. The *mutum*, the *jacupemba* and other birds of the forest have *jussara* as their food basis, followed by the *bicuíba*, the *jindiba*, the *jatobá*... Without the *jussara*, the birds leave for another region and leave our house with less food (Babau, 2019, my translation).

Tupinambá people face a historical conflict with local farmers, which is a common tragedy for all indigenous peoples that have been living under threat in Brazil. *Tupinambás*

have been seeking justice through the practice of what they called *"retomada de terras"* (retaking of lands)[96], which consists in reoccupying lands that once belonged to traditional populations and were invaded by farmers or other explorers. Within this process, there is also a recovery of another space, another ecology, another relationship to land. They face in their lands the environmental destruction and the pressure of capitalist speculation that intends to explore their lands for commercial purposes. This results in drastic consequences for those people who depend on the forests and rivers to live. Babau explains how the cutting of big trees affects all local ecology: the sun reaches directly the soil, which does not bear it and dries, causing the death of trees that lived under the shadow of bigger trees; the river's level decreases – and it is important to remember that trees retain water in their roots and prevent soil erosion – and the rain cycle becomes unregulated, troubling how indigenous people are used to planting (Babau, 2019). But it has changed since indigenous people began to organise themselves to reoccupy lands that were once stepped by their ancestors, places where rituals used to be realised, places that keep memories and affective bonds for those people (Alarcón, 2019).

In 2004, *Tupinambá* people put into action the first *retaking* of land, which was followed by many others in the following years. Their mobilisation was heavily repressed by the police with many episodes of violence. Afterwards, some indigenous people suffered persecution and intimidation. The repression against them also involved the police acting together with farmers, the media and courts to criminalise them. Anthropologist and journalist Daniela Fernandes Alarcón documented it very well in the short movie titled *O Retorno da Terra* (The Return of the Land*,* 2015)[97] and her book with the same title published in 2019. There is also a long report written by Glicéria Tupinambá, sister of Cacique Babau, who also played an important role in this mobilisation and was cruelly arrested by the police with a still breastfeeding baby (Tupinambá, 2021). It is not the focus of this work to describe these episodes of repression in detail, but considering the objectives of this work, it is important to mention that they also mobilised institutionally and legally to protect themselves and reclaim their rights, including indigenous lawyers, as the report of Glicéria Tupinambá shows.

Babau says that after they began to take their territory back, they managed to solve the problem of hunger, the forests were recovered over time, rivers were recomposed and the economic situation of the community also improved (Babau, 2019). Alarcón, who did

[96] I prefer to translate this word as retake, which means to take back something that once one has owned; instead of reappropriation, in which appropriation means to take control of something that belongs to someone else. The case discussed here concern the history of a people who lived in these lands for thousands of years and suffered a long process of extermination. They bravely resist staying where all their ancestors lived for so long.

[97] The movie is available on-line on the link: https://vimeo.com/127657520

ethnographic work along with *Tupinambá* people for many years, describes in her book how lands retaken by them were found in a degraded situation and how the reoccupation of these lands is also a practice of healing that is always tuned to a spiritual practice (Alarcón, 2019). The return to these ancestral lands is a practice of care in which they seek to retrieve the vitality of the territory, recomposing the cosmological web between trees, rivers, birds, spirits and people.

The discourse of rights frequently appears in the discourses of indigenous leaders and activists in Brazil. They appropriate this knowledge, negotiate strategically with institutions, and recur to the grammar of rights when it is needed, but on the other hand, they do not expect to have all their needs fulfilled by the State. Their perspectives are always focused on the defence of forests and territories that can sustain their existence. They affirm their rights at the same time that they recognise how their existence is only possible in fullness when the rights of other living beings are also respected. The brilliant text of Cacique Babau mentioned here shows strategies for reorganising their ways of living before the need to compose together with other animals living in the territory. He says:

> How can we think that we are the only ones with the right to land? And the right of birds to have their trees to perch, sing and nest? And the right of the sloth to have its tree to live in? And the right of the armadillo to have a land to dig and live with dignity? Why do only human beings think they can live with dignity on earth? We *Tupinambá* do not think so. We have our right and nature has her right. We don't touch her part (Babau, 2019, my translation).

In this case, he is not speaking of rights formalised in legal norms. It all stems from a relationship with the environment that is not based on the rational domain but on an attentive perception and a flexible posture to move according to the movement of non-human bodies. It is to pose oneself in an ecological web knowing that one cannot master the web, and if it happens, the web can be dismantled. And it is this web to which we are viscously entangled that sustains life.

7.5. Weaving justice in the middle of the jungle

If Carl Schmitt is right when he says in *The Nomos of the Earth* (2006) that the original movement that makes law arise is the taking of land, which produces an ordering of space and defines borders that establish relations of friendship or enmity with its exteriority, what indeed happens when lands are retaken and borders are reshaped? Or even what happens if lands are alive, populated by more than human agents, all entangled in a cosmological complex, such as

indigenous peoples conceive it?[98] How to think of law without a pre-established image of a transcendent reason legislating and deciding upon the real, working through its abstract reasoning based on norms and codes indifferent to the necessities that condition marginalised bodies?[99] For sure, this is a question that modern legal theory is not able to answer without a violent exclusion of many beings from relations that were taken as exclusive of humans, such as political and legal relationships.

