

Original Article

# At the Guarani step: contributions to thinking about bodies on this ground in Brazil

*No passo Guarani: contribuições para pensar os corpos neste chão Brasil*

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** This paper presents a way of thinking-feeling-imagining and acting on the body based on theoretical contributions from Guarani thought. It is understood that occupational therapists need to know and be able to use indigenous ancestral knowledge to multiply the ways of understanding the body in Brazil. **Objective:** To present the initial designs of a research path with indigenous writers, highlighting Guarani thought in its unique form of expression in this text. **Method:** This is the presentation of part of theoretical cartographic research carried out using materials written by indigenous authors. **Results:** The text narrates and problematizes the generation of bodies in this territory considering the contributions of the experts studied belonging to the Guarani indigenous nation. **Conclusion:** The power of Guarani thinking to encourage and expand theoretical conversations and questions around body knowledge that can transform knowledge and practices in occupational therapy in Brazil is indicated, even initially.

**Keywords:** Human Body, Knowledge, Occupational Therapy.

## Resumo

**Introdução:** Este texto apresenta um modo de pensar-sentir-imaginar e agir “corpo” desde aportes teóricos oriundos do pensamento Guarani. Entende-se a necessidade de que terapeutas ocupacionais conheçam e possam fruir saberes ancestrais indígenas de maneira a multiplicar as formas de compreensão acerca do corpo no Brasil. **Objetivo:** Apresentar os desenhos iniciais de um percurso de pesquisa com escritores e escritoras indígenas, visibilizando neste texto o pensamento Guarani em sua forma singular de expressão. **Método:** Trata-se da apresentação de parte de uma pesquisa teórica de cunho cartográfico, realizada em materiais escritos por autores e autoras indígenas. **Resultados:** O texto narra e problematiza a geração de corpos neste território, considerando as

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contribuições dos especialistas<sup>1</sup> estudados pertencentes à nação indígena Guaraní.

**Conclusão:** Indica-se, ainda que inicialmente, a potência do pensamento Guaraní para fomentar e ampliar conversas teóricas e questionamentos em torno dos saberes do corpo que podem vir a transformar saberes e práticas em terapia ocupacional no Brasil.

**Palavras-chave:** Corpo Humano, Conhecimento, Terapia Ocupacional.

## Initial Notes

[...] situating oneself has nothing to do with occupying a point of view [...] being able to situate oneself [...] implies being indebted to the existences of others, those who ask other questions and make a situation import in another way, that occupy the landscape in a way that prevents appropriation in the name of an abstract ideal, whatever it may be (Stengers, 2023, p. 74).

This text is a partial presentation of a research exercise that originated from questions aimed at exploring how we think about “body” in contemporary Brazil, how we understand ourselves as bodies that generate bodies in different environments (Favre, 2021) on this ground of ours, and finally, how we care for and are cared for from this place. Thus, the aim was to reflect on the stories we tell about ourselves, revisiting them, problematizing them, and searching for ancestral clues. This is a delicate and challenging task that involves engaging with diverse knowledge from anthropology, geology, archaeology, among others, but mainly listening to and learning from the stories of the elders who occupy this territory, the Indigenous peoples.

Some time ago, in occupational therapy (1990s), we set out to rethink “body” by dialoguing with different areas of knowledge (Castro, 2000; Almeida, 2004; Liberman, 2007; Liberman et al., 2022; Mecca, 2023; Angeli, 2023; Shiramizo, 2023). However, it is considered that, although we have made significant progress, we still need to understand whether “body” is indeed a term/notion/concept from the Indigenous epistemologies of this ground called Brazil. The study, still ongoing<sup>2</sup>, aims to advance in this direction in order to nurture other ways of thinking, feeling, imagining, and acting “body” from and with our stories here. Many forms of knowledge and narratives that have been silenced, violently appropriated, and buried by colonial discourses and practices are made visible (Krenak & Campos, 2021). Thus, the delicacy of this work lies in experiencing Indigenous knowledge, learning about ourselves – the people of this ground – rewriting our stories, and embodying the differences that arise from these alternative narratives rooted in Indigenous pluriverses. Above all, it involves not appropriating the discourse of others,

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout the manuscript, the word specialist is used to designate producers of indigenous knowledge, with or without institutional academic training. This is followed by the proposal of the Ye`pamahsá (Tukano) indigenous anthropologist João Paulo Lima Barreto to translate the word Kumuã, from his language into Portuguese, as a specialist.

<sup>2</sup>The research “On the ground in Brazil: mapping traces of other possible embodiments in indigenous tracks” began in 2020 (in its first version) and has been developed since then by author Andréa Angeli. Part of this study, which is partially presented here, took the form of a post-doctorate in the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Health Sciences – Unifesp – throughout 2023, under the supervision of professor Flávia Liberman.

but maintaining one's own place. In this way, what is presented at this moment is the *enjoyment* of these knowledges, contemplation, and experimentation, with a clear desire to slow down scientific production (Stengers, 2023).

