PART I

The Copy and Anthropology

Gustavo Lins Ribeiro

What's in a Copy?

Abstract What is in a copy? I will answer this question by considering the importance of the copy in three related areas: academia, cultural life, and the economy. In academia, the ease with which copies can be made is challenging pedagogical practices and the trust of its members, with plagiarism being the most immediate problem. The notion of authorship is also undergoing changes provoked by a proliferation of authors and by possibilities opened recently by cyberspace. In cultural life, imitation and mimesis have long been fundamental engines of socialization. Our enhanced capacity of copying problematizes, with new intensity, the relationships between homogeneity and heterogeneity, between the genuine and the spurious. In the economic world, the digital era is threatening some of the fundamental tenets of capitalism, especially of its variant, the "knowledge society," which concerns the control of intellectual property rights. The gap between normativity and social practices is widening. The many dilemmas and tensions identified in this text are therefore understood as symptoms of two major characteristics of the current times: hyperfetishism and hyperanimism.

Keywords Copy, digital era, knowledge society, imitation, plagiarism, fetishism, animism, property rights

> *"Copying makes us what we are. Our bodies take shape from the transcription of protein templates, our languages from the mimicry of privileged sounds, our crafts from the repetition of prototypes. Cultures cohere in the faithful transmission of rituals and rules of conduct. To copy cell for cell, word for word, image for image, is to make the known world our own."*[1]

In academic life, it is rather common to begin looking an issue that one supposes to be familiar with only to find out—after successive approximations—that the issue at hand is enormous and intriguingly complex and needs to be further explored.[2] This is, once more, the case. I first thought of writing about copies as an opportunity to present my latest findings concerning the breadth of issues that the term "piracy" poses for our contemporary economic reality. Indeed, I entered this fascinating world in the late 1990's by asking a simple question while looking at the Made in China goods sold by hawks in downtown Brasilia, in a crowded street market called the Paraguayan Fair: how did these things get here?

I then started a line of research that has lasted for more than ten years and ended up coining the phrases "economic globalization from below" and "non-hegemonic world system" in the process. I will certainly present my ideas about these topics here, but I will also explore new ground and new issues that posing the question "what's in a copy?" made me think of.

A few initial considerations are in order. The English word copy comes from the Latin word "copia,"[3] the meaning of which (that is "abundance, plenty, multitude") already insinuates a vast semantic universe. The world has always been full of copies, the Industrial Revolution only accelerated the multiplication of objects and images while the Digital Era made copying easier, more exact, and ubiquitous. Copies always imply several points of tension: between essence and appearance, the particular and the universal, the unique and the many, the original and the replica, the authentic and the fake/spurious, sameness and difference, production and reproduction, homogeneity and heterogeneity, and creativity and commerce.

What's in a copy, then? At this point, I could well answer this question with a simple "everything." Indeed, according to Canadian philosopher Marcus Boon, in his thought-provoking book *In Praise of Copying,* copying "rather than being an aberration or a mistake or a crime, is a fundamental condition or requirement for anything, human or not."[4] Succumbing to the temptation of answering "everything" would certainly grant me the world record of the shortest article ever, but the answer's astonishing generalization would amount to nothing more than a refusal to face the complexity underneath the subject. Therefore, I will answer this question

1 Schwartz 1998, 211.
2 Keynote speech of the congress of German speaking anthropologists, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, September 14, 2011. I thank my colleagues in Austria, especially Andre Gingrich, for the honor.
3 Boon 2010, 41.
4 Boon 2010, 3.

by considering three sets of related issues in which the copy is equally important: academia, cultural life, and in the economic world. It goes without saying that these are not separate universes.

Copying and academia

It is impossible to think of a university existing without copies, since it is a place designed for the production, reproduction, storage, exhibition, and reverence of knowledge. We find copies everywhere: in the libraries or in the copy shops, in the uploaded PDF files of scanned texts, or in the term papers downloaded from virtual firms that may even write customized monographs for their clients. Copying is also at the center of the classrooms, at the heart of pedagogy and learning, not only because professors repeat other authors' works while teaching but because students are supposed to show how they have understood them by copying and reproducing their thoughts. Furthermore, isn't the academic ethos itself heavily based on the admiration and mimicry of certain role models, at times displayed and incorporated in theories, and at other times in behavioral styles and political leanings?

