The Sky-Earth System: A Manifesto for Learning to See and Think as a Generic Ancient

Justin Shaffner

Adam Louis-Klein

ABSTRACT: The Sky is falling and there are too few who recognize the importance of holding it up. We contend that many of the pressing problems of our times, including climate catastrophe and global inequality, are direct consequences of the cosmology of the Moderns. We argue that anthropology as a discipline should think with ordinary people everywhere and with the Universe at once. We propose the Sky-Earth System as a cosmology in which to think and live as Ancients, to suspend the impersonal World of the Moderns. The Sky-Earth System is a metaframe that replaces the Nature/Culture schema of the Moderns and puts the Human back at the Center of the Universe, ending the Copernican era as seen from within the history of the Moderns. It allows us to think generically, meaning to think with everyone anywhere and anywhen. We think-with revival movements of the Ancients that are taking place everywhere across the Sky-Earth System, practices of symmetric anthropology in the Upper Rio Negro of the Amazon, in the city of Manaus and in Brazil, the Village-as-University in Melanesia and the Boazi revival, Afro-Centric, Polytheist, Psychedelic, and other movements occuring in North America and elsewhere at the ends of the World.

KEYWORDS: Sky-Earth Systems Science, the Human, Generic Ancient, symmetric anthropology, the Moderns, the World.

The Sky is falling and there are too few who recognize the importance of holding it up (Kopenawa & Albert 2013). We[1] contend that many of the pressing problems of our times, including climate catastrophe and global inequality, are direct consequences of the cosmology of the Moderns. It's impossible today to separate the political and the cosmological. At stake is the very contingency of the World[-system] and its relationship to the Universe and to the ordinary person. We claim that anthropology can be a science that thinks with the

[1] "We" take ourselves to be ordinary persons, an invariant position from which anyone can think

ordinary person everywhere and with the Universe at once. We maintain that such an anthropology might propose concrete solutions to the aporias of the World. The World[2], under the Moderns, goes by many names: Capitalism (Marx 1867), racial and otherwise (Robinson 2000, Lowe 2015); the World-System (Wallerstein 1974, Abu-Lughod 1989); Globalization; Empire (Hardt & Negri 2000); the Plantationocene (Haraway & Tsing 2019); Capitalist Sorcery (Pignarre & Stengers 2011); and the Cannibal Giant (the "two-headed state-market monster" in Danowski & Viveiros de Castro 2014). The World causes the Sky to fall, displaces the Universe as seen in the person and the person as seen in the Universe. But it doesn't have to be that way, nor should it. There are other ways of living together between the Sky and the Earth.

Anthropology is a science that has always had to think from the margins of the World. In its study of the World it cannot be content to reduce the persons who live in the World to it (cf. Laruelle 2012). This is part of the significance of animism, not only as an object but as a method of anthropology (Viveiros 2009, Descola 2005, Skafish 2016). There is a latent utopianism that results from putting the World each time into variation (Maniglier 2016), a prophetism to be made explicit during the end times of cosmological crisis (Kopenawa & Albert 2013; Danowski & Viveiros de Castro 2014). There is a war of the worlds (Latour 2002) taking place everywhere at the margins of the World, and in the Moderns' academies.

But neither the confidence of the Modern in the necessity of their World nor the celebration of endless differences and variations suffices to envision a positive alternative. It is necessary to actually build new spaces of thought and anthropology – the generic science of the Human and method of thinking-with the person – is central to this endeavor. The ethnographic record is not just a place to bury the Ancient – treating the People as an object for testing the Modern's theories, but a repository – a living testimony – of viable ways of being Human, thinking and experimenting in the contemporary. We seek to liberate these living testimonies from the colonial archive, in an effort to permanently decolonize anthropology as such from the World (cf. Viveiros de Castro 2009), each time from the beginning.[3] Anthropology as a discipline should be engaged in thinking

[2] The World is simply the project of living together, which either aligns with the Human, or else, occludes it. Amazonians and Melanesians do not need to distinguish the World from the Universe (Amazonians use the terms "mundo" and "universo" synonymously (Pãrõkumu & Kenhiri 1980, Galvão & Galvão 2004, Fernandes & Fernandes 1996, Krenak 2019)), but since the Moderns have separated them, their taking the World and the Universe together amounts to a conflation. The World of the Moderns occludes both the Universe and the Human. In this text, when we write the World in capitals, we mean the World of the Moderns, as what has become hegemonic. It corresponds to the colloquial meaning of the phrase "the World" amongst Moderns, in both its reference to the World of Modern social life taken as global, as well as its confusion with reality as such (the philosophical meaning of "the World") (Laruelle 1996). By the Universe, we mean the conformal unification of worlds that shows the person at the Center of any of them, as is explained in this text.

[3] We are not simply critiquing the World from an established position within it as it is ranged against its other conventionalized "critical" positions ["left" "right" etc.], but suspending the very form of talk of the World – its habits of description and perception – so as to shift the ground of talk and perception completely to the Sky-Earth System.

alongside ordinary people everywhere (Grimshaw & Hart 1996). It should not put itself above them and claim to be an exclusive account of who the Human is or its history.

Such an anthropology would not be engaged merely in the transposition of cultural practices in alien contexts, but in the composition of generics, analogical models that become integrative to the thought and practice of the anthropologist[4] themselves [in their own times].[5] Graeber and Wengrow's recent book (2021) shows at what level the political forms studied by anthropology might be engaged in this way. Graeber and Wengrow propose not to take a specific society as a romanticized ideal but to open up the ethnographic record to the multiplicity of social forms, making them available for contemporary prototyping and composition in the person (cf. Corsin Jimenez 2014, 2017).

The Moderns shouldn't be equated with the historical epoch called Modernity. Not only is this period simply when the Moderns become peculiarly dominant, but to fall into such a conflation would already be the Modern way of thinking [to think inside of World-History, rather than the History of the Human]. For the Moderns rely on a claim to historical supersession and replacement, supposedly rendering everything that came before them irrelevant. This linear orientation of the Moderns [World-History] perhaps first appears with the Christian theory of the fulfillment of the Old Testament by the New Testament, or even earlier, with the Deuteronomist reformation of the Hebrew Bible, so as to suppress the God who shows himself in Human form (Barker 1992), and becomes their racial evolutionism. It is a distinctive trait of the Moderns everywhere.[6]

Talk of the Moderns is not new; it follows them wherever they go. Like the World, they are known by many names, including wendigo, demons, sorcerers, and most recently, the Waitman, or the "Whites" (*os brancos*) (cf. Basso 1979, Bashkow 2006, Kopenawa & Albert 2013). We take seriously observations of the Moderns from all those who encounter them, including those that the Moderns have marginalized: the African, the Indigenous, the Proletariat, the Worker (Lazarus 2015), the Migrant, the Jew, the Terrans (Danowski & Viveiros de Castro 2014), ordinary people everywhere.

[4] By anthropologist, we mean any ordinary person anywhere thinking-with or doing anthropology and not some Modern professional identity. The ordinary is not a statistical or conventionalized normalcy, but simply the fact that the person is given everywhere, at the Center of the Universe.

[5] In this text we use brackets [ ] in addition to parentheses and footnotes. Whereas footnotes sideline or subordinate information to the main text, parentheses work to illustrate or clarify information in the immediate vicinity of the sentence. Brackets on the other hand work for us neither as subordinated information nor as illustrations, but alternate generic descriptions that are at the exact same level as non-bracketed material.