In this sense, returning to our ancestral knowledge is, above all, a process of repair, that is, noticing and correcting. It involves recognizing the variations in ways of being and living, thinking, acting, imagining, and feeling in Brazil. Repairing, through a handcrafted work of stitching, means exploring alternative relationships with what constitutes our common ground: the biomes, cosmologies, atmospheric and oceanic variations, and the various meanings present in the many expressions (in acting, feeling, thinking, and imagining) of beings (animals, plants, protists, fungi, bacteria). This activates other narrative politics (Barros & Passos, 2009) that recount the story of humanity, other beings, and the making of the world in Brazil. *Where we come from, who we are, and where we are going*. It may also contribute to repairing what has been broken, reestablishing the multiplicity of what has been called Brazil, but which has a thousand other names. In the craft of repair, it has been and is necessary to be patient, point by point, cultivating the relationship with the stitching.

It has taken us centuries to recognize ancestral knowledge, and decades in occupational therapy to revisit our theoretical and methodological foundations that are deeply embedded in colonialism (Núñez, 2019). Here, repairing also means caring not to repeat the historical epistemic violence against Indigenous peoples.

It is agreed that...

[...] slowing down science means civilizing scientists. Civilization here means the ability, demonstrated by members of a particular collective, to present themselves in a way that does not insult members of other collectives, that is, in a way that enables a process of producing relationships (Stengers, 2023, p. 142).

In this way, the focus of this article is to offer elements for the appreciation of other knowledge, resulting from what has already been possible to know and analyze Guarani production, demonstrating that they are constructed in a transdisciplinary and embodied way in speech, dance, land cultivation, in body painting or not, in ceramics, in cooking, among others. Thinking, acting, feeling and imagining are inseparable and a constant and cooperative exercise in a community made up of different beings.

It is noteworthy that the initial questions of this study also had to be redone along the way, since, according to indigenous anthropologist João Paulo, “[...] the indigenous notion of the body is something not finished, it is something manipulable, transformable, subject to infinite possibilities [...] a body is a dynamic agency and not something finished, enclosed in itself, individualized and biological” (Barreto, 2022, p. 199).

The author is referring to a radical shift in a conception of the environment, of the world, of bodies. “The body, then, is the arena of expression of an Amerindian philosophy” (Barreto, 2022, p. 199). The human body is conceived as a microcosm and has the power to transmute itself into other beings, “[...] it can change its appearance, its shape, its size and its physical state” (Barreto, 2022, p. 199).

The body is formed through many relationships; it is temporary and mutable, permeated by the spaces, narratives, images, feelings, and others that comprise our ground. It was not possible to isolate this category for study, which led the research to undertake

numerous immersions in biological and geological knowledge, for example, to delve into the specificities of the biomes and geographical spaces with which these peoples relate.

Indigenous specialists consider the earthly world as an organism, in which its constituent elements intersect and mutually affect each other, forming new bodies that meet. They speak of creative transformation and define the world as a living organism, a system characterized by self-production. Beings are made and remade through the connections that each body establishes with other bodies (Barreto, 2022, p. 200).

This meant that entering into a living and connective Brazil required a transdisciplinary disposition and the activation of the capacity to make elements such as the earth, mountains and rocks, water, atmosphere, and plant and animal beings porous, interconnected, and alive through experimentation<sup>3</sup>. It involved immersing oneself through contact with materials written by Indigenous subjects, as well as audiovisual materials and/or lectures in which their voices, actions, thoughts, and imaginations became present, along with artworks and crafts displayed in different exhibition spaces –although, for the execution of the research, the selection of written materials was prioritized.

## **Method**

Cartography was the adopted working strategy. In this approach, the researcher and the object are simultaneously constituted; it does not start from a hypothesis, but from questions and concerns that weave knowledge based on experience. Thus, it is also an intervention and is formed through clues arising from the relationships between the researcher and the problematic field (Passos et al., 2009). Several actions have been important for its establishment over time, namely:

- a) Surveying and reading materials written by various Indigenous subjects of Guarani origin and/or those living with this people, in the form of technical books, free texts on Indigenous movement websites, literary and/or poetic works, articles, theses, and dissertations;
- b) Recording clues in the form of words, excerpts, and images that related to or cited the body or elements that constitute their understandings of the body in a field diary. It is noteworthy that the Indigenous thought with which we have engaged is not represented by one or another author; it is circular, and when one speaks, they represent a people (Krenak, 2020a). This led the research to focus on immersing in this collective voice of one Indigenous nation at a time. In the case of this article, it presents what has already been gathered regarding the Guarani nation;
- c) Recording clues in the forms of sensations and images/drawings by the researcher in relation to the material read, as well as their immersion in other audiovisual materials, pictorial works, sculptures, or crafts with which they had free contact;
- d) Writing narratives based on the elements recorded in the diaries, aiming to report and reflect on what was discovered about “body,” and on the conceptual connections

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<sup>3</sup>Outdoor experiences through contact and dialogue with what we call “nature” in other discursive regimes.

with other non-Indigenous authors that support the expression of these alternative ways of conceiving the “body”.

These actions occurred simultaneously, allowing for constant analysis, redirections, and changes in trajectory. In this sense, the experience with each text allowed for a repositioning of perspective and presence, turning the given reality upside down and envisioning possibilities among the various ways of thinking-feeling-imagining-acting “body”. This enabled the research to be interrogated continuously, problematizing and remaining attentive to the tendency to interpret, homogenize, flatten, and unify meanings arising from the study process.