The concept of spatial justice developed by Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2015), allows me to go further in this question, observing how in these struggles for lands emerges a different way of ordering space taking into consideration the non-human bodies that are part of this spatial assemblage. Instead of a spatial production centred on human action modifying the environment, in the experiences of indigenous communities and landless movements narrated here, we can see a reorientation of human bodies in space that does not rely upon human mastery. Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos presents a pertinent perspective of the law being produced through the perpetual practice of solving problems between bodies occupying a given space. He describes spatial justice as below:

> So, rather than synthesis, spatial justice is an emergence (which means, it lies beyond prescription, controlled mechanics and systematic articulation of the result). Rather than originating in a dualism, spatial justice emerges from within a multiplicity (which means, it is not an oscillation between two opposing poles, but an often arbitrary picking of various positions that form a surface on which one moves). Rather than an outcome in the sense of causal link between legal and corporeal movements, spatial justice resists causality. Further, it also resists attribution, namely post-facto causal linking that takes place on a virtual plane, itself potentially co-opted by its own striation. Finally, spatial justice emerges properly speaking *in the middle* (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 189).

In the middle of cocoa crops, birds' songs, enchanted spirits, rivers, bigger trees, smaller trees, police attacks, normative instruments, legislations, and constitutionalised rights, these struggles for land and territory produce justice not only for the humans living in those lands and territories but also for non-human beings. Justice is not produced through a rational agreement of human subjects deciding on a given subject. Instead, it emerges according to how the different beings inhabiting that space compose together with each other in their

[98] Indigenous cosmopolitics is always populated by spirits. Nicole Soares Pinto called it an "ecology with spirits inside" (Pinto, 2021). Tupinambá people call the forest spirits as *"the enchanted"* and they are the true owners of lands (Alarcon, 2019); Yanomami people, which live in the northwest of the Amazon rainforest, call these spirits as *"xapiri pe"* (Kopenawa; Albert, 2013). Other indigenous people will have different names for spirits that inhabit the forests and coexist with them.

[99] I am taking as reference here the discussion made by Deleuze in the third chapter of *Difference and Repetition* (1994), where he conceptualises the Kantian reason as the modern image of thought, and move away from that to elaborate an immanent practice of thought.

environments; how they are part of the cosmological entanglement that viscously gathers different beings in a multiplicity that is not closed, but mutant.

Sandroni demonstrates in her PhD thesis how the territories where Tupinambá people live are not fixed but are constantly reshaped according to how people move to other localities, change agriculture or are affected by the dynamics of struggles for land (Sandroni, 2018). The retaking of lands can reshape how bodies are distributed in space and constitute new localities. When the State reinforces repossession orders, it also changes the landscapes and reconfigures territorial limits. Besides this, each kind of crop and agriculture practice shapes the landscape in different rhythms and cycles in non-human times. The local conflicts and relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous people are also crossed by external agents, such as in the case of legal disputes in which the State intervene. Justice is not fully granted with the retaking of lands, as indigenous people can still be vulnerable to attacks from farmers and their hired gunmen.[100] Justice is produced here in a constant struggle among those human and non-human bodies composing a territory. How to enable those bodies that have been suffering a long process of genocide and ecocide to affirm their existence in fullness? Rights are part of this struggle, but those groups realise their conditions of existence in fullness neither fully through them nor without them. This is achieved in the middle of dynamic relations of force, conflicts, negotiations, collaborations and exchanges in different scales and times, among local people, in relation to the state, disputing in the courts, retaking lands, and so on. This struggle occurs inside and outside the law, including rights but going beyond them. It is not a case that relies only upon the law in its institutional dimension for the law is not the central source of justice, but a part among other parts.

In her ethnographic work along with the Munduruku people and their experiences of self-demarcation of their lands in the state of Pará in the north of Brazil, Luísa Molina gives a pertinent account of this relationship between indigenous struggles for land and the law (Molina, 2017). She observes how normative production is oriented to itself, actualising its norms and improving its instruments as though it has an end in itself. It is the case of how the law determines what enters into its code and language. Molina exemplifies it by describing how the State determines what should be considered indigenous land and the implications of this in its own terms, in its internal logic, and the legal consequences. This is how the State tries to internalise the multiplicity outside its codes: codifying it and fitting it into the limits of

[100] See, for example, the report of violences against indigenous communities produced by the Indigenist Missionary Council – *Conselho Indigenista Missionário* – CIMI (2022).

its norms. By reading Deleuze and Guattari, she compares it to a chess game where each component has its possible movements determined beforehand in a striated space. The struggle for indigenous rights works in such a manner. But indigenous struggles leak the limited possibilities conceived by the State. Therefore, Molina proposes to understand the way indigenous people adopt legal codes and normative apparatuses not as a subjection of them to the State, but as a strategy that allows them to move inside and outside the "board", using the elements of the State's game against itself and destabilising it. In this sense, the self-demarcation of lands by Munduruku people produces a two-way dissonance when it puts in contrast distinct perspectives on lands and the adoption of normative apparatuses that turn lands into legal territories.

Regarding this contrast, Sandroni describes in her thesis a meeting between the Tupinambá people and State agents to discuss the demarcation of indigenous land. The State has a geometric perspective on the land as an inert object that can be divided into pieces whereas for indigenous people the lands compose an entangled and interdependent territory that cannot be divided without breaking the ecological relationships that sustain its parts. She quotes a curious intervention of a Tupinambá person who invoked an animal perspective to say: "*If they say that the border of the reserve is right there, then tell them to tell the armadillo that it is not to go outside the reserve"* (Sandroni, 2018). That is to say, other living beings do not recognise the arbitrary cuts that humans make on a web of relationships that exist in a differential continuum. When we break this cosmological web that has always entangled our existences with other living beings, we also cut the flows that nourish the basis of our lives. When the law recognises the rights of indigenous people to their lands, it cannot fulfil this circuit of flows for it is not enough to demarcate an area of forest whereas all the areas around it were destroyed. This shows the global dimension of indigenous struggles for land and how they do not fit fully into the modern grammar of rights but go beyond it to bring attention to a way of inhabiting the land in consonance with the cosmological composition of life. This points toward the cosmopolitical dimension of these struggles and how the situated movement of these bodies vibrates with the cosmological strings of the planet, moved by it and moving it in return, the local and the planetary resonating through each other.