At the university, the contradictions between copying and originality abound. At the same time that copyrights are praised by many as a modern right, they are constantly disrespected in the name of education. While students need to know and copy other people's work, they are also supposed to add something new. At the same time that they admire and often emulate their masters or their mentors, they are supposed to make original contributions to knowledge. Originality here means aggregated differences between the student's work and that which he/she cites. Perhaps, in the pragmatics of the academic world, we (most often unconsciously) accept the fact that there is no such thing as 100 per cent originality and that there will never be a perfect copy, that copying always means adding something different, a fact that is especially clear in art history.[5] In the end, creation and innovation mean an addition to previously known things or processes resulting from copying exercises and from the imperfections of memory and reproduction. But since academics also need to be authors, our tendency, as in any other realm, is to abhor copies and praise originality, something made clear by the use of expressions such as "my own theory is" and "in my view."

In academic life, nowhere is the scorn for copying greater than when the issue is plagiarism, a problem that has consistently grown since "cut and paste" became a popular jargon. Cut and paste problematizes the pedagogical role of copying. One thing is a handwritten copy of a published text, the other is its digital copy. A handwritten copy demands a time of reflection, of getting acquainted with the author's ideas, of thinking

5 Boon 2010.

about how to appropriate and criticize interpretations. The digital copy is an almost instantaneous action in which the content being copied may remain completely unknown. I am not so interested in the ethical problems triggered by plagiarism and forgery which, most of the time, are related to moral and professional deceptions and to frustrated economic interests. In fact, deception never yields a good feeling. What interests me is the idea that the current spread of plagiarism is embedded in major changes in the technology used in teaching, publishing, reproducing, and using information within academia. These changes impact traditional work routines in the academic milieu in ways that are still difficult to understand, but will certainly generate radically different scenarios and practices in the future. According to Hillel Schwartz,

> Lexicographers responsible for defining plagiarism have been accused of plagiarizing definitions. A University of Oregon booklet plagiarized its section on plagiarism. Given this compulsion to repeat that which bears on repeating, plagiarism in our culture of the copy appears inevitable. [...] Our culture of the copy tends to make plagiarism a necessity, and the more we look for replays to be superior to originals, the more we will embrace plagiarism as elemental.[6]

The scorn for plagiarism is intimately related to the Western idea of authorship, a notion that is central to the modern academy. Marilyn Strathern considers "the eighteenth century idea that persons are the natural owners of both themselves and their labour" a "notion of singular ownership/authorship [that] also sets up the conceptual possibility of one author supplanting or displacing the other."[7] In a productivist era, in which competition is taken to its limits, Strathern's statement is self-explanatory.

At the same time that authorship reinforces authenticity and originality as major academic values, it depreciates copying. Considering copying a problem is far from a universal position. The importance of copying as a way of learning has long been acknowledged in Buddhism, and in China, where "the multiplication of nearly identical images is understood not as the degradation of an original but the invocation of an impermanent, provisional form with the goal of training the mind to recognize its own true nature."[8] Interestingly enough, authorship developed in the eighteenth century alongside the regulation of copyrights in Europe, an offshoot of an established and growing book industry.

But in the digital era, with the advent of the World Wide Web, the notion of authorship may well undergo dramatic changes—if not disappear entirely. As Michel Foucault anticipated, a concept that came into being at

6 Schwartz 1998, 313.
7 Strathern 1986, 21–22.
8 Boon 2010, 63.

a given moment in history may well disappear in the future. The notion of "author," as Foucault put it, is intimately related to a "privileged moment of *individualization* in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy and the sciences."[9] On the internet, there are experiments that use the immense collective creativity found in global fragmented spaces that may now be articulated online. The global cooperation that now exists within this virtual public space,[10] which is practiced by political collectives such as the free software movement, provides an interesting example of global creativity enacted by a great number or persons that are not interested in individual authorship and copyright, but in the collective perfecting of a common good that is free for all.

Such collective online creation may concretely challenge the notion that the relationship between creativity and commerce is always mediated by individual authorship and copyrights. This does not amount to saying that we are on the verge of discovering an alternative to capitalist appropriation of creative work, as some activists of the open source and free software movements would like to believe.[11] It is not impossible to suppose that a corporation, such as Google, is likely to profit from an environment free of copyrights, a sort of global fragmented creative mind, where global hackers would provide, for free, the work and information needed to improve the company's products. If such a scenario develops fully in the current juncture of computer electronic capitalism's hegemony, we should add Googleism as a new label to classify capitalist production, after Taylorism and Toyotism.