## **A Ground That Moves and Animates the Living**

[...] opening the possibility to propose other versions  
so that the stories can be continuous  
is something so mundane, so earthly... this is precisely the point (Haraway,  
2023, p. 235).

We sought life on this ground called Brazil and its thousand other names. Ailton Krenak shows that, before this land was called Brazil, it was home to Indigenous nations and their living territories. Many languages were spoken, and narratives of inhabiting this world – Earth (the planet) – and these lands (organic matter) were shared. Narratives that date back 8 to 10 thousand years, but within them, a common aspect: the prophecy of meeting and/or reuniting with that other relative, the white one, who had been lost.

We are witnesses to the arrival of others here [...] recognizing this enriches us much more and gives us the opportunity to refine and deepen the recognition among these different cultures and ways of seeing and being in the world that laid the foundation for this Brazilian nation (Krenak & Cohn, 2015, p. 163).

We follow the master in the quest to recognize, experience, and connect diverse stories to multiply the ground. It is understood that these are always narratives from the perspectives of those who tell, look, feel, think, act, imagine, share, that is, situated narratives. With them, ways of being and living are established for all who share these spoken and/or written words. How we tell our stories matters (Haraway, 2023).

One of the stories of life on/in the planet belongs to the peoples of the Guarani nation. We follow the path alongside the voices of Guarani specialists. The poetics of their narratives intertwine with the persistence to exist and resist throughout centuries of great violence. Their ways of conceiving existence seem to combine environment (the web of relational ties between humans and non-humans) and walking, in a complex relationship of complementarity between the terms. Their map is mobile, their geography questions the dominant one that establishes geopolitical borders, and their ground is always in motion and constitution with each step taken, intertwining firmness and delicacy at once. A living ground, in contrast to the imagined, idealized ground as static and hard, as is still studied in books, graphs, and school maps.

The Guarani peoples moved ancestrally through what the colonizers called the Atlantic Forest. On this journey, they sought and continue to seek “good living<sup>4</sup>”. For Papá (2021, p. 4), Mbya Leader and Filmmaker, “The cosmology of the Guarani goes through this: ‘where the souls bathe,’ meaning *nhe’ëry*, which is the Atlantic Forest [...]”. A ground “where the souls bathe” produces a way of living and generating life that seems to stem from an ontological construction where beings are formed in relation to the surrounding environment in a mutual implication, a tendency toward cooperation among all involved beings – animals (including humans), plants, minerals, fungi, protists, and bacteria, the atmosphere, the geography of the spaces traversed and inhabited, a “interspecific” community in the construction of well-being.

The anthropologist, curator, educator, and activist Benites (2015) tells and warns about a position in the world, with the world:

We Guarani see space as our world (*oretava*), which would be the *amba* – our world, from where we come, our origin, our *nhe’ë*<sup>5</sup>. Everything is connected to our world – the land, our way of being, the animals, the plants, the water, the river, the air (*yutu*), the trees, the fruits, etc. That’s why we preserve all things, respect them, treat them as part of us. We won’t cut down a tree to profit from it (Benites, 2015, p. 30-31).

This is reinforced by another specialist:

In the Guarani world, there are only three types of laws; these are three types of things that must be maintained, which we must continue to carry forward. The correct word would be *orereko*, *nhandereko* (our system, our customs). [...] First comes *Yvy* (the Earth) together with *ka’aguy* (the forest). Then comes the *xeramói* (spiritual leadership). The third is the *xondaro* (guardians). The *xondaro kuery* take care of what is around. The *xondaro* will focus on helping the *xeramói* to gain strength. – *Ronaldo Costa – Karai Tukumbo* (Ladeira, 2015, p. 73).

This way of thinking-feeling-acting-imagining your territory blurs the boundaries established by colonial dynamics. Previously, they spread across Argentina and Patagonia, Uruguay, Paraguay, the Guianas, and Suriname... in traversed paths. Today,

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<sup>4</sup>Krenak explains that living well was the way it was translated into Spanish and later into Portuguese, which was “*Sumak Kasai*” (an expression present in the worldview of the Quenchua and Aymara people who live in the Andes mountain range), which is related to the way of being in the world. It is a knowing, a feeling, an action, a dream sharing the planet with all the entities that make it up. “Good Living can be the difficult experience of maintaining a balance between what we can get from life, from nature, and what we can give back. It is a balance, a very sensitive balance and it is not something that we access through a personal decision” (Krenak, 2020b, p. 8-9). “We are bodies that are within this biosphere of Planet Earth. It’s wonderful, because, at the same time that we are inside this organism, we can think together with it, listen to it, learn from it. So, it really is an exchange, really. It’s not about you affecting the body of the Earth, but it’s about you being equalized with the body of the Earth, living, with intelligence, in this organism that is also intelligent, doing this dance, which I have already referred to as a cosmic dance” (Krenak, 2020b, p. 13-14).