[6] Here, we are simply generalizing the critique of the Moderns everywhere (cf. Levi-Strauss 1971, Wagner 1981, Strathern 1988, Latour 1991, Viveiros de Castro 2009, da Silva 2007, 2022), in and outside of the Academy as belonging to the same World domination, as simply Modern race science meant to suppress the Ancients.

Despite major failures at the level of health, food, diplomacy, economy (just distribution and optimal scale), biodiversity, and the integration of knowledge, all of which today have reached a tipping point, the Moderns continue to hype themselves up. They do not know how to live well between the Sky and the Earth. The Moderns refuse conviviality and reciprocity, reducing the person either to a competitive, atomized individual or dissolving them into an impersonal crowd. They try to police talk under the assumption that the sole goal should be the standardization of conventions so as to reproduce the World. A specific criticism of the Moderns is necessary to be able to identify them from an external position that does not presuppose their authority: to name them so as to call and cast them out, to suspend their authority.

Just as the Moderns cannot be equated with a historical supersession, nor are the Ancients confined to the irrelevant past, a "cultural ancient" that is mere historical curiosity. We take the Ancients to be each one of us, the ordinary person and their invention, who cannot be superseded. We start from the Beginning, the person themselves, as a universality that anthropology might take as invariant in the midst of the comparison of differences. We call this *the generic Ancient*, affirming at the very same time the importance of anthropology's ongoing dialogue with those who have lived or still live at the margins of the World of the Moderns.

Throughout the various phases and "schools" of anthropology, we identify a throughline that leads to the development of a symmetric anthropology (cf. Manifesto Abaeté 2006; dos Santos & Dias 2009, NEAI 2018)[7], an attempt to radicalize anthropology's engagement with the other to the point of effecting recursive transformations on the thought of anthropology itself, and that we wish to formalize so as to make integral to the practice of anthropology, and to take to its ultimate conclusion. We see here the promise of an anthropology that lets itself be transformed continuously– in concept, affect, and practice – by thinking-with, a commitment that gives birth to concepts like the "dividual" (Strathern 1988), the "fractal person" (Wagner 1991), and "perspectivism" (Viveiros de Castro 1998). Here we see the beginning of a composition of models that place the self and the other within a unified space that is not reducible to [the reproduction of] the World[-system], but unfolded from a flow of invention that is immanent to the People as they think together [in the Universe] (cf. Wagner 1981, 1986a, 2018a, 2018b).

From these concepts we get a first indication of what it might mean to think from a common=x (Schmid 2021),

[7] We acknowledge Bruno Latour here as one of the proponents of a symmetric anthropology, who explicitly experimented with regimes of enunciation and dared to speak and intervene on behalf of and as a Generic Ancient in the World wars over the sciences: "We have never been Modern" (Latour 1991).

a generic point of view, that serves as the basis for the positive alternative we would like to elaborate. We see similar kinds of endeavors undertaken in other disciplines: such as Philosophy, where Laruelle (1996, 2018) aims to suspend Philosophy's dogmatic authority over the ordinary Human and their inventions; or Biblical Criticism, where Margaret Barker (1992) reopens Abrahamic spiritual history as a matrix of variations of thinking-with the God; or Critical Race Studies, where Denise Ferreira da Silva (2014) initiates a poethical practice to emancipate Blackness from the "colonial (juridic, economic, symbolic) architectures" that produced it and instead take it as an unknown 'x' for global re-compositions at the ends of the World. We see in all of these a tendency toward an ordinary, generic science that thinks with the ordinary person everywhere, unmediated by the conventionalized authority structures of the World[-system] and its reproduction. We seek to formalize this gesture of placing the Human at the Center of thinking-with, of the reciprocal invention between Peoples.

Sky-Earth Systems Science (SESS) is a formal way of thinking with and speaking in the images of ethnographic material themselves. A certain distance is maintained but also suspended between the subject and object of analysis, such that what the anthropologist says about the material emerges from the People themselves. The anthropologist speaks a *pidgin,* a language composed as much out of the images of their interlocutors as their own. Knowledge about a fieldsite comes from experimentation with the possibilities of such combinations of thoughts and images, in terms of problems also framed in the language[8]. It is not a question of a faithful *emic* description, but the modeling of thoughts within a generic space, over which neither interlocutor has total authority, the specification of a common=x, as it emerges in collective intimacy (Schmid 2021).

Many anthropologists have isolated how Nature functions as a background frame to control the thoughts of others, and their effects, so that they conform to the cosmology of the Moderns (Wagner 1981, Strathern 1980, 1988, Viverios de Castro 2004, Latour 1991, 2012, 2018, Descola 2005, da Silva 2007, 2022). In short, Nature relegates the Ancients to a merely metaphorical understanding, incapable of true and literal reference, without the autonomy that is proper either to the People themselves (cf. Viveiros de Castro 2003) or to scientific thinking (cf. Althusser 1965). It reduces their thinking to cultural representations, merely local practices, as set against the exclusive knowledge of Nature that only the Moderns possess. By continually taking Nature as given (cf. Sellars 1991, Wagner 1981), as much in the natural as in the social sciences, the Moderns continue to reposition themselves [and their conventions] as an authority over others.[9]

[8] "Every understanding of another culture is an experiment with our own" (Wagner 1981).

[9] We seek not another counter-Convention, or a counter-World, but a generic space of Invention.

We propose the Sky-Earth System as an alternative to Nature as the meta-frame of cosmological composition and the axiomatic given of the [social] sciences. SESS is not simply another anthropological theory meant to supersede the previous. It has always been there [since the beginning], and well-documented in the ethnographic record, but has simply fallen out of favor amongst the Moderns and their anthropology.

Motivated by a desire to recognize and uphold the autonomy and integrity of the ancient, ordinary sciences everywhere, our aim here is simply to name, describe and demonstrate SESS, as well as explain its consequences for anthropology and thinking-with, for creating a framework for symmetrical, generic exchange between persons, taking both the form and content of talk seriously. For example, instead of theorizing about xapiri ontology or beliefs about them, Kopenawa thinks from and with the xapiri as persons, and directly asks the anthropologist to do the same, to listen to the voice of the xapiri he is transmitting (Kopenawa & Albert 2013). Until anthropology takes responsibility for the person in how it thinks-with others [inventions], it will forever remain an ideology of the World[-system] rather than an autonomous science – unable to enter into rapport with – let alone a reciprocity and generic exchange [in-disciplinarity] with - the Ancients and their sciences, such as those practiced across the different village campuses and *haus tambaran* of the University of Melanesia (cf. Narokobi 1980, 1983; Dobrin 2020), or the science of image-talk [*bahsese*] taking place across the different *bahsawii* [transformation houses] on the Upper Rio Negro (Dutra & Dutra 2018).

The Sky-Earth System is a meta-frame for thinking as a generic Ancient, for superposing and integrating the Universe and the Person. The Sky-Earth System can be compared to Isabella Stengers' (1997) and Bruno Latour's (2017) usage of James Lovelock's (1979) concept of Gaia, which would overcome the separation of politics and ecology and replace Nature as the overarching frame in which worlds are situated. There are several reasons, however, why we choose to think from within the Sky-Earth System, rather than Gaia, while also responding to the way the climate crisis compels us to envision both the Planet and the Universe differently.

Gaia reproduces many of the defining moves of secularism, which we feel it is necessary to suspend in order to integrate the full range of the ordinary person within anthropology. Reducing or dismissing the God[s] has been one of the axiomatic premises of Modern social sciences (cf. Asad 2003). Gaia still preserves the metonymic relationship between terms such as Earth, Matter, and Nature in the secular gesture (Louis-Klein 2021). It defines immanence not as a self-reference in talk or immanence to action (Varela & Maturana 1979, Luhmann 2002), but a bringing of Heaven down to Earth, an a priori decision against the God[s] and a lowering towards Nature. Here, Gaia mimics Galileo, Spinoza, Newton and other Moderns' insistence that the duality of Sky and Earth can be done away with, in favor of the homogeneous substance of Nature.