In the Anthropocene, the planet enters the scene in its open totality and it challenges us to think of our local situations always in connection with a planetary conjuncture. Paradoxically, if on the one hand, the Anthropocene puts in question how human activity has consequences on a geological scale, on the other hand, it also displaces the centrality of the human to show how the planetary condition is a fruit of the co-emergence of its multiple parts

(Chakrabarty, 2021). The human does not have the last word on the production of the world and we are put beside all other species with which we need to compose together to make possible better ways of living and dying on this planet.

7.6. In defence of humus rights

In the experiences narrated above, I described how these collective formations co-emerging together with their territories work without passing through the determinative and normative forms of knowledge. Their natures are not exhaustively described in scientific causal chains but are experienced as a corporeal involvement with the territory. It does not mean that scientific tools should be avoided or ignored, but that these natures are firstly lived corporeally and the compositions between people and their territories unfold along the slow time of coexistence with the land. They do not follow the fast pace of progress, efficient mastering of environments and other obsessions of the temporal horizon of modernisation. In this cosmopoetics of justice, where the ancestral knowledge of indigenous people guides the way of coexisting with the land and its multispecies population, nature is not controlled. Instead, people learn to come into confluence with its temporality.

However, these collective formations also happen within the structures of power imposed by the colonial nation-state, the global capitalism and the world produced by modernisation. People taking part in these formations need to deal with legal institutions and normative demands as well. But looking through these experiences of struggle for land in southern Bahia, I sought to show how these formations are not fully contained within these structures, although they are conditioned by them. If they manage to produce justice and defend their rights in these struggles, this is not realised by acting only through the legal institutions and the State, which is very negligent in protecting them, as it was demonstrated. Their territories are formed through autonomous struggles that confront the structures of power of the State and the capitalist forms of production. The legal institutions are also part of the viscous meshwork of relationships, conflicts, collaborations and negotiations that make it possible the emergence of these territories.

The post-human approach to the law developed by Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos helped me in this path. The concept of lawscape afforded me to think about these more-than-human formations emerging from the way bodies move, the arrangements they compose among themselves, and how the way they distribute themselves along the space shapes the space in a

different way. Each new ordering produced by these dynamics conditions how other movements can be possible or not after. The threshold through which a geographical constraint or a social norm can be turned into a legal norm relies mainly on whether a legal system internalises it as a norm or not. *"Everything is potentially law if the legal system understands it as law"* (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015, p. 67).

Brazilian geographer Milton Santos explained space as systems of objects and systems of actions that interact with one another (Santos, 2021). The former conditions the possible actions that can take place, but as the actions modify the objects and create new ones, the dices for other possible actions are rethrown. Thus, space is transformed and it reshapes how bodies are assembled in the space and what they can do in a given space. It is important to consider that humans are not the only actors modifying the space and other species are all the time shaping the landscapes in different rhythms (Tsing, 2015). Tsing describes how *"landscapes are simultaneously natural and social, and they shift and turn in the interplay of human and nonhuman practices"* (Tsing, 2005, p. 29). The *lawscape*, in turn, is also composed by the assemblages between human and non-human bodies in space.

Thus, if law with its pretension of being a universal command beyond subjective and partial positions, has instead some root in the bodies composing the space, conforming them to its forms, would it not also be true that when these bodies move, the law is also transformed? How can we understand this passage from the bodies' micro-scale to the macro-scales of the law? Indeed, the concepts of spatial justice and *lawscape* bring to question the molecularity of the law and its different processes of actualisation into determined legal assemblages. They bring into perspective a passage from the body to the socius, or a point of communication since it is a two-way relationship in which individual bodies change the collective and are also shaped by it.[101]

How to grasp this passage between a molecular scale of bodies constrained by norms classified in different terms (religious, moral, physical etc.) and a global scale that presents society with a specific image (democratic, totalitarian, patriarchal, etc.)? In the former, bodies are strained by norms that can be discursive, based on rational causality very rigidly and explicitly expressed or dissimulated and diffused in the space;[102] yet the bodies' behaviours and

[101] A perspective about this passage is developed by Deleuze and Guattari in the text *Micropolitics and Segmentarity,* one plateau in their book *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). In this text, they develop a conception of the state as a resonance machine that is fed by molecular changes in the micro-order of bodies and subjectivities. The state makes to resonate these transformations in a macro-scale.

[102] As already mentioned before, Judith Butler develops a discussion about this concerning the sexual norms imposed on bodies and how it conforms bodies to sexual identities and social positions (Butler, 2011).

power relations are usually furtively producing arrangements regularly understood as disorder in contrast to the ideal order required by the law. In the latter, a global scale emerges as a regime of visibility that provides a specific perception of how social matter is organised and a set of utterances that refers to what is seen in order to produce a sense upon this. This is, for instance, the way Foucault explains in his book *Discipline and Punish* (1995) how the panopticon space and architecture of prisons produces a regime of visibility of bodies, regulating what is seen or not, and how criminal law makes to proliferate a set of utterances that refer to that for explaining that context.