Authorship may also radically change in the face of other types of online cooperation. Here, the main example is Wikipedia. Although Wikipedia is no panacea (in the end, there is always an editor who controls what is published), it allows us to speculate about the possibility of a radical wiki-anthropology, for instance. Such on-line text construction would excel over the format of traditional journals with their referee system—which, at the core of the world system of anthropological production, more often than not replicates the styles and agendas of the Anglo-American academic milieu.[12] The possibility of writing with myriad other known or anonymous cyber-colleagues may also point to the emergence of post-authorial academic texts. Are we ready to make global wiki experiments in academic writing and theoretical production? Are we ready to go beyond the notion of authorship in academia, one of the bases of inequality reproduction in a world full of individualism and individual power seekers? I don't know. Perhaps my generation is not. Perhaps younger scholars, natives of digital culture who are completely immersed in cyberspace, are.

9 Foucault 1984, 101.
10 Ribeiro 2003.
11 Evangelista 2010.
12 Kuwayama 2004.

Copying and culture

There are several possible explorations of the relations between copying and culture. I will tackle with but a few here. How one acquires or learns a culture and a language, that is, how a person becomes human or a member of a culture and a society, has been a much-debated subject in philosophy, sociology, and anthropology. Learning is presumed central to *Homo sapiens* evolution. Indeed, if every hunter and gatherer had to invent arrows and bowls again and again, the human capacity for adaptation and evolution would have been seriously affected. Mimesis, socialization, enculturation, diffusion, and borrowing are recurrent concepts in this universe. Discussions often resonate with questions of structure and agency in ways that resemble the attribution of positive characteristics to authenticity, originality, and authorship and of negative characteristics to copying and imitation.

A relatively recent revisionist perspective on enculturation by Cindy Dell Clark provides an interesting illustration of a position that emphasizes children's agency. Dell Clark considers enculturation "not so much a straightforward mature-on-immature imposition of practices" but "a many-laned and multi-directional matrix in which children and elders interact."[13] Following Jean Briggs,[14] Dell Clark asserts that "enculturation entails a complex, shifting assortment of ingredients to be actively selected and interpreted by the child." Dell Clark takes a critical stance of "cultural reduplication" and concludes that a "revisionist notion of enculturation implies a dynamism and fluidity to cultural learning, rather than a cloning like social reproduction process."[15] Once more, what seems to be at stake are the tensions among creativity and inventiveness versus repetition, copying, and imitation.

The notion of imitation has enjoyed a greater visibility in the past in the social sciences. Perhaps we are at the forefront of a return of its influence caused by a growing interest in the work of French sociologist Gabriel Tarde (1843–1904), who published his book *Les Lois de l'Imitation* in 1890 (the English version, *The Laws of Imitation*, was published 1903). Matei Candea, the editor of a recent volume entitled *The Social After Gabriel Tarde*, speaks of a Tardean revival.[16] Tarde's mimetic paradigm is also an exercise on the value of difference; in his view, repetition provokes difference. His thinking has informed disparate but influential works, including Everett Rogers' *Diffusion of Innovations*, which was first published in 1962 and later became a classic on the subject.[17] Rogers' theoretical approach is radically different from those of authors such as Gilles Delleuze and Bruno Latour, who were also influenced by Tarde. It is not my intention to summarize Tarde's rather complex production nor

13 Dell Clark 2005, 182.
14 Briggs 1992 and 1998.
15 Dell Clark 2005, 183.
16 Candea 2010, 2.
17 Rogers 2003.

the equally elaborate current appropriations of his work. Rather, I am more interested in looking at the renaissance of his influence as another indication of the increased awareness of the importance of copying and the challenges it brings.

If imitation entails complex theories and arguments, mimesis, simulation, and mimicry do not lag far behind. Suffice it to mention the lasting influence of the Platonic interpretation of the relationship between outward appearance and essence in Western philosophy, the echoes of which, in anthropology, could be heard in hot debates about identity, authenticity, and essentialism in the 1990's.[18] Or we could also mention Jean Baudrillard's well-known contribution on the role of simulacra and simulations in the constitution and reproduction of current social life.[19] The digital age, in which copies do not have originals, may perforce witness the death of the original, clearly subverting the Platonic gaze. In this environment, we are inevitably drawn to a discussion on virtuality and the status of reality. Virtuality creates confusion about the phenomenological status of the real world at the same that it magnifies our life experience. This principle is certainly behind the choice of the name "Second Life" for the popular virtual "place" in cyberspace.