<sup>5</sup>For Sandra Benites (2015, p. 12-13), there is an important misunderstanding of the Guarani-Portuguese translation in what we can conceive of as *Nhe’ë*, she says: “[...] *nhe’ë* is different, it is a being-name that comes from *Nhanderu Kuery*. *Nhe’ë* comes from the four *amba*: *Karai Kuery*, *Jakaira*, *Nhamandu* and *Tupã Kuery*. *Nhe’ë*, therefore, is the foundation of the Guarani person and not the word-soul, as translated by Candogan (1945), Melià (1979), Pissolato (2007), among others. [...] when we pronounce *nhe’ë*, we are referring to all our thought, knowledge, we connect with our spiritual world”.

these peoples remain in conflict with the logics of demarcating their lands, as the ways of living and being Guarani are little or not respected in this process. For these peoples, the geopolitics of this land has other, fluid designs that are established by the constant “guata” – walking – an element foundational to their philosophy.

Our ancient grandfathers [...] from the beginning, they started walking. [...] Many people, in the past, came [...] to cross, to cross the sea, to reach Yvy Mará e’y. They always came. [...], but after cities and countries began— Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil [...] the cities with their fences prevented their walking – *Xeramói João Silva* (Ladeira, 2015, p. 46).

The Guarani narrative continues to create a world that challenges the dominant geopolitics and economy, which carve out boundaries, impose divisions, turn everything into a commodity, and separate humans in a cruel game based on power dynamics arising from capitalism, in addition to appropriation and violence under the regime of private property, whether individual or state-owned. A conflict over land that strips these peoples of their rights, despite the Guarani existence on this land dating back 12,000 to 15,000 years, “[...] according to studies and archaeological findings, leaving behind millennia-old traces, such as Marajoara igaçabas (ceramics with artistic graphics), funerary igaçabas [...], records of alphabets and ancestral writings such as itaquatiaras (graphics recorded in stone or caves)” (Jecupé, 2001, p. 99).

In the Guarani world, we find various dwellings; the earthly one is just one of them. Worlds that communicate and exchange, existing simultaneously. Territory is a term that combines material and immaterial dimensions, plateaus where lives intertwine in diverse forms and multiple bodily presentations. It should be noted that one must be a specialist, producing a body of knowledge to access some of these dimensions.

In their understanding of the creation of the world and life on Earth, darkness appears as the beginning of the world, from before. And a being, Nhanderu, who is born by himself.

Everything began in the midst of darkness; there was only darkness and sea, without a single living being. A wind from the north and a wind from the south met, creating a small whirlwind, and Nhanderu Tenonde [...] materialized there, **above the sea**, floating and holding only his popygua (staff). Nhanderu had no father or mother; he was born by himself. Still being a god, upon existing there, he faced difficulties, for there was nothing solid to step on. Thus, he felt the need to create the world we now call Yvyrupa, the Planet Earth. Everything was dark, and in the midst of the dark, Nhanderu [...] thought about what he would do [...] he **knew through his heart**: “I will create the Earth.” Along with him what would be the germ of the pindo mará e’y, the sacred palm, was born. He planted it on the ocean. Its roots expanded and, upon contacting the water, transformed into land. Being a very sacred plant, it is invisible to us, simple human beings. As soon as he planted the pindo mará e’y, he generated the tatu ratá’i (armadillo). It was this armadillo that helped him spread the land thus created. To this day, that pindo still stands in Yvy Mbyte, the center of the world, a place that today non-Indigenous people call Paraguay [...] – *Xeramói Timoteo Oliveira – Karai Tataendy* (Ladeira, 2015, p. 9).

Nhanderu will also create Nhandesky, his companion, the Earth. From their union, the sun and the moon will be born, the twins who will accompany their mother for part of her journey, guiding her after Nhanderu returns to his amba. Nhanderu comes to live with Nhandesky, but lacks patience with her, pregnant with twins, who becomes tired during the walk. He returns to his amba, and alone with her children in her belly, she exhausts herself and does not listen to herself, getting lost at the crossroads. “She [...] did not know how to take care of herself and did not listen to her py’a (feeling, heart) [...]” (Benites, 2018, p. 65). She ends up devoured by the jaguars. However, the jaguars cannot kill her children, as they are the children of Nhanderu and very powerful, thus weaving an interspecific composition. The jaguars raise the children until they grow and wish to go beyond.

The first world was created by Nhamandu Ru Ete, the first Nhanderu that ever existed. [...] Then, he made a woman to be his companion. As he is Nhanderu, the one with power, [...] he thought: [...] I will make others. And he made Tupã [...] the master of water; it is Tupã Ru Ete who commands the rain. Nhamandu Ru Ete [...] he created again Karai Ru Ete. [...] Then [...] he made Jakaira Ru Ete [...] later, he himself destroyed that land, to renew it again. [...] Each god resides in a certain direction. There is Nhanderu Tupã, who is in the West. There is also Nhanderu Jakaira, who is in the South, and then there is Nhanderu Karai, who lives in the North, facing the north. Thus, in the four regions, they have their amba (place, dwelling). All these gods know each other [...] and there are more subdeities who are their helpers [...] and then comes Karai Jekupe, who lives beside them. His dwelling is closer to us – *Xeramôî Marcolino da Silva – Karai Tataendy Marangatu* (Ladeira, 2015, p. 9-10).