This discussion gains a more literal sense in the context of the Anthropocene, which is one of these global-scale perspectives on the social situation in a planetary dimension, but also linked to the spatial production of humanity modifying the landscape without due attention to non-human times and processes. Santos says that *"today space is a system of increasingly artificial objects, populated by systems of actions that also have an artificial character and that increasingly serve purposes that are external to a given place and its inhabitants"* (Santos, 2021, p. 35). For Santos, technical development and the general presence of techniques became the main geographical agents in spatial production. Extending his thoughts to the present discussion, I consider that these techniques are the fruit of the set of human activities on the Earth's surface that reached a degree of complexity able to inaugurate the new geological era named as Anthropocene, which is the apex of modernisation. Either we consider it starting from the colonial invasions that converted south global landscapes into plantations (a way of ordering bodies spatially accordingly to racial hierarchies), or starting with the industrial revolution that accelerated the concentration of people in segregated cities (another kind of spatial order), we can consider the Anthropocene as a planetary *lawscape* that will determine drastically the human possibilities on the Earth, or it can even cancel whatever possible future to humanity.

In the collection of experiences from indigenous people and social movements struggling for land, we find a different horizon for the forms of inhabiting the planet in the Anthropocene. A horizon no longer oriented towards modernisation, but instead, ecologisation. It demands a break with the patterns of consumption and ways of living that we have in the cities, but which are deeply complicit with forms of capitalist production and extraction that are among the main anthropogenic causes of climatic changes and geological transformations (Clark & Szerszynski, 2021), as well as it is complicit with the ongoing processes of capitalist accumulation that threaten indigenous lands and carry on exploiting, killing and incarcerating black people (Yusoff, 2018; Silva, 2022). Only by subverting this global capitalist order is

possible to produce justice for black and indigenous bodies and liberate nature from the servitude of human extractivism. In the cosmopoetics of justice echoing from these struggles for lands, justice is only possible by making visible the viscous law that sticks our lives to the planet and to other forms of life that make this planet a liveable place. To defend human rights is also needed to liberate nature from capitalist control and recreate the territories where we can recompose our lives collectively. There is no human life possible without a land to live, and capitalist modernisation breaks with our attachments to lands, which are where we connect to the planet as well.

Therefore, we can conclude by saying that the guarantee of human rights to a dignified existence is dependent on the guarantee of full existence to all other living beings to which our lives are viscously entangled and without which we cannot survive on the planet. This viscous entanglement turns human rights into *humus* rights. As Donna Haraway says, *"we are humus, not Homo, not Anthropos; we are compost, not posthuman"* (Haraway, 2016). The term speaks of the interdependent existence of humans with other creatures, composing and decomposing each other, *becoming-with* in different geographical scales and layers of time. Humans as *humus* are deeply connected to land and the Anthropocene comes to remind us of this. It has been challenging the epistemological construct inherited from modernity that is based on the separation between natural and social sciences. A way of knowledge-making that tries to separate and purify epistemologically parts that have always been interfering with one another (Latour, 1993).

Clark and Szerszynski argue that the Anthropocene demands us to think of society *through* the Earth, taking it as a self-organising system far from equilibrium. Besides the need to socialise the Anthropocene and show how its consequences are unevenly distributed to different social groups, they also propose to geologise the social. They say that *"the human acquisition of geological agency, we contend, needs to be viewed not only as a manifestation of social power, but as an expression of those powers and properties of the Earth with which we have joined forces"* (Clark & Szerszynski, 2021, p. 11). The experiences of indigenous peoples and the Web of the Peoples discussed above point to another way of becoming-with the earth in which these earthly powers are not dominated and exploited to produce capitalist wealth quantitatively. Instead, they produce a wealth qualitatively different. One that allows for producing the conditions of an autonomous, healthy, sustainable and above all collective existence in composition with other species of living beings.

In these experiences, human bodies shape the landscapes in collaboration with the maintenance of the conditions of living for other species. Taking care of how other species

inhabit the space, being attentive to the ecological webs they compose, and positioning flexibly in conjunction with how other animals, insects and plants are arranged in the space, they give way to the emergence of another lawscape where the material conditions of living and being able to exert political agency – that which rights are supposed to protect – are composted on the lands. This lawscape emerges from the viscous assemblages sticking these different bodies together and the practice of weaving as many forms of life as possible in this meshwork is what makes it flourishing.

When indigenous peoples reclaim rights, they are not merely demanding a promise to be fulfilled by the State. They are requiring the recognition of a territory produced by a multispecies collaboration. When the State does the legal demarcation of indigenous lands or recognises the legitimacy of a settlement, this is a condition for the emergence of these miscellaneous compositions of more-than-human collectives. The realisation of justice is neither in the hands of the State nor is determined exclusively by anyone else. Justice emerges through these viscous compositions formed when bodies assemble in a way that makes possible a heterogeneous coexistence without causing the subjugation of any part. This also means that the non-human agencies composing these viscous aggregates are also contributing to justice. This viscous law guided by a *cosmopoethical* – the insertion of the 'ethical' here was intentional – relationship with nature reorients justice towards the liberation of nature and recreates this relationship as an experience of freedom and enjoyment. It restores the material (cosmological and ecological) conditions and subjective capacities of enjoying the experience of being alive.

Indigenous practices of retaking ancestral lands and landless workers' practices of recovery of deforested lands through agroforestry arose after decades of social struggles demanding rights without any effective answer from the State. Either concerning the legal demarcation of indigenous land or agrarian reform to distribute lands among landless workers. *"One has to step on the land to have the right"*, a *Tupinambá* woman said after a mobilisation to retake a land (Alarcón, 2019, p. 108). Alarcón explains how this understanding is present among the activists and it indicates the need to push the gears of the rights recognition system. Without this pressure, their rights would not be granted. If on the one hand, the demand for rights makes life more coupled to the State's sovereignty and its power on life (Agamben, 1998), on the other hand, it is only part of a struggle that is not concerned with structures of centralised power. These struggles are not seeking to institute a unified territory, but they collaborate among them to spread autonomy. Thus, reactualising what once motivated a French anthropologist to say that these are not societies without States, but societies against the State,

which resist the State not only when it comes from outside, but when it virtually haunts to divide the social body into hierarchised parts (Clastres, 1989).