The Moderns make a metaphor of the Sky in their perception, treating it as an abstract and transcendent "Heaven," rather than a literal space to think inside, and so at the same time metaphorize the Earth as another representation of Nature (or Being), the substance behind perception. They think inside of the metaphor of Heaven and Earth, which bottom-out in the literal ground of Culture and Nature, rather than in the literal percept-space of the Sky and the Earth, as it is experienced in the images and crossed in the Center: a virtual reality space in which no substance is given but the person.

The problem is not the duality, or binary, of subject and object, of mind and Nature, epistemology and ontology, but that these terms are themselves thought in terms of the substance behind perception, inside of Nature as two substances ("thing" and "consciousness"), within the plane of Nature (*natura naturans*) itself: instead of the duality of the Sky and the Earth without Nature. Ontology remains simply the other side of epistemology, whereby the Moderns attempt to fuse with the substance behind perception (by lowering to it), and always reproduces simply a new representation of Nature (of the fusion) and a new epistemology, rather than the self-(re)presentation of the Sky-Earth System, its doubling of the presentation, self-mirroring, and diagram of the Sky and Earth images with themselves.

For the Ancients, the Sky is not a problematically separated transcendence, nor do the Ancients only think from the Earth so as to reproduce the secular gesture of a lowering towards Nature.[10] A myth of origin from the Original Sky - prior to the division of Sky and Earth - is widespread everywhere outside of the Moderns' World[-system], in the Amazon, in Egypt, China, the Mediterranean and elsewhere. Gaia theory, then, tends to assimilate the Ancient to specifically Modern problems, even when the goal should be a critique of the Moderns and a suspension of their cosmology, to start over from the Beginning. It does not fully distinguish the position of Earth from that of Nature, or of a metaphorized version of it that continues to represent it in the last instance.[11] The ethnographic record we feel poses other possibilities, which involve taking the images even more literally and that point to a truly distinct space from which to compose the images and the worlds.

[10] Here we are simply trying to take the cosmologies of the Ancients literally, which includes the "shamanic" ascent (and descent) [the vertical] to the various layers of the Sky and Underworld. We want to think from within the entire time-space of the Ancients.

[11] Uniformitarianism [geology] sees the Earth as background, impersonal Nature, with human Culture impinging on it only as the analogical Modern-cut, the social-evolutionary "transition to civilization" [archaeology]: the Neolithic, the State, Writing, Indo-Europeans, the Aryans, the Axial Age, Monotheism, the Greeks, Plato, Christianity, Modernity. These premises continue to be dogmatically assumed by Modern geologists and archaeologists, who attempt to force others into accepting them on the basis of authority, or threaten anyone who questions them with punishment to their reputations. These premises have been exposed by paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould for geology, and by Graeber & Wengrow, as well as journalist Graham Hancock, for archaeology.

The Sky-Earth System is an analogical expansion of ethnographic material that is motivated independently from the Modern configuration of perception [of Heaven and Earth, Nature and Culture, Being as Substance]. We feel that it is necessary to move beyond an [exclusive] "us/them" type contrast that continues to position, or interpellate (Althusser 1971), the speaker within the frame of the Moderns, and instead start from the *crossing-place* at the center of self and other, the generic Ancient in all of us (Dos Santos & Mendes 2009, Wagner 2018b, Louis-Klein 2022a). We feel that it is necessary to stop merely speaking *about* the Ancients, but to think *as* Ancients (in an immanent and generic way, in the first-person) and it is in thinking with Ancients that leads us to think as them.

The Sky-Earth System reintegrates the ordinary person into the Universe, the Human at the Center of the Universe, ending the Copernican era as seen from within the history of the Moderns. The Moderns aim to displace the person and prioritize impersonal orders of the World (cf. Postone 1996, Strathern 1988), asserting a Copernican supersessionism that sees the Universe as a proliferation of peripheries, the Ancients confined to a mistaken and merely local perception of Nature [culture; geocentrism]. We hold that it is necessary to maintain the polycentricity of the Center of the Universe, and at the same time that the Human is really there at the Center and this is what matters.

Whether one takes the multiplicity of centers to mean that there isn't one, or to mean that the Center is really everywhere and polycentric, is the difference that makes all the difference. By the Center we do not mean a local region spread out across space, but the unextended 'point,' the origin of the coordinate frame where anyone is, and from which a generic space-time is projected, in which to compose the images in experience. In placing the Human at the Center of the Universe, we do not propose an "anthropocentrism," or deny the personhood of the animal, but generalize the Human as an invariant and minimal position [for anyone to think inside] [across all the plants and animals],[12] building both on Viveiros de Castro's concept of Perspectivism (1998) and Wagner's integrative Human Hologram (2001), in each case having arisen from a profound engagement with Amazonian and Melanesian thinking, respectively, from which we continue to draw inspiration.

We are not trying to "de-center" anything, but suspend the World which occludes the Human at the Center of the Universe. It is the Moderns who have de-centered the Person. Their talk throws shade [sorcery (Pignarre & Stengers 2011)] on the person, eclipsing them, never showing the whole person (cf. Strathern 2004). It always

[12] The issue is not an objectification of their capacities or the attribution of subjectivity to them as they exist as substances in Nature, but the specification of a minimal generic position to be accessed from anywhere in the Universe without Nature.

reduces them, interpellates them as if they were less than one, speaks to and about the ordinary person everywhere as already [buried] underneath them. We simply aim to suspend the World so as to open up the Sky and uncover the Human that has always been there, since the Beginning.

In composing a system of worlds in which to think with everyone at once, it's not a question of rejecting a meta-frame in favor of the dispersion of local worlds or territories (cf. Viveiros de Castro 2009), simply favoring multiplicity over unity (cf. Badiou 1988), or difference over identity (cf. Deleuze1968). Nor is it a question of a return to a supposedly Modern and universal "rationalism" as it triumphs in World-History as the Enlightenment (cf. Negarestani 2018, Badiou 1988, 2006, Meillassoux 2006). We practice the generic and universal thinking that starts directly from the Ancients, that has always been here, as is well-attested in the ethnographic record.

The Modern may deny it but the record is there as a testimony; the World simply places a control on what one can do with the material, or sustains a resistance against the transformations it effects in the person [the reader; the ethnographer]. We believe that SESS can be shown and practiced even within the heart of the World and the World academy, transforming the materials of the World so that they are conformal with the Person – returning to the Universe – and our axioms and terminology are chosen simply so as to make this possible.[13]

From the minimal premise of the Center, we are able to give parameters that develop positive content to our model of the Universe and the ordinary person and to a generic composition of worlds. In specifying a vertical and horizontal axis, which open the Sky and the Earth to perception, and intersect in the Center, we give a framework in which the images can be thought together and superposed, at the same time mimicking empirical, first-person perception just enough to act as the literal space-time we think inside of. The Sky-Earth System is the superposition of the images as seen together in one, in the Center, where we are, unfolded as a space-time. The Sky-Earth System is an integrative thinking environment – a surrounding container [of worlds] – a virtual reality and surround-sound space (cf. Gómez-Emilsson 2022) that lets us see what the Ancients are seeing. It replaces Nature as the referential ground of talk, the assumption that in the last instance whatever we talk about [or in[14]] must be Nature or the World.[15]

[13] The axioms can be evaluated on the basis of their consequences, on the degree to which they let such a thinking be actualized.