I myself wrote that, in order to understand current public space, we need to make a distinction between the virtual public space and the real public space that, together, make up public-space-in-general.[20] The increased political use of the internet since the Rio 1992 Earth Conference, and of cell phones since at least the anti-globalization 1999 Seattle battle, as well as the work of groups such as Avaaz, to mention three out of myriad examples, clearly illustrate the intertwinement between the real and the virtual public space, something that intensifies what I have referred to as "political activism at a distance."[21] The intertwinement of virtuality and reality may derive from the division of the sign into signifier and signified, and is thus necessarily embedded in all symbolic systems that depend on the linguistic sign.

Avatars insinuate the possibility of virtual cloning—something not as disturbing as the possibility of the genetic cloning of human bodies, a subject that immediately spurs waves of technophobic reactions. At present, human cloning is a limit imposed on bioengineering's copying capacity. Nature and culture, a preferred anthropological topic, now needs to be considered through other lenses as the capacity to manipulate the natural world is extended to more fundamental dimensions such as the very code of organic life. In an age of technoculture, it is not by chance that anthropologists have become involved with science and technology studies to

18 Boon 2010.
19 Baudrillard (1981) 1994.
20 Ribeiro 2003.
21 Ribeiro 1998.

understand "emergent forms of life," an allusion I make to the title of a 2003 book by Michael Fischer, a leading scholar in this field.[22]

Owing to their interest in diffusion and dissemination, and in the exchange between local and supralocal settings enmeshed in flows of people, knowledge, and things, anthropologists know that the relationships between sameness and difference, between homogeneity and heterogeneity are central to human life and to our understanding of the complex symbolic umbrella we all live under. In the past, some influential anthropological visions of culture were strongly informed by a nostalgic ethos as well as by the search for an organic, harmonious, totality within which genuine links between location, history, and individuality might thrive. A classic reference here is Edward Sapir's well-known 1924 piece "Culture, Genuine and Spurious."[23] From this perspective, "internal" factors are highly valued to the detriment of "external" ones, and to the detriment of what Sapir described as a "spiritual hybrid of contradictory patches, of water-tight compartments of consciousness that avoid participation in a harmonious synthesis."[24] This position has long been accompanied by another, which stresses that cultural life is an amalgamation of several borrowings. Think, for instance, of Ralph Linton's equally classic piece, the 1936 article "One Hundred Percent American," in which he stresses how Americans use and copy objects and behaviors of many different origins.[25] Almost a century later, we surely are far from Sapir's position not only because hybridity and fragmentation are no longer seen in a negative way,[26] but also because—for many of us—it is clear, as Eric Wolf put it, that "in a majority of cases the entities studied by anthropologists owe their development to processes that originate outside them and reach well beyond them, [...] they owe their crystallization to these processes, take part in them, and affect them in turn."[27]

However, resonances of the genuine/spurious tension still seem to interfere in current political ideologies and in the pragmatics of identity politics, especially when interethnic politics is at stake. "Strategic essentialism," a concept in postcolonial theory coined by Gayatri Spivak, refers to the strategic political use of a supposedly unified social identity. In a different mode, postcolonial approaches also make clear the political role of imitation and of "spurious" culture in settings where subalternity is a hallmark of the relations between different ethnic segments. Here, a good example is Homi Bhabha's well known essay "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," on the role of mimicry in colonialism.[28] For him, mimicry is at once resemblance and menace, since the discourses that

22 Fischer 2003.
23 Sapir (1924) 1949.
24 Sapir (1924) 1949, 315.
25 Linton 1936.
26 See, for instance, García Canclini 1990 and Ribeiro 1992.
27 Wolf 2001, 312.
28 Bhabha 1994.

reproduce imperial dominance carry a weakness that destroys domination from within. The subversive force of imitation imposes itself because nothing is pure replication and new critical interpretations and practices may always arise. The realization that borrowing symbols and discourses from the dominant colonizer always involves re-readings and the agency of native populations has its own tradition in anthropology, as the classic 1958 essay by Eric Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol," testifies.[29]

But what exactly is at stake in the several facets and implications of the relationship between culture and copying that I have been exploring? Why are imitation and copying criticized when they are so necessary? Always living in a hall of mirrors, in a multiplicity of social relations and representations, we fear losing our uniqueness, losing control of who we think we *really* are and being dissolved in an amorphous and imagined mass of other beings like us. We fear becoming avatars in a world without flesh and bone. Even worse, the fear of losing one's authentic being and capacity of being a human subject is also a fear of becoming a puppet or a drone, of falling under someone else's spell, or falling prey to their desires and power.