Conclusion: An autoethnographic essay on the cosmopoetics of justice

Every poetics is a palliative for eternity.
Édouard Glissant

In November of 2023, during my last trip to Brazil before finishing this thesis, I was invited to talk about my research at the school where I studied in my village, the *Centro Educacional Landulfo Caribé.* At the beginning of my talk, I was interested in knowing more about the public to which I would speak. Even though I was familiarised with the context, I knew that it changed over time. Besides this, since 2011, when I moved to another region of Brazil to study, I have lived far away from my village. The public was a mix of teenagers in high school and elderly adults attending the program of alphabetisation. Before speaking of the history of cocoa and how it shaped our region, I asked them to raise their hands if they had already worked in cocoa crops. Most of them raised their hands. Then, I asked them to do it again if their parents or grandparents had worked in cocoa crops. All of them raised their hands. Once again, I asked them if they knew the names of their great-grandparents and only a few people confirmed it. At last, I questioned who knew a person holding a PhD. Nobody raised a hand. And I told them that I also grew up without knowing anyone who was a PhD.

Besides me, there are only two other people in my village who have reached a PhD and they also moved to other states in Brazil. Nowadays, these students have teachers who are masters. In my teenage, some of my teachers did not have even a bachelor's degree. I would not like to take these degrees of qualification as a hierarchy of education as though it was the unique and necessary path of intellectual development. In this thesis, I dialogued with indigenous and black intellectuals who did not follow an academic career, but who have contributed immensely to recover and elaborate on forms of understanding the world that for centuries have been dismissed and erased. My option for a cosmopoetic form of knowledge was a way to make room for this dialogue in the elaboration of theoretical discourse. However, considering the uneven structures to which we are conditioned in our modernised societies, where access to higher education and post-graduate degrees strongly influences one's social position, this fact has something to say about who can access the authorised means of intellectual production, especially the university. Access to the university for black, indigenous

and peasant people has only become possible since some decades ago. In one of the biggest universities in Brazil and Latin America, the University of São Paulo (USP), until 2023, there were only 2 indigenous and 121 black or brown – *pretos* and *pardos,* which in Brazil are included in the category *negro,* according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) – lecturers/professors among a staff of 5.151 people,[103] in a country where more than a half of the population is non-white. This brutal inequality in access to the means of intellectual production also influences which kind of knowledge is produced at the university.

One of the main challenges that the teachers at my former school in Florestal related to me was the problem of low self-esteem among the students. In my lecture, I talked about the rich knowledge that their parents and grandparents have about the land where they live and how important it is for the uncertain future of climatic changes. Our native region is still largely covered by part of the Atlantic rainforest coexisting with cocoa crops. Some experiences with agroforestry around the region are successful and inspirational, such as the Terra Vista settlement, the Ouro Fino farm[104] and the indigenous territories of the Tupinambá and the Pataxó peoples (Alarcón, 2019; Sandroni, 2018; Cardoso, 2018). But this ecological and intellectual potential is not recognised and it is common for young people to feel shameful about their origins. I understand it because I passed through it as well. I know how the geographical and social hierarchies that differentiate modern and non-modern people can hurt. Important to remember that this is a context where the majority of people are non-white and most of them have black and indigenous ancestry.

Following Silva, I argue that these hierarchies cannot be unmade only through education and intellectual transformation because they are first of all hierarchies of power. Silva argues that the critical arsenal of modern theories, including critical race theories, can only treat problems of racism and prejudice as intellectual or moral deficiencies that could be solved through education or cultural inclusion through symbolic representation. This is because they are articulated around the modern ideal of the rational subject as the measure of full humanity and racism would be a failure or deviation in the universal recognition of this ideal (Silva, 2007; 2022). However, the problem is firstly economic, legal and political. The racialisation of the 'Others of Europe' and the obliteration of their political and intellectual agency was a strategy that made possible the extraction of value from indigenous lands and black labour, which is the basis of capitalist accumulation (*Ibid.*). Silva criticises the limitations

[103] https://jornal.usp.br/universidade/comunidade-usp-somos-mais-de-120-mil-pessoas/
[104] https://www.fazendaourofino.com.br/

of modern theories because they translated these problems into mere mental or moral deviations. Following her argument, in this thesis, I refused the paternalistic recognition of our sufferings that do not touch on the colonial structures of power that place our territories as sites of capitalist extraction of commodities to feed the modernised world and never return the value extracted from our lands. Until 2022, 57,7% of the population of the state of Bahia was in a condition of poverty or extreme poverty[105] whereas the chocolate industry accumulates an annual revenue of over 200 billion dollars per year.[106] Besides the poverty, 6 cities of the state are among the 10 most violent cities in Brazil[107], being the black population the most affected by these situations. As I have shown in Chapter 4, Brazil was one of the largest exporters of cocoa in the world during the twentieth century and most of this production was concentrated in southern Bahia. The history of cocoa is one of violence against indigenous people and black workers. Their lives and histories were physically and symbolically erased to the point that nowadays we no longer know our links with them. But this history of violence and racism shaped our present and how we are perceived and positioned socially. As Dionne Brand wrote: *"One enters a room and history follows; one enters a room and history precedes. History is already seated in the chair in the empty room when one arrives. Where one stands in a society seems always related to this historical experience"* (Brand, 2001, p. 25).