[14] Talking in, in the sense of both talking in a language [the form of talk] and talking inside of a space [the topology of the frame].

[15] Sky:Earth::Culture:Nature is the Modern formula, which SESS suspends. In the Modern formula, the first two terms are metaphorical, while the second two are literal, or Nature is the literal ground of reference, and Culture is a literal metaphoricity, or the natural ground of human metaphorical projection. The Modern appeal to the "immanence" and "materiality" of the Earth, involves a metaphorization of the Earth, grounded in the encompassment of literal Nature. Should the formula be reversed so that Culture encompasses, the Modern perceives that as the encompassment of a metaphorical Sky ("Heaven"), which should itself be understood in terms of a human

Since the Nature/Culture duality has become an object of criticism by anthropologists, much attention has been paid to whether the problem consists in duality all together, or simply the unbridgeable separation ("the Great Divide") between the terms, or in the specific semantic positions assigned to them (with their racial and gendered undertones), or their hierarchical rather than balanced relationship. Whereas various directions have been taken, they tend to either do away with an organizing schema all together, in favor of multiplicitous hybridities (in which case it may still be the case that what is being hybridized is Nature and Culture) [new materialism], or they are attempts to invert the schema in the hope of producing new effects, such as Viveiros de Castro's (1998) transformation of multiculturalism and mononaturalism of the Moderns into a multinaturalism and monoculturalism drawn from Amazonian ethnographic materials [one could say that Viveiros de Castro inverts the frame in order to produce an anarchic effect which subtracts from any overarching frame], or to provide a distinct duality, as in Descola's (2005) move to consider continuities or discontinuities in "interiority" and "physicality" in the relation between humans and non-humans, or finally in attempts to preserve the hierarchical organization of the terms but emphasize their continuity and embeddedness, as in Eduardo Kohn's (2013) biosemiotics of mind. Without positive parameters to keep the person conformal to the Universe [between the Sky and the Earth] we feel that such innovations are liable to recapture by the World (cf. Latour 2009), to become indexicals of the World's authorized positions and points of reference [institutional, state, etc.], rather than of simply the Ancient at the Center of the Universe.

All of these proposed solutions can be characterized by either a loss of organizing frame, the preservation of the frame in a corresponding or inverted form, or the proposal of a new one. We have already shown the problems we have with Gaia as a new frame which would supplement the assertion of a multiplicitous hybridity between natures and cultures. We also feel that it is important to preserve the desire for symmetry between terms that is part of the methodological orientation of symmetric anthropology, even while taking into account the hierarchical encompassment of systems (cf. Dumont 1966, Viveiros de Castro 2015, Sahlins 2017, Kohn 2013), which we, however, take to be ultimately reversible.

We feel that we need a new meta-frame and minimal duality [a control (Wagner 1981) on the images] that both undoes the "Great Divide" of the Moderns, as well as puts the frame of comparison on a completely distinct basis, one drawn directly from the ethnographic materials, as in Viveiros de Castro's case, but without a merely

and cultural metaphorical projection. SESS flips the formula a different way, so that the terms no longer correspond, by taking the front two terms as literal, and the back two as metaphorical, while also taking the Sky as the encompassing term. Sky is no longer in correspondence with Culture because it is not a local metaphoricity within Nature, but a literal encompassing container, while Earth is no longer in correspondence with Nature, because it is not the encompassing term.

formal inversion or correspondence between the terms. We need something as concrete and as literal as Nature, but which can act as a distinct ground of reference (see Wagner 1977) [rather than the metaphorical Earth of ecology, which still represents and bottoms-out in Nature as literal]. While we feel that Descola's "interiority" and "physicality" are wide enough to capture the scope of cosmologies anthropology should be engaged with, we think they are not concrete enough to act as a new, scientific cosmology, remaining abstract, taxonomic brackets at an epistemological distance from the material. Descola's modes of identity and modes of relation do not seem able to generate further structural complexity, but when combined ethnographically only result in various "weightings" of dominance between the terms, whereas we seek something that can be structurally generative of new thoughts [invention], in a more direct application of Lévi-Strauss's methodology in the *Mythologiques* [and Wagner's in *Symbols that Stand for Themselves*], while also remaining true to the Universe and to the Person.

We propose the Sky and the Earth as a minimal duality [control], generalizing the wide-spread myth of the Sky and Earth's separation in the Beginning of time. We take this myth as the frame for a generic *Mythologiques* inside of which to speak, in referential and performative immanence to any material. The Sky places us inside the virtual reality space, as a minimal, meso-scale [Human] percept that creates a container around the experience. The Earth describes the flat horizontal field that also surrounds and contains the person, but as a plane for relations with other finite perspectives. The person sees them both at once in the intersection where they are, of the two axes crossing in the unextended point that is themselves. Like Descola, we seek a generalization of "spirituality" [Sky] and "materiality" [Earth], but here realized as a literal and encompassing space-time, what we have called an integrative thinking environment for the composition of worlds and images (cf. Corsin Jimenez 2014). We do not analogize Culture to the Sky and Nature to the Earth, but change the position of the Human within the Universe altogether, placing them at the Center of the Sky-Earth System and invent new, analogical images from there, with the Sky and Earth as ground of the images (of the figures) rather than Nature and Culture. Sky-Earth Systems Science is an autonomous and ordinary science distinct from the World altogether.

Each image is an analogue of the Sky and the Earth images themselves as crossed or combined in one. There is an analogical flow (Wagner 1981) of the images as they mirror each other and superpose in the Center, not an "analogism" (cf. Descola 2005) which would be pinned to a local ontology of relations, but the very structuration of the images as they are composed within a generic space (cf. Wagner 1986a), what makes any image translatable and transformable [topologically, geometrically, etc.] into another [category theory], rather than an ontological positing of the categorical discontinuities and continuities of Nature (in the substance of

Being). Rather than one of the permutations, it is what holds together all the permutations within the Sky-Earth System matrix of image-terms. Analogical-flow is simply a formal operator, but it is made concrete in the very mirroring of the Sky and the Earth themselves as the concrete perceptual ground of analogy, one which is just as animist in placing the Human at the Center of the Sky and Earth, and just as totemic, in composing itself out of holographic image-skins [xapiri] that become the substance of the Sky-Earth System itself without Nature (Kopenawa & Albert 2013).

Sky-Earth Systems Science superposes and integrates any material [images] [myths] [talk] [scientific models] into the Sky-Earth System on the basis of minimal and independent axioms.
Let these two core axioms be:

1) We are at the Center of the Universe.
2) In the beginning, the Sky and the Earth separated.

The first statement makes the ordinary person the generic ground of perception, of everything we think and say. It shows the person and the Universe at once, allowing for a first-person, generic experience of the images of the Universe on any scale. The second axiom opens the space between the Sky and the Earth, the space-time in which the images are superposed so as to compose the cosmology. The Sky and the Earth are always seen together in one; the image of the animal and the image of the God are seen together in the Human [the Center]. The Sky-Earth System is the superposition of the images themselves, as it directly emerges from thinking-with the ethnographic materials of ordinary speech and action, with anyone anywhere [generic].

By the Sky-Earth System then we do not only mean the planet Earth, but any planetary experience and perception with its horizontal and vertical axes, as they intersect and cross in the [perspectival] Center. What we describe is closer to a spaceship Earth (Boulding 1966) in which there is always both the Floor and the Roof, of the House that is the Universe, inside of which the People think together. The Sky and the Earth are relative terms for the reciprocity of perspectives everywhere. Wherever there is an Earth there is a Sky, and it is a question of what we compose at the crossing-place, as we superpose the images and worlds here at the Center of the Universe.