According to Sandra, Nhandesky’s story is fundamental to understanding the structure of Teko<sup>6</sup> and the way of life of its people. For the author, Nhandesky has little visibility in the narratives that are created. We encounter another important thread that runs through us, namely, the strength of the discourse that seeks heroes, leaders, and the male figures present in the narratives, while overlooking the complementary nature of the masculine–feminine in these productions. Who wrote the stories and translated them into Portuguese? Who conducted the initial research among Indigenous peoples and whose voices were heard? Who invaded Indigenous lands under the Christian banner and their forms of “education”? Who compiled dictionaries? For a long time, the same male figures persisted, identified with colonial, modern, and Christian narratives. However, Sandra emphasizes that to access the Guarani “well-being,” one must understand this part of history, that of Nhandesky, which is commonly transmitted orally, especially among women.

Cristine Takuá, a Maxakali philosopher, educator, and artisan, states, “This great complexity that exists in the forest dialogues [...] with a strong creative potency of plant and animal beings who, like us, have resisted for centuries and created ways to continue walking on this planet” (Takuá, 2020, p. 1). Thus, in this ground (territory) of

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<sup>6</sup>For Takuá (2020, p. 4), “The Guarani have a term, concept, called Tekó Porã [...] which would be like a good and beautiful way for you to be and be in the territory”. Consider highlighting that it is necessary to return to the way in which Guarani subjects understand the territory, as previously presented.



complementarities, relational and interspecific, notions of self, the world, and living together are woven through dialogue among all the beings involved in the community, in cooperation and sharing of all that one has. Meanings are attributed to collective actions that produce singular lives. It is a mobile ground (always in the process of becoming) and connective, through which one circulates in this land, on Earth (the planet), and in the other levels that compose the Guarani world.

### **Clue 1: Yvyrupa (Planet Earth) and the clues of the body expression of the Guarani nation**

In the clues collected, the encounter with somatic and existential poetics. The writer Kaka Werá Jecupé helps in the approach, saying: “[...] Thunder beings establish spiritual abodes in the four directions and now receive the responsibility of generating soul-words<sup>7</sup>, shades of their essences, to incarnate on Earth” (Jecupé, 2001, p. 89).

Bodies are envelopes-membranes of words that are born from the dark and that are also in us. The dark is first in the creation of the world, but it also inhabits each person, forming their “inside”, thus, the body-envelopes are a fold of the world’s sound. Perhaps we can say that each being is a tone breathed from life. Sandra says that “In Guarani society, in general, the body and language are the basis of the main wisdom [...] always taking into account Guarani cosmology and customs” (Benites, 2018, p. 5)<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, the narratives become words of each person’s lives, and of the life of the one who created everything that is alive from the dark<sup>9</sup> are fundamental in the fabric of the bodies and ways of being of these people. For the Guarani Nhandewa, says Sandra, each person’s life stories are precious and should be shared.

Experiences lived individually are reflected in the collective, they are thrown into the collective, regardless of whether they are good or bad. Each person’s experience will organize the larger collective [...]. The Porã tape (good path) is built from the aspects of others too (Benites, 2018, p. 6).

The stories of each and every one form a common knowledge, and just as food is cooperatively produced and shared among the members of this nation, so are words. Both nourish the Guarani being. Therefore, the creation narratives, of those who came before and those who are living now, are sources of knowledge and construction of a “self-us”<sup>10</sup>. This “self-we” junction is used to mark the difference in the ways of

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<sup>7</sup>Regarding “word-soul”, Sandra Benites clarifies that the translation is wrong, as previously mentioned.

<sup>8</sup>It is important to highlight the difficulty of translating some concepts from the indigenous language, in which the principle of complementarity is fundamental, among others, for example, to the Portuguese language and its matrices. There is, here, a political effort of rapprochement undertaken by authors, and it is important to observe and deepen what is engendered in the word body from the Guarani philosophical foundation. This material exceeds the size of this article. To get closer to the topic, we recommend, among others, the catalog of the recent exhibition: *Nhe'e' Porã: memory and transformation*, at the Museu da Língua Portuguesa (2024) in São Paulo.

<sup>9</sup>“We believe that the dark is responsible for the entire universe, including Nhanderu, the Supreme God. Where did Nhanderu, our creator, who we admire so much, come from? It also came from the dark. And this dark is responsible for the creation of the entire universe today, including our body. [...] There is no point in saying that land is not territory. As incredible as it may seem, we are part of this land, even the tree. And that’s why we say xeyvara reté. Xeyvara means ‘sky’, or when I breathe. Retain, the body, which would be the earth. Therefore, I am earth, but I breathe, I depend on this atmosphere, which I receive, on this energy. I need this to survive” (Papá, 2021, p. 2).