This is also the viscosity of cocoa's history. Not a linear history that is causally transparent and thoroughly described in a sequence of registered events, but a mute history haunting our bodies, our skins, our facial traces, and our ways of being, even though we cannot know our past. When I moved to London, I brought this spectral history within my body. It was not my first plan to do an autoethnography, but it became my inescapable struggle. This thesis is the form I managed to give to this struggle. The distinction between modern and non-modern worlds and how modernisation configures global history was the way I found to translate my displacement each time I crossed the Atlantic Ocean travelling between Florestal and London. To inhabit this distance when we come from a world made of violent clashes and mixtures such as the worlds produced by colonisation, is an experience of confusion. To cross this distance when we come from the side that was exploited and subjugated to give the material conditions

[105] Statistics from the Superintendence of Social and Economic Studies of Bahia – SEI, 2023.
[106] Data informed by the Australian company of industry research IBISWorld: https://www.ibisworld.com/global/market-research-reports/global-candy-chocolate-manufacturing-industry/#IndustryStatisticsAndTrends
The German platform of statistics analysis, Statista, provides similar information: https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/food/confectionery-snacks/confectionery/chocolate-confectionery/worldwide
[107] Statistics from the Brazilian Forum of Public Security (*Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*), 2023.

to build this modern world is an experience of pain. I do not know how it will be the future of these students with whom I talked in my former school, but I wrote this thesis willing that they do not need to pass by the same challenges as me. As I have said before, I do not expect that a thesis can change the uneven structures of society, but I know it can be another tool in this battle, as many books and authors that helped me to be here. They made me capable of describing these global configurations, my confusing experience crossing so disparate worlds and giving form to the affirmation of our worlds. However, I did not address this thesis to them. Writing in English, it was to this Anglophone world where I needed to be that I assumed this theoretical struggle. Who knows one day those students could read me while they are following their trajectories, tracing their strategies and building their tools. So, they will find how my successes and failures could help them.

It was also by experiencing the lonely life of a Latin immigrant in London, crossing a global pandemic, which was how I arrived here, and learning to live in this world where my world is unknown or downgraded that I thought of the concepts that I developed here. London is a city where I met people from many other worlds unknown to me. All these people carry different stories and trajectories that are woven into the making of this city. They do not necessarily converge, they can even conflict, but they viscously put the globe in relation. In the experiences that I had as a visiting lecturer working on topics such as the Anthropocene, politics of climate change, critical environmental law, and so on, I met other students from different parts of the world to discuss and reflect on our common inhabitation of the planet and how this latter behave to our presence. It was also while I was in London that, for the first time, I began to see news about my native region being seriously affected by floods as I had never seen before. This also affected the course of my research. Through these experiences, I also saw viscosity putting in relation not only these different cultures but also these different natures.

Thinking of nature through indigenous cosmologies, and taking them as a theoretical lens, I understood that nature was not a neutral universal and abstract object that could be indifferently described by scientific tools in a deterministic and normative form. This could not be the nature of cocoa ecology, which is usually called “the culture of cocoa” by cocoa workers when describing their own worlds. Of course, the practice of cocoa agriculture involves technical-scientific knowledge, but when my father is working in the crop while our dog plays in the weeds, birds are singing around, and my father stops to drink from a water source or to take a jackfruit, guava or cashew to eat, there is much more than what these scientific tools can describe. When I remember the pain of the internal mass of cocoa pods, the endocarp, getting inside my nails in the collection of cocoa seeds after harvesting, or the smell of its viscosity

staining our hands and clothes, this is an experience that does not fit in the single name of nature as an abstract and universal name applied to a diversity of beings and experiences produced through the relationships between these many beings.

When I found the Yanomami concept of *urihi a* to describe their nature, it changed my understanding of what nature was. Kopenawa describes it as a meshwork weaving people's lives with the forests where his community lives and it also shapes their sense of territory and their spatial orientation (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013). *Urihi a*, the world-forest or land-forest, is indeed a sociocosmological concept. Albert explains how the concept designates not only the forest and its connections to the communities, but a mobile "*architexture"* in which space, time and narrative are interwoven, forming "verbal maps" (Albert & Kopenawa, 2023, p. 44-45). The concept refers to the geographical configuration of Yanomami communities and their way of situating and orienting themselves in their territory, that is in the middle of the Amazon rainforest. Albert describes it as "fractal geography" made by different layers involving the connections of the communities with places and neighbour groups, the geographical network of places of fishing, hunting, and camping during longer journeys in the forest, the spaces occupied by the Yanomami people in their migratory history, the relationships with neighbour communities, all this forming a territory with indefinite limits (*Ibid.*, pp. 42-43). It is traced by words indissociable from the way this people live in this territory and their ancestral history occupying these places. The *urihi a* is not a fixed space with closed borders, but it is also made by the itinerant way of living of this people guided by a system of values of the land in constant recomposition. It does not designate an immutable soil that underpins a social identity linked to it. Instead, it is a complex of interwoven lines and routes making "translocal communities" formed by migratory flows, including the flow between urban and rural areas (*Ibid.,* p. 45). This is because these people are constantly recreating their discourse and ways of understanding themselves according to the transformation of their lives. Their cosmological discourse was never a static mythology that remained the same over the centuries. As Albert writes, it is also through this way of understanding their lives enmeshed with the territory of the forest that the Yanomami people resist the sedentarisation imposed by the State which intends to fix them in delimited reserves with agricultural vocation, turning them into small farmers (*Ibid.,* p. 46).