We wish to think as, if not more, universally than the Moderns themselves, and we know the scope they give to Nature as a background frame to the disciplines. We cannot do away then with the Sky as the encompassing container of any inversion between the Sky and the Earth [the God and the animal], such as in the image of the

Earth from "outer-space," in which the [planet] Earth is now an orb inside the Sky, rather than the horizontal plane or floor of the spaceship [the Earth of the observer]. In each case, there is a Sky inside of which everything is happening and which is the container [gourd] [womb] [netbag] [brain] [black hole] of the Universe and that is the Universe.

To think from the Center of the Universe is to hold the Sky and the Earth together in perception, to see the Two in the One and the One in the Two (Wagner 2001), as one recombines and experiments with the ethnographic images. When the Sky and the Earth are seen together, the separation and combination of the terms is seen at once in an intersection, or crossing, appearing as the two axes forming an 'X' shape across the Center. The very geometric structure of the Sky-Earth System demonstrates the superposition of the different perspectives, as a self-referential diagram of itself, a self-description of its autonomous space. To think from the Center [The One (Laruelle 1996)] [unextended] is to think from the Original Sky that existed prior to the division of Sky and Earth (*antes o mundo não existia* (Pãrõkumu & Kenhiri 1980)), within the concrete space-time of the Sky-Earth System.

In this way, the Sky and the Center reflect each other and are seen as One, as the ordinary person at the Center finds themselves already in the Original Sky at the Beginning.[16] The system remains always intrinsically *symmetrical* [symmetric anthropology], as the Sky is resolved into the Center as the Original Sky, even as it remains the encompassing frame of any inversion between Sky and Earth (and so any two terms [images] [persons]). In this way, the very way in which the Sky is taken as primary renders the relationship between the Sky and the Earth in each case reversible and integral.

The control the Sky-Earth System places on the images is to see them in one's eyes [psychedelic] and oneself at the Center. As the images are seen in the eyes and from the Center one is able to begin orienting, tracking, and experimenting with their composition. One literally experiments shrinking and expanding them, mapping their edges and vertices, orienting and rotating them, etc, as diagrams of the system. There is no reference or substance behind the images, as in the idea of Nature or Being [Substance] and its objectivity, but simply their experimental composition in the Center and as the Sky-Earth System.

Axiom 1 unoccludes the Person at the Center of the Universe, and restores the immanence of the person in

[16] The Sky and the Center are reflected along the vertical axis, along the World Tree, as one sees when one looks up from the Center to the top of the Sky. Or it occurs through the rotation of the Sky, as the Sun, Moon, and Stars cross the horizontal plane of the Earth, and the Sky reverses to become the Underworld, synthesizing the horizontal and vertical axes through the curvature [space] and rotation [time] of the Sky. The Sky proportions perception to the Center.

the Universe and vice-versa. Axiom 2 lifts and holds up the Sky at the Center of any and all worlds.[17] Together they form a framework, the Sky-Earth System, that restores what the axioms of the impersonal World [commodity-form] conceal, so as to reveal the integrity of the Human everywhere, at the Center of the Universe.

The ontological turn (cf. Holbraad & Pedersen 2017) took itself to be continuing on Wagner's project for a recursive anthropology that thinks with and takes seriously its interlocutors, and it understood the wide scope that such a project would imply in reframing anthropology's relationship to the totality of the disciplines, which it named as ontology. However, we feel that without a positive control on the material, new parameters and a new meta-frame, the project of the ontological turn is liable to repositioning in the World or reference to Nature.

In new-materialist talk, we see a positioning of the ancient within the global order of NGO intervention, ecology as a reigning paradigm that appeals to the Moderns' intuitions of Nature, an orientation to the Ancients that does not necessarily involve thinking-with them and may involve instrumentalizing them (cf. Wagner 1977). What matters for the Ancients is that the Universe and the Human are seen together, not that the "homo sapiens" is made a mere instrument for the reproduction of Nature, under the guise of sustainability. In this way, the Ancient comes to take on a merely local and encompassed position in the World and is made to answer to it. It came to be seen that what the ontological turn was calling "ontology" could not be distinguished from "culture," from simply the local cosmology of this or that cultural group within the World (cf. Kohn 2015). The Sky-Earth System is not a local cosmology, but rather a generic cosmology, in which each local appears as a perfect or holographic representative of the global structure. This is because it is composed out of generics, as Wagner and others have described of Melanesian knowledge-practices (cf. Crook 2007), and as Viveiros de Castro intuits when he sees Amazonian perspectivism as a generalizable frame of comparison between cosmologies and not only a cosmology to be compared.[18]

Ontology reproduces an impersonal conventional structure (Wagner 1981) independent from the ordinary person, who is replaced by the category of Being (cf. Mimica 1993), so that there is a disproportion between analytical and interpersonal frames of thinking (cf. Strathern 2020), a division of labor and formula for the

[17] It is not only whether there is one or many worlds that matters, but the distinct experience in which they are composed, and the formalization that lets that experience be felt and transmitted. The Sky-Earth System is both a world-pluralism and a conformal unification of many worlds, a complete meta-frame and one in which no world irreversibly dominates the others. For the Sky, as the encompassing frame, is reflected back into the polycentric Center itself.

[18] Where we depart from Viveiros de Castro is in the idea that the generalization of Amazonian thinking results in an anarchic anti-holism, a dispersion of local cosmologies, rather than a generic cosmology, and in the last instance, an inverse, counter, and anti-Modernism, rather than a suspension of the Moderns on an autonomous basis.

reproduction of the World, the systematic occlusion – perpetual eclipse [the long night]– of the person at the Center. What mattered for the ontological turn was often the "becoming-other" [variation; difference] of any 'what' (the concept of a mountain, bird, language, sign, meaning, time, space, Being, etc.) as it is transformed in anthropological comparison (see Charbonnier et al. 2017). What matters for SESS is the conformal (Penrose 2010) transformation, not of the 'what,' but of the 'who': how the person is integrated with the Universe in the expansion of the generic image, as it is unfolded from within the Sky-Earth System.

The Sky-Earth System operates as a conformal cyclic cosmology, a model of a physical cosmology that we take from Roger Penrose (2010) and generalize to think the multiplicity of cosmologies from within the Ancient position. In the conformal cyclic cosmology (CCC), we see the direct embedding of the images all within a holographic and containing Sky that replicates itself at any scale (conformal) as in an Escher hyperbolic tiling. The conformal cyclic cosmology views this resolution into a conformal geometry as the very moment of a return to the Center, to the Beginning of the Universe. The conformal recomposition of the images in [scale-]symmetry across them is the very re-commencement each time from the Center, the very position of light, of an internality to the relativistic perspective, which is where we position ourselves transcendentally. In this way, the CCC provides us with a concrete topology in which to think the Sky-Earth System as a physical, i.e. literal, model at the same level as the Moderns' own most expansive models of Nature, except that we do not assume a substance behind the images, but take it is a formal composition of the images themselves. The Ancient can no longer simply be contained and localized in the Modern, but rather the Ancient thinks directly inside a scaled cosmology of any size, the Sky-Earth System.