<sup>10</sup>This “self-we” junction is used to mark the difference in the ways of constituting the self that inhabit the Amerindian narratives with which I came into contact during the research. The extent to which to be a subject you need to be in relationship with your surroundings (physical and symbolic territory) which includes animals (including humans), plants, fungi, protists,

constituting the self that inhabit the Amerindian narratives with which I came into contact during the research. The extent to which to be a subject you need **to be in relationship** with your surroundings (physical and symbolic territory) which includes animals (including humans), plants, fungi, protists, minerals/soil/geography of the place, the atmosphere, the waters. As well as the “spirits” (beings invisible to non-indigenous people) that inhabit each of these entities in a continuous relationship. It is important to emphasize that the word spirit, here, has different meanings from those usually attributed to it in Judeo-Christian cosmology.

And, surprisingly, we call it *yy*, ‘water.’ And land is *yvy*; and tree, *yvyrá*. So, this means water is liquid sustenance. It is a pillar of the entire universe [...] *Yvy* is land, which is dry, but it partners with water. *Yvyrá*, which means wood, signifies “future partner of the water.” *Xeyvara reté* means ‘I am the future of the partner of the water.’ So everything is connected to one another, nothing is separate. And that’s why my body is full of water and iron, which is blood. And the air that I need to breathe, the atmosphere produces [...] (Papá, 2021, p. 3).

In the story of Nhandesky, Sandra (2023) notes that it is possible to connect with the fact that within Guaraní cosmology, there are no perfect beings, not even the gods. There are imperfect beings, “[...] and that’s why we need to seek to build or create other paths from our own mistakes” (Benites, 2023a, p. 15). One does not know what will be encountered along the way; with each step, one knows there will be obstacles. Therefore, according to her, it is important to build a body of knowledge to deal with what comes along the path. “There is no thing that is ready or perfect; it is important to have the wisdom to navigate at any moment, in any space; I think it’s a matter of liberation” (Benites, 2023a, p. 15).

Guaraní cosmology is embodied in the body in motion – BNGuata/walking. The Guaraní activist, writer, and psychologist Geni Nunez Longhini points out that “Walking does not aim for progress or evolution, as Guaraní time is not linear [...] Guaraní spiral time is oriented by the cycles of nature” (Longhini, 2022, p. 103). One walks to mature, deepen, gain existential density, and wisdom. Geni cites the Guaraní philosopher Vera Timóteo Popygua, who says they follow the temporality of the universe’s expansion like rings into infinity (Longhini, 2022). In this delicate somatic-existential architecture, one can observe the complementarity of times<sup>11</sup> – past, present, and future are intertwined in the here and now in a certain composition with other surrounding elements, forming a body (fabrics, structures, words, emotions, and cognitions). To feel, think, and act are complementary and occur simultaneously in what the author defines as body-territory. Thus, the body is a territory, woven into these multiple relationships where words are carefully blown to sketch their provisional form

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minerals/soil/geography of the place, the atmosphere, the waters. As well as the “spirits” (beings invisible to non-indigenous people) that inhabit each of these entities in a continuous relationship. It is important to emphasize that the word spirit, here, has different meanings from those usually attributed to it in Judeo-Christian cosmology.

<sup>11</sup>For Benites (2023b, p. 3), “What is the path? Path is what we have been facing, going through, and these paths we call tape. Tape is the movement. What we can build from teko, from memory, thinking about the future – which is the tenonde, which would be “forward” –, for us, it is forward and it is the future. So, I mean, look forward. What is looking forward? For you to look forward, you need to understand what memory you have”.

at each moment of the journey. “Narrative is a body; it is the process of the body” (Benites, 2023b, p. 1). It is a “self-us” knowledge of an experience in the world that is not confined within the affective, geopolitical, social, and cultural boundaries of property, allowing for the observation of the sprouting of other possible embodiments.

Sandra explains the “body-territory” by showing that

Teko is the way of being, of being in the world, of living in the world, or of seeing the world; the way you are, as a body: teko. But this body has various relationships. **This body is a relationship.** Teko does not develop, that is, it does not produce the way of being or the way of being in the world alone. It comes from your relationships. [...] Tekoha is the place where we produce our way of being. [...] What do the Guaraní need to continue being Guaraní? They need an environment. What is the environment? The environment can be the river, it can be the forest, it can be the animals, it can be the air, it can be the silence, it can be the things of nature, which is different from other peoples. So, for us to continue with health, to have health and education in the Guaraní way, we need all these elements that are around us. From this, your knowledge, your understanding will be created. Your knowledge is related, is associated with the forest, with the spirit of nature, with the spirit of the river, with the spirit of the tree, with the spirit of the animals. [...] From the moment these elements are no longer around, we become ill. We lose our reference (Benites, 2023a, p. 6-7).

The horizontality in these woven relationships highlights the subtle differences that arise from this perspective. All the beings that make up these relationships have an equal place and voice in the fabric, and their differences are expressed in the affirmation of their viewpoints and their unique places in the composition. There is coexistence between the terms in relation, no hierarchy and/or overlap and/or amalgamations. Everyone exists in what differs from each other<sup>12</sup>. Bodies appear incarnated as “sprouts of the biosphere” (Favre, 2021), meta-stable expressions of these relationships always in the process of becoming, sustained by complementarity and coexistence with the other beings that make up the universe in which they exist. Singular compositions of life, this life is immanent, traversing and metamorphosing in its manifestation in different bodies. These bodies are interconnected by life itself. Neither before nor after, it is a living and connective here and now.