Although I grew up in a context of rural communities that had lost their connections to their indigenous ancestry, the concept of *urihi a* inspired me to think of the networks of routes connecting places in the geography of cocoa production. When I was a child, I used to follow my father not only in the crops but also in his travels around the region to collect the cocoa

produced on other farms or cassava flour made by local people. My father also used to be a middleman buying cocoa from local producers to sell it in Jequié to other warehouses that would still sell it to exporters or industries. I followed him in these activities as well, and as he used to be a real hard worker, he also worked as a driver in the evening, transporting students coming from nearby farms to the school in Florestal. All these travels happened through dirty roads crossing hillsides that could be slippery in rainy seasons. I used to help my father by opening the gates dividing farms, pastures and crops, so he could drive through by car more quickly. Besides this, I was always cycling to friends' houses and, together with them, to rivers for swimming or practising mountain biking and downhill around the region. All these experiences formed the affective geography that I have of my native land.

This world relegated to a lower position in modernised centres and erroneously pictured with non-intellectual stereotypes as a place of physical labour was for me, first of all, an experience of freedom and rich involvement with other people and the local ecology. And it is a place of labour, indeed, but not less than the big cities are as well, as neither it is less intellectual than them. But who does make it possible to feed the thinkers? It was a world of injustice as well, and I would not denounce global capitalism in vain. I also saw many colleagues leaving the school to work in cocoa crops to help their families' income. Black female mothers could have oppressive husbands that did not afford them the same freedom. I grew up working too, but the fact that my father had his own land and did not have to work on someone else's land made it possible for me to study, though this was also difficult for me, mainly concerning access to higher education. However, despite these inequalities, everyone in that world could swim the river, take some fruit in the crops, cycle around, fish, hunt, go to parties and so on. There was a lived land crossed by rivers, surrounded by forests, echoing birds singing, that despite all harm caused by a history of colonisation, racism, patriarchy and capitalist exploitation, could afford these experiences. The experience of that world was not always so mediated by consumption and conditioned to money as it is the experience of living in London, for example. In the urban centres produced by modernisation, capitalism makes it impossible or much harder access to these experiences.

Beyond this, capitalist forms of extraction and production also destroy other territories where these experiences are still possible. See for example the case of the Krenak people in the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil, whose livelihood is very based on fishing. They had the main river crossing their lands, the Doce River, intoxicated by the disaster caused by the breach of a dam of toxic mud derived from mining activity operated by Samarco company, which is part of one of the biggest mining companies in Brazil, the *Vale do Rio Doce* or Vale S. A. (Fernandes

et al., 2017). The disastrous rupture of waste dams happened twice in 2015 and 2019 and it also destroyed two small cities, Mariana and Brumadinho, and caused hundreds of deaths (Freitas et al., 2019). One of the most notorious indigenous thinkers in Brazil, Ailton Krenak, is a member of this people and grew up on the riverside of the Doce River. He denounces how capitalism reduces and impoverishes our experience of the planet:

> We are living in a world where we are forced to dive deep into the earth to be able to recreate possible worlds. The thing is, in the narratives of the world where only the human acts, this centrality silences all other presences. They even want to silence the enchanted spirits, to reduce to mimicry what it would be to "spiritise", to suppress the experience of the body in communion with the leaf, the lichen and the water, with wind and fire, with everything that activates our transcendent power and that surpasses the mediocrity to which the human being has been reduced. For me, this is even offensive. Humans are accepting the humiliating condition of consuming the Earth. The orishas, as well as indigenous ancestors and other traditions, instituted worlds where people could experience life, sing and dance, but it seems that the will of capital is to impoverish existence. Capitalism wants a world in which we operate like robots, and we cannot accept that (Krenak, 2022, p. 20, own translation).

Critical analyses of the legal consequences of these disasters show how the Brazilian State preferred to safeguard the corporations involved and the economic growth at any cost (Armada, 2021; Primo et al., 2021; Laschefski, 2020). These studies show the failure and omissions of the Brazilian state in providing protection and reparation for the victims and how the corporations involved acted to protect their profits. Cases like this, which is only one among many, show how the State is complicit with the capital and unable to confront and constrain the power of these companies in order to protect people in more disadvantageous conditions. Capitalist development and its forms of modernisation run over communities that stay in their way. This is also what happens with indigenous communities that confront the interests of agribusiness, mining and other forms of extraction. For example, it is the case of indigenous people in southern Bahia, such as the Tupinambá people and their historical conflicts with cocoa farmers (Alárcon, 2019).

In this thesis, I confronted the ontoepistemological basis of modern law to show how it is limited to realise justice for indigenous and black communities living from and with the land. The modern legal theory, which is subjacent to the making of colonial and modern worlds, in its normative language conceives of humans as detached from their natures and the lands as things that can be cut, divided, split as though they were not meshworks of many forms of life involved and co-evolving. To oppose the modern legal theory and its contemporary normative derivations, I developed through the concepts of viscosity and viscous law a theoretical framework or a cosmopoetic discourse inspired by the forms of knowledge of indigenous people, landless workers' activists and cocoa workers. Through these concepts, I sought to

show how people's lives are entangled in their territories that afford them the material conditions of living collectively. However, also because these territories are threatened by the persistent and invasive interventions of global capitalism, I showed how their lives are also viscously connected to these global networks of production that also reach the other side of the Atlantic. For example, the connection between the exportation of cocoa from southern Bahia and the industrialisation of chocolate in England or in the US, as I showed in Chapter 4. Moreover, these territories are, on the one hand, affected by climate change that has anthropogenic causes, such as the long history of deforestation caused by colonisation and the high emission of greenhouse gases triggered by industrialisation and modern ways of living (e.g., the massive use of automobiles); on the other hand, these territories are also important sites of struggle to recreate socioecological alternatives to cope with the scenario of planetary mutations. Thus, the viscous law also weaves these assemblages of people and their lands, or lands and their more-than-human beings, to the temporalities and rhythms of the Earth. Viscosity enmeshes these three layers: local ecologies, global capitalism and planetary mutations.