In this way, SESS works alongside physical cosmologies and enters into a unified, in-disciplinary (Schmid 2021) space with the sciences. All the resources of algebras, geometries, and physical cosmologies are made available as modeling tools for SESS, in so far as we take the 3-d existence of the Sky-Earth System in literal terms, while fusing them with the semantic parameters of the Mythologiques, minimized to the animal and God positions, from which others (such as the plant, the star, the black hole, etc.) might be structurally and mythically generated. We build on the legacy of numerous anthropologists who were engineers or who had an interest in physics themselves, in order to propose the Sky-Earth System [CCC] as a toy model of the Universe (Negarestani 2018).[19]

The Peoples and places at the margins of the World have always been a Black Hole for the anthropology of the Moderns, the problem of how to incorporate and make sense of them within the World of the Moderns (cf.

[19] Franz Boas, Bronisław Malinowski, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Edmund Leach, Roy Wagner, etc.

Strathern 1990, Crook 2007). Wagner's theory of symbolic obviation is an anthropological formalization of certain Melanesian knowledge practices (Wagner 1978; cf. Crook & Shaffner 2011), a way of speaking directly from the Black Hole [prototype of the holographic and conformal containment of the images]. Obviation turns the images in the words back on themselves, reversing their time-series, breaking down and recycling the sense they make in the reciprocity of perspectives at the Center (Wagner 2018b), what the Daribi call a *porigi po,* an inventive speech that produces new, analogical images, each one generic in scope.[20] In the Upper Rio Negro region of the Amazon, and today in Manaus, the *Kumu* practitioner also practices a kind of conformal speech – the science of *bahsese* – in which any image can be activated or reactivated within the talk or chant so as to effect a concrete reintegration [healing] of the person at the Center of the Universe (cf. Lima Azevedo 2016, Lima Barreto 2022).

In the language of the World, generic and specifics are not alternate and proportionate terms, but rather the specific is subordinated to the generic, and there is a chasm between local and global representations. The World is a typed [hierarchical; irreversible] coding language[21], rather than a homoiconic LISP (Kay 1969) in which structures can be analogically preserved across different scales [permuted as block-strings]. The World gets caught up in its own abstract categories and concepts as if they existed over and above the ordinary Person and People [auto-position (Laruelle 1996)]. The Modern talk tends to be associative in this way. The words become indexicals of positions in the World and the contents associate amongst each other merely so as to reproduce the impersonal World. The Modern talks *about* things, rather than thinks with them, at a level of reference that is disconnected from the content and is merely citational [of the World], failing to unify form and content [syntax and semantics] in the last instance.[22]

As Latour (2012) showed, the Modern often invokes science in this way, being more concerned with regulating the word "science" as an index of the World's authority than in thinking scientifically, or working directly with scientific concepts as an ordinary scientist. It's necessary to attend to both the form and the content of speech, not only what is said, but how. SESS is engaged in an ongoing symptomatology and ethnography of the

[20] *Porigi po* has analogues elsewhere in Melanesia including the Foi *irisae~medobora* ("tree leaf talk") (Weiner 2001), the Kaluli *balema* (Feld 1987), and the infamous knowledge practices of the Min of the Mountain Ok (Barth 1987, Crook 2007, Wagner 2018a), a region also known as the "graveyard of anthropology" (Crook 2007), due to the difficulty anthropologists have had in staying faithful to what they experienced in the field, once back in the midst of the World.

[21] In computer programming, a type system dictates the kinds of operations that can be performed on a term (a word, phrase, or other set of symbols). Type systems formalize and enforce the otherwise implicit categories the programmer uses for algebraic data types, data structures, or other components.

[22] A different citational practice is possible, one that treats names like block-strings [skins; heads; names] to be permuted, recombined and superposed, treated conformally and experimented with freely to create Human effects (see Louis-Klein & Shaffner n.d.).

Moderns, similar in certain ways to psychoanalysis, so as to locate where and how the Moderns occlude the Person in their ways of talking, and to directly experiment with speaking, thinking, and perceiving as generic Ancients. The talk that speaks across the images of ordinary speech, composes them conformally in and as the Sky-Earth System generic cosmology, we name *Sky-Earth pidgin*.

Sky-Earth Systems Science (SESS) suspends the authority of the Moderns and their control over who or what people think with and over what counts as ordinary Human speech. Authority-over is cross-canceled in reciprocal predation. Each is forced to think with each other, as a We, at the Center. No one has absolute authority over the material, but each is capable of co-authoring, speaking and thinking-with each other in a reciprocity of perspectives. SESS sets up a positive space to think with everyone everywhere, each time, with each other, all together and at once. The Ancients always begin again from the Center, the common = X, in order to redistribute the materials of the World to the ordinary person, making the Universe and the Person conformal and integrated with each other [as the Sky-Earth System].

The Sky-Earth System exerts a force on the reader to think with the other, to enter and think inside of their matrix of images, but it does not force the reader into any determinate position [dogmatic], nor does it hide its constitutive statements and proposals [axioms], as if they were not open to evaluation based on their consequences, or usefulness. Yet, this is precisely what the Moderns continue to do with both Nature and the World.

SESS is not another theory about, standing over what it describes, considering it externally, but a toy model in one to one correspondence with the concrete person [at the center] living with each other [at the center] between the Sky and the Earth. When nothing is taken as given [Nature; Being], then the Universe is composed simply of images, to be put together and recombined, experimented-with and experienced in the person [*bahsese*]. Rather than a new Philosophy, or a mixture (Laruelle 1996) of Anthropology and Philosophy, we wish to suspend Philosophy as the index of authority for Anthropology, and for all thinking, instead thinking simply with ordinary People everywhere, who are the Beginning and End of thought, whose talk and images directly compose the system. We wish to suspend the World that would speak in Philosophical "theories" and "frameworks," when they seek to ground the social sciences from above, or when they are in turn authoritatively justified by a more noble "empiricism" of anthropology, that is itself another epistemology and ontology of the Moderns [the epistemology of Nature] with its hierarchy of theory and fact, and its treatment of People as exemplars for impersonal "concepts." Our axioms are not theories about Nature meant to be won in debates within the World, but simply minimal constraints so as to make a generic thinking-with the images - with other

people - possible. This is how SESS treats ethnographic material, as toy models or prototypes (Corsin Jimenez 2014) for thinking and experimenting as people in the Universe.

There is a reason that the Modern has not taken the Ancient sciences seriously, or even truly tried to experiment with, or import wholesale [analogic], the ways the contemporary Ancients at the margins live, because they lead to the World obviation, destruction and recycle [revolution] (cf. Holbraad, Cherstich & Tassi 2020). The Ancients start from and continue with a place-value for any person[[=x]=SES] such that the World never gets off of the ground, let alone big enough to occlude the Person in the Original Sky or the Original Sky in the Person (cf. Weiner 2001, Corsin Jimenez 2004).

SESS allows the Modern division of labor for reproducing the World to be clearly seen for what it is, the obscuring of the Person at the Center of the Universe, across all of their different social forms [domains], in their kinship, politics, economics, and [World-]religions (cf. Schneider 1984). Anthropologists have described this obscuring and displacement of the Person under different names inclusive of but not only the "commodity" (Marx 1867, Strathern 1988), "bureaucracy" (Weber 1922), and the "state" (Clastres 1989)[23]. In each case, something other than the person grows itself as the World [commodity chains; cancer; blight; positive feedback[24]].

The Ancient always thinks in a way that takes responsibility for the person, as has been described by anthropologists (cf. Wagner 1981) under different terms, including the gift (Mauss 1925), the elementary structures of kinship [in generalized and restricted exchange] (Levi-Strauss 1955), the society against the state (Clastres 1989), galactic polities (Tambiah 2013), kingdoms (Graeber & Sahlins 2017), and polycentric polytheism (Butler 2012, Barker 1992). These are but names for the sciences of the Ancients in how they place the person at the Center of the Universe. Sky-Earth Systems Science generalizes these Ancient survivals in the World not as objectified types but as integrated analogic ground [common=x], such that exchange is kept conformal in the recycle of the person, each time [across the Human life cycle]. SESS revives the ancient form of exchange (Mauss 1925), in the form of the Human economy (cf. Hart, Laville & Cattani 2010), where nothing is bigger than or debases the person.