In this sense, the same life manifests in different bodies, mutable and in constant transformation and communication, capable of interchanging their forms. In the journey of living, knowledge is thus forged in these embodied relationships of walking. “The tape is the path. I use this metaphor: the path is a constant process, movement” (Benites, 2023a, p. 7). Notions of completeness and development – as in beginning, middle, and

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<sup>12</sup>The indigenous Yampara (2010) makes a beautiful contribution to the discussion. Yampara criticizes Western mono-thought, proposing an ecobiotic cosmogony that is in the structure of Suma Qamaña thought, the Aymará correlate of Guaraní teko porá. What does this ecobiotic cosmogony consist of? It is a philosophy in which cosmology, ecology and the analysis of the place of living beings remain on the same plane. The cosmos, the environment and living beings are interdependent. In this sense, teko porá rivals the Western notion that the human species is the most prepared to know and dominate “nature”. Ecobiotic cosmogony is telling us that nature is not an “other” available to human beings to have their natural resources exploited by “naturally superior” beings (Nogueira & Barreto, 2018, p. 633).

end – are dismantled. They intertwine “Teko and tekoha. The production of knowledge is the path itself, the tape, which is the movement you face” (Benites, 2023a, p. 16).

One can imagine the growth rings of trees. They form in spring and summer, and rest in autumn and winter, when all goes well in the biomes where they exist. The rings indicate the spiral time of a tree's life, its maturity, and its experience in a specific territory, as adversities such as heavy rains and heat are marked in the membranes of its cells that form the coloration of these rings. Experiences produce knowledge inscribed in cellular membranes, marking bodies and indicating their lifespan and the amount of accumulated knowledge. In this sense, we can think of a vital impulse for continuity in the relationship between trees and the atmosphere and the sun, as well as into the soil; however, what indicates their maturity is recorded in the rings of their trunk, showing how they lived this impulse upward and inward – their journey. We agree with Sandra when she says that “This **body** of ours, in fact, is **the movement**, our trajectory, our steps and our understanding of what we carry<sup>13</sup>” (Benites, 2023b, p. 9).

There is a insistence on connecting what is harvested in Guarani land with the knowledge produced by American psychotherapist Stanley Keleman, creator of “emotional anatomy”, as his work and the developments produced by Regina Favre have become important references among occupational therapists (Shiramizo, 2023). It is noted that Keleman's framework still speaks to structural separations – viscera, nerves, muscles/bones. “The organism is indeed a series of tubes and neural, muscular-skeletal, digestive layers. [...] Therefore, there are important layers in each tube – an inner, an outer, and an intermediate one, and what is conducted through the tube” (Keleman, 1992, p. 17). His approach is limited to reading human bodies in relation to themselves. However, in Regina Favre's work, there is an expansion in the way layers are conceptualized, as they are woven in relation to environments – ecologies in which we are immersed – social, imagistic, emotional, political, historical, and ecological. There is a genetic impulse for growth in bodies seeking to continue, but their maturation occurs laterally, through the aggregation of tissues in relation to environments, forming adaptive/creative/affirmative responses to events. For Regina:

Bodies are produced in a continued embryogenesis, weaving themselves as an inside and an outside, a surface and a depth, where the edges contain the excitement of lived experiences immersed in events, where bodies are formed in environment-events throughout their formative history, in gradients of more or less consistency, more or less excitation (Favre, 2021, p. 147).

They sprout and generate from the biomes in which they are embedded, which directly resonates with what Guarani specialists teach us. However, the radicality of a body, from the Guarani perspective, is noted, where its membranes/edges are made of a delicate interspecific and situated web, always mobile. This is difficult for non-Indigenous people to grasp, as their understanding comes from a world where each being is a species, individually cataloged and separated from others through comparisons and hierarchizations.

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<sup>13</sup>Our emphasis.

Experts say that the fabrication of Guarani bodies depends on a multifaceted biome that teaches and fosters difference, embodying it in an infinite array of possible envelopes. A body, in this case, emerges from relationships with its surroundings, a crowd of interspecific connections. In a world experienced as in continuous variation, meta-stable, materially and immaterially (varied *amba*), bodies are both produced in and are relationships. These relationships populate the materiality and immateriality of life with images, practices, feelings, and knowledge.

Sandra teaches us that educating in Guarani is called *Mbo'e* (to educate, to teach) and means “[...] to do together, to demonstrate, to practice, and to learn by doing” (Benites, 2018, p. 34). This concept refers to preparing individuals for life, exploring each person’s competencies, which are in interaction with the collective. *Arandu* (knowledge) and *Teko* (way of being) are dynamic; collective well-being arises from these two intertwined dimensions of “I-we” (Benites, 2018). The processual nature of walking reaffirms a ground that aligns with continuous variation rather than with rigid, doctrinal boundaries between knowing, feeling, imagining, and acting, as understood by the “*Juruá/whites*.”