Somewhat less dramatically, I will explore another angle to conclude this section. Can you imagine the amount of time it would take just to move around and complete our everyday activities if each object were unique? Copying, repetition, and imitation serve previsibility, something fundamental to the reproduction of what Anthony Giddens calls "practical consciousness," or our ability to reproduce patterned daily life.[30] Without this ability, and given the enormous amount of energy we would have to expend to constantly monitor extraordinariness and randomness, the human subject and social life as we know them would not exist. In view of this reasoning, I can also conclude that uniqueness and authenticity are highly valued because they represent a rupture in the chain of repetitions, thereby bringing extra-ordinariness and novelty to light. It is failure in repetition, in a series of events or objects, it is the unexpected—in a word, serendipity—that constitutes a privileged mode of creation and innovation. In the end, copying and creativity depend on each other because without copying—and the flaws it implies—there could be no extraordinariness.

Copying and economy

There would be no economy without copying. Labor processes and technologies rely on repetition, replication, and predictability. Production relies on re-production. Consumption relies not only on innovation but on the capability of predicting an object's usefulness. The multiplication of copied objects for consumption according to previously existing templates (let's call

29 Wolf 1958.
30 Giddens 1984.

this mass production) is not new. Coins and bottles, for instance, have been mass produced in the West since ancient times.[31] However, the Gutenberg Revolution and, later, the Industrial Revolution, dramatically increased the mass production of objects. More importantly, the Industrial Revolution, with its accelerated production of copies, imposed the hegemony of commodification as a regime of social (re)production that impacted not only the economy but all aspects of human life, in a process well captured by Karl Marx's seminal work, *The Capital* (and especially by his notion of commodity fetishism). Hereafter, social actors would be mesmerized by commodities and the market in ways that hindered them from understanding the social forces and processes responsible for the re-production of their own lives.

If capitalist commodity production in the nineteenth century was already so powerful as to commodify the lives of the inhabitants of industrial nations, imagine the extent to which this pattern has developed today—when even the unconscious has been colonized by capitalism. The digital era, with its tremendous copying capacity, dawned when Fredric Jameson published his prescient 1984 essay on the cultural logic of late capitalism (and from which I derived my last assertion about the unconscious).[32] The proliferation of copies of creative works granted by digital technologies also makes Walter Benjamin's classic 1936 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" appear somewhat dated.[33] It couldn't be any other way. Benjamin's writing reflects the analogue logic of reproduction of his day. Currently, we are under the hegemony of electronic and computer capitalism. Mechanical reproduction no longer sets the pace of social life. But Benjamin is a great thinker. He anticipated, for instance, that the notion of authenticity does not make sense for reproductions as well as that "technical reproduction can put the copy of the original into situations that would be out of reach for the original itself."[34] Also, from his work, we can imply that there are no Benjaminian originals in the world of commodities. Originals suppose an aura that withers in systems of mass production.

More than eighty years later, notwithstanding Benjamin's work of genius, it is possible to see some of its limits. This limitation, as a matter of fact, does not disallow the brilliance of the essay. Quite the contrary, such limits can only be seen because their potential existence was already in the text. For instance, his comments about the power of photography to accelerate "the process of pictorial reproduction"[35] could not suppose the digital convergence that made photography and videography from a mobile phone possible. Now, taking pictures or making videos is so easy and accomplished so *en masse* that it is impossible to calculate how many pictures and videos are made and shared in a year. With the popularization of cell phones, soon every person will carry a camera. Concurrently, the

31 Boon 2010.
32 Jameson 1984.
33 Benjamin (1936) 1975.
34 Benjamin (1936) 1975, 13.
35 Benjamin (1936) 1975, 12.

internet has become a fantastic treasure hoard of images. Consider, for instance, what Facebook and YouTube mean as repositories of testimonies. The scope of the YouTube archive is so immense that it makes me toy with the idea that, now, researchers in the social sciences and in psychology have the Jungian "collective unconscious"—a notion I was never truly comfortable with—available for inquiry on their computers. In the same vein, Benjamin saw that, with the "increasing extension of the press," "an increasing number of readers became writers," and what "began with the daily press opening to its readers space for 'letters to the editor'" resulted in such a state that "the distinction between author and public is about to lose its basic character. [...] At any moment the reader is ready to turn into a writer. [...] the reader gains access to authorship."[36]

What would Benjamin write if he could see today's proliferation of authors on blogs, websites, Facebook, and Twitter? A world where everyone is potentially (or de facto) an author is a world so saturated of authors that the very notion of authorship seems senseless. But it is not only writers that proliferate on the internet: there are also crowds of photographers, filmmakers, and musicians that publicize their work online. YouTube is actually functioning as a screener for the discovery of new talents by the entertainment industry. The number of views a video gets is a free-of-charge global poll. YouTube is a virtual mega impresario and employment agency for artists of all kinds on a global level.