We feel that the crossing-point of Melanesian and Amazonian thinking has allowed us to locate the generic

[23] The Big Other (Lacan 1966).

[24] The Moderns always embed the negative feedback of reversible relationships between the terms inside of a positive feedback of increasing and unending "growth," a linear and irreversible time-series, while the Ancients embed any positive feedback - and its power of drive and amplification - within the negative feedback of the reciprocity of perspectives, within a kind of supersymmetry of symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships [intransitive and anti-symmetric algebra].

position from which to speak, that which symmetric anthropology was leading to, and which the ontological turn still needed. They form a chiasmus: What we see in Melanesia is the Sky-Earth System shown within the Human Hologram, the analogical body of the person that keeps its proportion across any scale, folding the entire Universe into the person's skin; while what we see in Amazonia is the Human everywhere in the Sky-Earth System, the Human spread throughout the skin [holographic] of the Universe. In each case and together, we see the person and the Universe at once: the person at the Center of the Universe. More than just a cultural comparison between these two local regions (cf. Gregor & Tuzin 2001), we feel that this chiasmus is a site – though not the only one – from which to compose a generic anthropology.

In 2011, Roy Wagner and Justin Shaffner (one of the co-authors) were invited to Brazil to initiate a formal reciprocity of perspectives, an exchange of skins (Crook 2007), between emerging Amazonian and Melanesian anthropologies. These ritual exchanges were ongoing experiments in reverse, symmetrical and cross anthropology (cf. dos Santos & Dias 2009). There they engaged with Yanomami shaman and prophet Davi Kopenawa and also Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, as well as other Brazilian and indigenous anthropologists and leaders. It is also where Adam Louis-Klein (the other co-author) would return in 2022 to study prophetic movements, meeting with Ye'pa-Mahsã anthropologist João Paulo Lima Barreto and Ümükori-Mahsã elder Durvalino Kisibi, both of whom work at Bahserikowi: the Center of Indigenous Medicine in Amazonia and the indigenous research-group NEAI (*núcleo de estudos da Amazônia indígena*), ongoing experiments in symmetric anthropology at the margins of the World and irreducible to Euro-American anthropology (cf. Lima Barreto 2022, Diakara 2021, NEAI 2018).

People everywhere at the ends of the World are experimenting with starting over, of recycling [refactoring] the materials, and beginning again, recomposing the Human, and they are doing so through thinking-with the Ancients. We want to show how the various experiments happening at the margins of the World (or in the World, but not of it) work alongside Sky-Earth Systems Science, including the various currents of anthropology that have led here or are ongoing.

There is an ongoing tradition of active experimentation in thinking with the Ancients in the Americas, coterminous with the trans-plantation of the World there in the "New World," from the Mormons, the Moorish Temple Science, and Rastafari, among others, to Afro- and Indigenous Futurism and a contemporary pan-Black=Ancient revival. Each reframes the Moderns' language of Blackness into a common=x for contemporary experimentations and recompositions of thinking with and as Ancients – the original Ancient Peoples and Civilizations in Africa, but also Ancient Blacks everywhen (from the Beginning) and everywhere (the Americas,

the Mediterranean, India, Asia, the Pacific, and elsewhere). In their thinking-with the Ancients, they seek to decode and unlock the wisdom practices of the Ancients captured in the ethnographic and historical record or that are otherwise occluded by the World, to open them up as an immanent phase space, a common=X, from which to experiment (cf. da Silva 2014).

The practice of anthropologist Acacea Lewis exemplifies this work. Continuing the legacy of Baba Kilindi Iyi, she is actively extracting and experimenting with ancient knowledge practices to revive the ordinary psychedelic experience at the Center of the Universe (cf. Kohn 2022). Like Harriet Tubman, to whom she is compared, Acacea shares the science so that the people can free themselves from the racist identity-categories of the World, and heal [integrate] the transgenerational trauma caused by the systematic capture, exploitation and oppression of the so-called Blacks by the Devil, so as to experiment with starting over again from the Beginning, to recompose themselves as living Ancients, Original People at the Center of the Sky and Earth [World-Trees], even as they are amidst the World's domination.

We wish to think with these and other movements that seek to revive the knowledge of the Ancients, not as a turn to a by-gone past but as utterly contemporary experiments [with the Human]. We think-with an emerging self-understanding of the Polytheist revival movement that breaks with the dogma of Monotheism to re-articulate the relationship between ordinary people and the living Gods, prioritizing the *who* over the *what*, without the historicism that reduces immortal persons to mere projections of past societies (Sahlins 2017, Butler 2022, Bello & Hübner 2022). These movements engage indigenous thought not as mere observers but participants [participant observation = thinking-with]. We also think-with such movements happening in Brazil (Bernardo n.d) and emerging alliances between polytheism, the demarcation movement for indigenous territories (*demarcação já*), and generic engagements with Christianity, such as Amazonian and Melanesian Christians who think history as one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel and the yearning for the Promised Land (Sanchez, Muniz, & Ribeiro 2022).

We see in all these movements a politics that suspends the Moderns and their World, movements which Danowski and Viveiros de Castro (2014) bring under the banner of the Terrans. We see in this suspension a millenarianism, which is intrinsic to the anthropology we practice. We want to herald the coming Kingdom (Graeber & Sahlins 2017), in which the King of Kings – the God who shows himself in the Human (Barker 1992) – will have the final authority over the rulers of the World. We want to play our own part in holding up the Sky. We think that anthropology can be a prophetic voice in our times, and that secular social-scientific critique should become prophetic critique (Heschel 1962; cf Clastres 1995, da Silva 2018), the suspension of

the World's power from the point of view of the person, in a prophet's discourse (cf. Lacan 1966) that speaks directly from the Center of the Universe. This is the place from which Jesus spoke, and not only him alone, but also Nggiwe [of the Boazi], Ümüko Boreka [of the Desana], and ordinary prophets everywhere.

We do not start from the universality of the suffering subject (Robbins 2013), but the ordinary person [the Human] prior to the debasements (Patterson 1982) of the World [and its Money]. Jesus was not defined by his suffering but as the ordinary person unbreakable in the face of any, whereas to define him by his suffering was the Roman point of view on him, the point of view of the World. We speak from Jesus not as "Christians" or from this identity-category [local position, objectification] in the World, but from the proposition that Ancient Hebrew Thought can act as a generic, just as it does for Amazonian, Melanesian and other polycentric Christians. We would like here to turn the anthropology of Christianity (cf. Robbins 2003, 2004, Engelke 2007, Engelke & Robbins 2010, Vilaça 2016, Vilaça & Wright 2009) around itself, so as to become a generic (cf. Laruelle 2014) for anyone to think-with, rather than the description of a Modernizing or counter-Modernizing project which would be imposed on the subjects of the [globalized] World[-system].

We want to reclaim from the Modern the longue durée of the Human at the Center, in a way that is true to the time-space of the Sky-Earth System, without historicization within the History of the World: its evolutionism[25], its World-Wars, the story of Modernity (cf. Wagner 1986a). We speak new stories, in analogical languages, that are but the unfolding of the Myth, the [vector] matrix phase-space (cf. Maniglier 2016) of the Peoples as they think together at the Center of the Universe. This is the history that starts from what always was and always has been, and which will still be there, when the Moderns have sunk back into the ground where they came from. To start all over again from the Original Sky at the Beginning.