Besides these geographical scales, the viscous law also connects layers of time and memory that act in the present. This is the case of indigenous ancestry and how it resists being erased by modernisation. It reinforms the present with ancestral futures that reorient the current modes of existence towards the horizon of ecologisation. It is also what informs the cosmopoetics of justice and the redistribution of human relationships with nature as a plurality of beings, liberating these latter from the human subjugation and reinvolving the human in the cosmological web of life, as we are also part of the multiplicity of nature. This web is no longer woven around the humans as their centre but pushes them into a cosmic dance, sticking them to the planet. Ancestry here is not a transcendence. Instead, as it is deeply corporeal and sticks bodies to lands, it reactualises the indigenous memory into new modes of existence.

In the intense struggle of indigenous peoples to protect their territories, it is the memory of the entire sociogenesis and cosmogenesis of the historical configurations of modern society that resurfaces in the monstrous intrusion of these ancestral spectres. The ancestral times expose the actuality of the white man's efforts to erase indigenous ways of living and colonise indigenous lands. For example, as I showed in Chapter 7 when discussing the efforts of Bolsonaro's government to legitimise the exploitation of indigenous lands. On the other hand, in the face of this, we also see the contraction of an ancestral memory that discharges into this same land the bodily impulse to maintain and expand the possibilities of existence for all human and non-human peoples who share the dream of this immense subject called Earth. The

memory of these ancestral times also exposes the periodicity and historical delimitation of legal, economic and political configurations, such as capitalism, and the recombination of these memories pressuring the present breaks the progression of time, opens a crack in the linear history, disturbs the teleological destinations of modernisation, and it makes to pass through this breach the virtuality of another image of the existence (Silva, 2020).

The viscous law moulding multispecies relations between humans and their living territories redistributes the limits of freedom as humans need to constrain their impulse to develop and expand limitlessly without concern about other forms of life that are mastered to make their development possible. So, human freedom here is more negotiated. It cannot be understood through the same rational and autonomous individual subject of freedom. Human bodies are here moving together with non-human bodies, human life in composition with non-human life and non-organic matter (water, air, land, minerals, rocks and so on). The viscous law is the sticking connections of interdependence among these different beings recreating the lawscape (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015). Such interdependence is not normative, but fluid and processual. Bodies always act together with other bodies, either human or not, to which they are viscously assembled. Indeed, it is the assemblage made by them that acts. Their relations and connections move in confluence according to the movement of each part involved in the assemblage, as different water streams flow together becoming a more voluminous current. The change of a river, of cocoa, of wind, of earth's mineral composition or any element composing the assemblage alters the condition of all other parts involved and the human subjects only act along with the collaboration with their many partners. Therefore, the making of these collective assemblages is not autopoietic but *sympoietic* (Haraway, 2016), as each part here is crossed and influenced by factors and agents that are not necessarily present locally. They co-evolve together with the transformations of the planet. The connections and influences are aleatory, contingent and viscous, marking and conditioning the action of the local agents by sticking them involuntarily to other lines of life unfolding elsewhere.

By understanding how bodies always exist in connection to other bodies, this viscous law can also be actualised in more crystallised socioecological forms of collective organisations. These latter would work to sustain these viscous webs of life as a shaman works to avoid the falling of the sky if the relations holding together the many cosmological beings are torn apart (Albert & Kopenawa, 2013). The practice of justice building here is inseparable from ecological practices. The viscous lawyer would be one that acts as a weaver by attending to how different forms of life are knotted to each other forming a meshwork where it is possible to lay down and rest, knowing that this meshwork is capable of providing what is needed to

live, as indigenous people can trust in the forest to take care of their futures. The painting of Macuxi artist Jaider Esbell, *"Arikba, a mulher de Makunaimî"* (2020) shows this image. This is also the practice of Glicéria Tupinambá recreating the ancestral mantle of her people. She is a weaver who struggles for her people's territory and recreates the present and future of Tupinambá people with her artistic-political-spiritual practice of rebuilding ancestral pieces once stolen by colonisers (Françozo & Velden, 2020). Like Glicéria weaving the Tupinambá mantle made of the materials that express the territory, or Esbell painting a fractal cosmos that is confounded with each being forming it or Kopenawa's shamanic diplomacy with the spirits to keep the sky in its place, a viscous lawyer understands the violence of tear apart the sticky connections enmeshing a body to flows of life feeding it, and separating and isolating the body from what makes it alive. The viscous lawyer will work to rewire the many threads making the land a meshwork through which vital energy flows. All other species can understand it and flow on this meshwork without cutting its connections. Would we need to wait for the collapse of the Gulf Stream, the total melting of glaciers, the extinction of our companion species of earthly inhabitation and many other catastrophes to learn that all of it is viscously connected?

The first time I visited the Terra Vista settlement, I was walking around there with my father and we saw a curved thin tree below the shadow of a thick and leafy tree. My father pointed to it and said to me, 'Look at that, she is curving like this to flee the shadow and seek the sunlight'. In another moment, further ahead, we were aside a river and he showed me how the roots of a tree were all directed towards the river, and he told me it was how the tree was thirsty and looking for water. Maybe neither he nor I are indigenous, but the land that created us is and it pulses in our hearts and memory. This was what I learned from cocoa and I crossed the Ocean to share with you.

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