But, at the same time, the internet also represents the greatest present challenge to copyright. If, on the one hand, the economy depends on copying, then economic agents also need to control copying, since retaining rights to certain commodities means having a monopolistic niche in the market. Such control is increasingly more complicated to exert—especially over transactions involving digital culture.

Notions of originals and authenticity have long been formulated to help control economic competition. Indeed, coins have been falsified since ancient times and the history of the term piracy, meaning the antithesis of civilization, is associated with the rise of Athens.[37] However, according to Adrian Johns in his book on piracy, "although appropriators of ideas may always have existed, societies have not always recognized a specific concept of intellectual property. [...that concept] owed its origins to the cultural transformations set in train by Johann Gutenberg's invention of the printing press."[38]

Although patents were already being granted in Italy and England by the fifteenth century, and "patents controlling the 'rights in copies' of books can be dated to 1563 in England,"[39] people started to refer to "intellectual purloining as piracy [...] sometime in the mid-seventeenth century,"[40] and

36 Benjamin (1936) 1975, 24.
37 Johns 2009, 33–34.
38 Johns 2009, 8.
39 Boon 2010, 48.
40 Johns 2009, 23.

the first copyright law only emerged in 1709. However, intellectual property as a regulatory mode of economic activity developed only in the nineteenth century. Currently, as Brazilian anthropologists Ondina Fachel Leal and Rebecca Henneman Vergara de Souza show, intellectual property is intrinsically linked to the 1994 legally-instituted global regime on "Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights" (or "TRIPS") administered by the World Trade Organization, an agency of global governance.[41] This international agreement legitimates a "power structure that gives support to an emerging knowledge and information economy."[42] Globalization and the digital age thus brought copyrights and trademarks to the center of economic conflict. This is why many analysts view piracy as the greatest threat to national and global economies, or believe that the regulatory framework needs to change.[43] Lawrence Lessig's *Free Culture*, for instance, is a well-known book on new scenarios that the internet has generated regarding copyrights and the free exchange of ideas.[44] For him, current laws are used by corporations to "lock down culture and control creativity."

At the same time, the production of unauthorized copies is a highly stigmatized activity.[45] Nevertheless, it is a major economic force everywhere and not only in the so-called "developing nations."[46] Here we enter the realm of the appropriation of flows of global wealth by the grass roots, by people who participate in what I call "economic globalization from below" and "the non-hegemonic world system."[47] What is behind the unauthorized copies of a Louis Vuitton purse or of DVDs sold in street markets almost everywhere?

"Trader-tourists" and street vendors of global gadgets, for instance, are but the tip of the iceberg of economic globalization from below which, in turn, is part of the non-hegemonic world system. I call their activities non-hegemonic because they defy the economic establishment everywhere. Their occupations are considered illegal, as "smuggling." In consequence, these trading networks and markets are seen as illegitimate and are confronted with repression in the name of legality. The commodities traded are usually classified as piracy. Sometimes, they are simulacra of "superlogos," i.e. highly desired global brands controlled by major transnational corporations in order to retain monopolistic niches in the global market.[48] The difference between the prices of original superlogo items and fake ones is the source of a profit margin that makes working in the non-hegemonic world system worthwhile. Economic globalization from

41 Leal and Souza 2010.
42 Leal and Souza 2010, 15.
43 See for instance Johns 2009.
44 Lessig 2004.
45 See for instance Naím 2005.
46 Johns 2009, 14.
47 Ribeiro 2007 and 2011; see also Mathews, Ribeiro, and Vega 2012.
48 Chang 2004.

below provides access to flows of global wealth that otherwise would not reach the more vulnerable ranks of any society.

Economic globalization from below is made up of 1) nodes, i.e., of markets where global gadgets and copies of superlogos are sold, 2) flows among such nodes, typically connected by way of migratory networks and diasporas such as the Chinese and Lebanese ones, and 3) of production centers. Larger nodes of the system feed smaller ones in a trickle-down fashion. The totality of the activities within these markets, routes, and production centers of globalization from below comprises what I call the "non-hegemonic world system."[49] One may find nodes of this non-hegemonic world system as large as the Paraguayan city of Ciudad del Este, or in the city of Dubai—both markets that move billions of dollars annually—or in areas of major cities such as China Town in New York and in small street markets scattered on the sidewalks and squares of major metropolises of the world.[50] These are (i)llicit activities, i.e., they are considered illegal by the state and the economic establishment, but they are socially accepted and viewed as legitimate by their practitioners, who do not consider themselves criminals.[51] The main production centers that feed these global networks are located in Asia, in countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and especially China. The province of Guangdong, China, is the center of the non-hegemonic world system.