Civilization has been there since the Beginning, whenever and wherever there's been People (Louis-Klein n.d.a., cf. Graeber & Wengrow 2021, Gimbutas 1993, Hancock 2015, 2019).[26] The person at the Center of the Universe is the analogic unit [seed, living stone, lego block, particle] of Civilization, the scale-invariant term for any House [oikos] composed from the common = x (Wagner 1986b, 2012). In the reproduction of the person (=x) across the lifecycle, the Ancients permute the different units of the person across regional systems, culture

[25] There is a different kind of evolutionism - multiregional evolution (Thorne & Wolpoff 1992, Frayer et al. 1993, Wolpoff, Hawks & Caspari 2000, Wu 2004, VanArsdale 2020) - suppressed by the Moderns in favor of their racializing theory of Out of Africa, in which Africans are the least evolved People within the Modern World-System, whose Myth is projected as the World-History of the Human. Multiregionalism instead thinks from the matrix of Human forms as they have unfolded across the landscape as regional systems, a *Mythologiques* of Human and animal forms, in which the Human is an expandable generic across the entire interconnected history of life (Louis-Klein n.d.a), rather than a superseding and analogically Modern event, so as to debase the animal [as the slave].

[26] This is simply what the Myth asserts, including the Bible.

areas (Kroeber 1925), civilizations (Spengler 1926, Mauss 1929), galactic polities (Tambiah 2013), and planets. The People as Wandering Heroes cross the horizontal plane of the Earth, composing themselves as a vertical [image] in the Anthill, Pyramid, Temple, City and World Tree [fractal-Forest].

When Nggiwe came to New Guinea, the People were in hiding, living underground, inside the holes of the earth and its trees. They were all folded in on themselves (cf. Mimica 1988). They could not speak or move properly. They did not have proper holes for their eyes, ears, nose, mouth or anus, and they had webs between their limbs and the digits of their hands and toes. There was also a Giant, known by many names, including Sido, Sosom, Souw, Kau, and Nimrod, roaming the landscape (cf. Wagner 1996, Shaffner 2010) mistreating and eating them as if they were only animals.

Nggiwe saw what was going on, and felt sorry for the People. Whenever and wherever He came across them, He uncovered and opened them up so as to reveal the Human at the Center (*Anim-aba*) (cf. Van Baal 1966). Nggiwe used a bamboo knife to cut open their eyes and mouths, and to separate their arms and legs. "Open your eyes now. Do you see the Sun in the Sky? How does it feel on the skin? Open your ears, and listen. Spread your fingers and toes. Stretch out, and stand up straight. Open your mouths, and try to speak. Tell me what you see." He and his wife then washed them in the *kastom* water so that they would heal and grow.

Nggiwe then constructed a *Haus Tambaran*, or Spirit House [a Temple (Barker 2004) & University (Narokobi 1980)], in order to introduce the Ancient arts and sciences of how to live well together, as Humans, between the Sky and the Earth. He divided the House down the middle along its spine into two sides, the Sun and the Moon, each corresponding to the different phases of the Sky with the Earth (Sunrise and Sunset, Day and Night), and the Earth with the Sky (Water and Land), respectively. He then further subdivided each side, like the ribs, into equal sections, so that each *boan*, or unit of People, have their own section. "You of the Barramundi, the Turtle and the Sago belong to the Sun. You of the Cassowary, the Pig, and the Crocodile to the Moon. Treat each other as brothers and sisters, as Human."

Nggiwe then instructed them on generic exchange within and across the Sky-Earth System, revealing the House to be a common = x matrix table, for multiplying the People as a confederation of plants and animals (cf. Louis-Klein n.d.b), in one skin (Crook 2007), through continuous symmetrical exchange within and across the different Houses (cf. Busse 1987): "Be fruitful and multiply. Marry across the House." The House is a perfect mirror and toy model of the Sky-Earth System, for how to take responsibility for growing and reproducing the Human at the Center of the Universe in radical [non-]dual organization (Lévi-Strauss 1958, Maybury-Lewis

1979, Viveiros de Castro 2012), such that across the different Houses of people that compose the regional system (Damon 1990) and galactic polity (Tambiah 2013), the person is entirely integrated across any permutation.

Nggiwe then led the People in revenge against the impersonal Giant, to return the gift and make the exchange symmetrical, to create a new common=x. They had a great feast, redividing and reapportioning the World among them, re-distributing and integrating the Person (=People). In this way, Jesus-Nggiwe (cf. Busse 2005a) showed the People everywhere how to start Civilization all over again, from the Beginning, at the ends of the World; to obviate or anneal the World[-system] (cf. Wagner 1986a; Gómez-Emilsson 2021). There, in Melanesia, where the Sun comes out of the Ground, the Twelve Tribes of Nggiwegizie [the Children of Nggiwe] still generate the People according to His Law, and say that they will continue to do so until the end of the World (Busse 2005b).

To live well again between the Sky and Earth, to redistribute the materials of the World to the Peoples, in order to re-invent themselves as Humans, just as Nggiwe [and all the wandering civilizing heroes everywhere (Sahlins 2017)] did. To show the integral Person as the Beautiful and the Good, the psychedelic symmetries of the Gods (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1955, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1971, Hage 1983, Kuechler 2017, 2020, Gómez-Emilsson 2020), laid out on the walls of the Holographic House and Temple. To learn to be together again in community and conviviality (Turner 2011, Overing & Passes 2000, Schmid 2021).

SESS invigorates anthropology's political potential to suspend the World and to think-with the sciences after Nature. It revives anthropology's vocation to think with others, as a universal project, freed this time from [exclusive] "us/them" contrasts that keep the other's thoughts at a comfortable distance, or in mere complicity with growing and reproducing the World. Rather than a racial science and classification of homo sapiens, or the attempt to discern its cognitive unity, generic anthropology is a science *from* and *as* the ordinary person, whom we have called the Ancients, in fidelity to anthropology's vocation to think from the margins of the World yet from the Center of the Universe.

These reflections have been predominantly methodological and have focused on SESS's relationship to the discipline of anthropology. Much more is to be said in terms of the content of its cosmology or the way in which it involves and extends the physical sciences [systems theory, physical cosmology, ecology, biology, medicine, astronomy] or theology [non-standard abrahams, messianic movements, polytheism(s)]. They are simply the ancient arts and sciences of Human flourishing (cf. Hirshberg et al. 2022), of living well between the

Sky and the Earth. Some of these themes have begun to be sketched out (Louis-Klein 2021, 2022a, 2022b, n.d.a, n.d.b)[27], and are under active experimentation in formal and informal contexts (such as social media), amongst members of *Oscillations: Non-Standard Experiments in Anthropology, the Social Sciences, and Cosmology*. Most of all we wish to suggest SESS as a research programme, to be undertaken collectively and across a wide range of concerns and ethnographic materials, and alongside other disciplines. We feel that what we have proposed is a necessary direction for anthropology to take and is consistent with the driving motivations of the discipline, and we welcome all kinds of collaboration with this endeavor.

Today, new Giants are roaming the landscape. We need a new planetary-scale Ancient civilization (Hancock 2015, 2019, Graeber & Wengrow 2021, Witzel 2012), to conduct the diplomacy (Latour 2012, 2017, 2018) that makes possible its integration and harmony, making the person seen everywhere in the Universe: a generic cosmology in which to think and live as Ancients.

[27] https://oscillations.one/Assets/Issues/Sky-Earth+Systems+Science

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