What's in a copy?

Campaigns against piracy are expressions of a crisis of the notion of property and of related normative frameworks that are central to the reproduction of capitalism.[52] This is why copying is taken so seriously by the economic and political establishment. Unauthorized copies of commodities are subversive forces. They denounce the arbitrariness of the extraordinary profits that trademark and copyright allow; they make the promise of consumption to everyone more feasible through unregulated means and defy the monopoly and privilege that the largest corporations in the world hope to maintain. In the end, copying is also a political issue as the expressions "copyright" and "copyleft" make clear. Indeed, the struggle to free copies and innovation processes from the hold of powerful corporations is basically a political struggle.[53]

Ultimately, the main issue at stake is whether we want to live in a world completely colonized by flexible capitalism, with its tremendous copying capacity and voracious desire to control intellectual property. It seems we are almost there. I see two possible outcomes, both of which are, in

49 Ribeiro 2007.
50 Ribeiro 2006a, 2006b.
51 Abraham and Van Schendel 2005.
52 Boon 2010; Johns 2009.
53 Evangelista 2010.

one way or another, related to the efficacy of commodification. The first could be called "hyperfetishism," meaning the hyper efficacy of fetishism in a world completely colonized by copies without originals, and by their central role in accumulation within the cutting-edge sectors of electronic and computer capitalism. In such a realm, no one would really care about alienation. The current almost complete disappearance of this term is an indication of what I just said. The other outcome is what I would call "hyperanimism," or a return to the metaphysics of animism among the moderns.[54] One expression of hyperanimism is the prestige currently enjoyed by some theories that attribute agency to things. Perhaps it is a reaction to a world where copies have no originals but algorithms, a reaction to the possibility of a shallow world, finally and completely disenchanted, in which human clones may exist.

There are other dilemmas brought on by the enhanced capacity of copying. I argued that the very notion of author as originator,[55] as someone who gives existence to something, is being challenged by the rise of collective and anonymous global forms of creation. I also argued that the notion of authenticity is being challenged by the disappearance of the original and of genuineness. It is hard to anticipate what a world without authors and authenticity would be like. Would it be a world with a more collective sense of membership?

Finally, copies compel us to think about the dialectics between difference and similarity as necessary features for perceiving and acting in the world. On the one hand, if everything were the same, it would be impossible to distinguish any particular part of the real world from another—it would be something akin to experiencing a void space where recognition through contrast would be nonexistent. On the other hand, if all things were different from each other, it would be impossible to predict form, function, and process—it would be something akin to experiencing an overwhelming chaotic space where all our energies would be spent on understanding the uniqueness of everything and where recognition through resemblance would be nonexistent. In short, I consider copying a total social fact, to borrow Marcel Mauss's terms.[56] It is an activity that has economic, sociological, psychological, cultural, artistic, scientific, legal, academic, and political implications. Indeed, mimesis is a fundamental quality of human life in every regard. If it is true that copying has always been central to social, cultural, and economic life—and is becoming increasingly more so—it is hard

54 I am aware of Fabian's (1983) critique about the use of "animism." My use of the term does not imply a negation of the coevalness, nor is it meant to be an invective. For me, what is at stake here is not the notion of time nor its political and ethnographic usage. Rather, what is at stake are the different understandings of humankind's capabilities of changing natural and social realities by means of human labor.

55 Schwartz 1998, 248.

56 Mauss 1973.

not to conclude that we are on the verge of a great change in the way we perceive and react to the role of copying in the reproduction of our lives.

References

Abraham, Itty, and Willem van Schendel. 2005. "Introduction: The Making of Illicitness." In *Illicit Flows and Criminal Things*, edited by Willem van Schendel and Itty Abraham, 1–37. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Baudrillard, Jean. (1981) 1994. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Benjamin, Walter. (1936) 1975. *"A obra de arte na época de suas técnicas de reprodução."* Os pensadores 48. São Paulo: Abril Cultural.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1994. "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse". In: *The Location of Culture*. 85–92. London: Routledge.

Boon, Marcus. 2010. *In Praise of Copying*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Briggs, Jean. 1992. "Mazes of Meaning: How a Child and a Culture Create Each Other." In *Interpretive Approaches to Children's Socialization*, edited by William Corsaro and Peggy Miller, 25–49. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

———. 1998. *Inuit Morality Play*. *The Emotional Education of a Three-Year Old*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Candea, Matei, ed. 2010. *The Social After Gabriel Tarde: Debates and Assessments.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Chang, Hsiao-hung. 2004. "Fake Logos, Fake Theory, Fake Globalization." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (5) 2: 222–236.

Dell Clark, Cindy. 2005. "Tricks of Festival: Children, Enculturation, and American Halloween." *Ethos* 33 (2): 180–205.

Evangelista, Rafael de Almeida. 2010. "Traidores do movimento: Política, cultura, ideologia e trabalho no software livre." PhD diss., State University of Campinas, Graduate Program in Social Anthropology.

Fabian, Johannes. 1983. *Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes Its Object.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Fischer, Michael M. J. 2003. *Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1984. "What is an Author?" In *The Foucault Reader*, edited by Paul Rabinow, 101–120. New York: Pantheon Books.

García Canclini, Néstor. 1990. *Culturas híbridas: Estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad*. México: Grijalbo.

Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Jameson, Fredric. 1984. "Postmodernism; or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism." *New Left Review* 146: 53–92.

Johns, Adrian. 2009. *Piracy: The Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Kuwayama, Takami. 2004. *Native Anthropology: The Japanese Challenge to Western Academic Hegemony*. Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press.

Leal, Ondina Fachel, and Rebeca Henneman Vergara de Souza. 2010. "Introdução: Propriedade intelectual e antropologia." In *Do regime de propriedade intelectual: Estudos antropológicos,* 14–18. Porto Alegre: Tomo Editorial.

Lessig, Lawrence. 2004. *Free Culture. How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity.* New York: The Penguin Press.

Linton, Ralph. 1936. *The Study of Man*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co.

Mathews, Gordon. 2010, "On the Referee System as a Barrier to Global Anthropology." *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 11 (1): 52–63.

———, Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, and Carlos Alba Vega, eds. 2012. *Globalization from Below. The World's Other Economy*. London: Routledge.

Mauss, Marcel. 1973. "Essai sur le don: Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques." In *Sociologie et anthropologie*, 145–279. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Naím, Moisés. 2005. *Illicit: How Smugglers, Traffickers, and Copycats are Hijacking the Global Economy*. New York: Doubleday.

Ribeiro, Gustavo Lins. 1992. "Bichos-de-Obra: Fragmentação e reconstrução de identidades." *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 18: 30–40.

———. 1998. "Cybercultural Politics: Political Activism at a Distance in a Transnational World." In *Cultures of Politics / Politics of Cultures: Revisioning Latin American Social Movements*, edited by Sonia Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar, 325–352. Boulder: Westview Press.

———. 2003. "El espacio-público-virtual." In *Postimperialismo: Cultura y política en el mundo contemporáneo*, 199–217. Barcelona: Gedisa.

———. 2006a. "Other Globalizations: Alter-native Transnational Processes and Agents." *The Edelstein Center for Social Research—Working Paper* 4. Rio de Janeiro. http://www.centroedelstein.org.br/working.shtml.

———. 2006b. "Economic Globalization from Below." *Etnográfica* 10 (2): 233–249.

———. 2007. "El sistema mundial no-hegemónico y la globalización popular." *Série Antropologia da Universidade de Brasilia* 410. http://www.unb.br/ics/dan.

———. 2011. "Wirtschaftsglobalisierung von unten." In *Lexikon der Globalisierung*, edited by Fernand Kreff, Eva-Maria Knoll, and Andre Gingrich, 441–442. Bielefeld: transcript.

Rogers, Everett M. 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations*, 5th ed. New York: The Free Press.

Sapir, Edward. (1924) 1949. "Culture, Genuine and Spurious". In *Edward Sapir: Selected Writings in Language, Culture, and Personality,* edited by David G. Mandelbaum, 308–331. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schwartz, Hillel. 1998. *The Culture of the Copy: Striking Likenesses, Unreasonable Facsimiles*. New York: Zone Books.

Strathern, Marilyn. 1986. "The Limits of Auto-anthropology." In *Anthropology at Home*, edited by Anthony Jackson, 16–37. London: Tavistock.

Wolf, Eric R. 1958. "The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol." *Journal of American Folklore* 71 (279): 34–39.

———. 2001. "Culture: Panacea or Problem?" In *Pathways of Power: Building an Anthropology of the Modern World,* 307–319. Berkeley: University of California Press.