The notion of a craftsmanship of bodies seems fundamental, from the way names are recognized, to the care of children, the rites with youth, and what follows into adulthood. The daily weaving of the “self-we” occurs through activities, shared narratives, silences, and rests sustained in the Guarani way of being. From conception to birth, there is knowledge and experience that belong to the order of “self-we.”

When a mother is about to become pregnant, she receives a sign: in a dream, our *xeramõi* and *xejaryi* already know. *Nhanderu* tells them that the child is coming to Earth. [...] The child already brings a name, and when the baby is big enough, the mother takes it to the *Opy*<sup>14</sup> to hear the name [...] that comes from *Nhanderu*. *Xejaryi Tereza – Djatxuka* (Ladeira, 2015, p. 25).

Guarani knowledge keepers narrate that when a woman became pregnant, corn would already be planted to be harvested at the time of birth, and in the prayer house, the *karai* could access the child’s “*nhe e*” and reveal its name. After harvesting the corn, it was/is placed in the form of seeds in a small container, and the *Karai* performed the baptism (Ladeira, 2015). The name comes with that being; it is not a prerogative of its family but belongs to a dimension of “we” and takes the form of life through baptism. Children are cared for by the entire community, as well as by their parents. They belong to and are part of the community, they already exist, they are not someone in training, they have a voice and their own name<sup>15</sup>. In this way, we observe the startling of a being that is constituted in relation throughout its entire life. In youth, there is a delicate craftsmanship of the female and male body<sup>16</sup>, from actions and knowledge shared in the territory (around) in which one lives.

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<sup>14</sup>It refers to the “house of prayers”.

<sup>15</sup>“Two Guarani words circumscribe “child”, “children” and “childhood”: *mitã* (small children up to approximately two or three years old) and *kyringue* – children up to 12 or 13 years old [...] In any case, Childhood here has not the same meaning given to the category in the Western context. The relationship between adults and children differs greatly. The Guarani cultural base does not treat children as beings that need to be constantly protected. [...] Children are not reprimanded, they live their daily lives with a degree of autonomy that is unparalleled in urban societies in the white world” (Nogueira & Barreto, 2018, p. 634).

<sup>16</sup>Sandra Benites mentions that there are individuals who experience gender transition and who experience the constitution of their bodies according to the way in which they identify.

Sandra shows, once again, the complementarity as a principle in this process.

Men have feminine bodies, but women also have masculine bodies; it's a bit of everything. There are just different moments when we use the skills of these two bodies that we carry. So, these two bodies, I would say, are just different places, different moments. The skin is different; if the moment is different – it's not that we are totally different from one another (Benites, 2023a, p. 1).

Once more, the construction of a layered body is affirmed, organized by events, made present by the needs to face the obstacles that arise in walking, so that one can live well. Boys gather with an older person who guides them. In the past, Sandra tells us, there were houses for boys and houses for girls, but today, due to the real living conditions of the members of this nation, these spaces are rarely seen. Boys have “hot blood”; they “bleed” every day and, therefore, need to take action. In this sense, they will build their bodies through learning to hunt, swim, build homes, and cultivate. In these activities, they encounter the knowledge of the beings of the earth, learning to interact with the “Ijara”—invisible beings that are present in all things. For Sandra, it is necessary to learn how to dialogue and sing to know how to deal with each aspect of the world. In this process, they will create the body of dance (Jeroky)<sup>17</sup> (Benites, 2023a).

One aspect is the warrior dance, *ywyraija*, which has a very strong dance. And I came to understand that the dance of men is like a political cosmos. [...] The same dance, the same song, transforms for each situation. Sometimes it is sacred, sometimes it is playful, sometimes it is political, and sometimes it is war. This is something very important, and today I realize the significance of men's dance (Benites, 2023a, p. 6).

Boys are knowledgeable about the places where plants and herbs are found, and they are taught to know the narrative of *Nhandesky*, so they learn to interact with girls/women and support them. This includes caring for their bodies, as they must know how to find remedies in the forest to assist them during times of seclusion – such as menstruation or childbirth.

Women menstruate every month; they live in cycles. Therefore, they are immersed in activities that teach them to listen to their bodies and the cycles, to weave, plant, harvest, and sing. Thus, from their first cycle, they are taught to silence themselves and quieten, and during this time, they should not perform daily activities. They need to be cared for by the elders. “From the moment we start menstruating, we have this relationship with our bodies, that this is wisdom; our blood is wisdom; our movement is our wisdom” (Benites, 2023a, p. 9). Contact with blood produces knowledge, and it itself is knowledge.

During menstruation, it is a time to listen to our own bodies; they say it is a moment of solitude, to enjoy your body, to listen to your body, to withdraw from others, because during this time you are also in a period of conflict and

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<sup>17</sup>In one of the works from the *Selvagem Studies* cycle, it is possible to observe the dance performed by Carlos Papá inside the forest – *Mata Atlântida*. He explains to us, a dance – is “[...] if it appears in a sensitive bud, for us there is no translation dance, but how to become a sensitive bud”, a dance that takes place in interaction with the world (Youtube, 2023).

sometimes anguish, so this moment is very important for us—it is called the moment of solitude, to enjoy solitude. Your own body, your spirit, your own breath (Benites, 2023a, p. 6).

They also learn to dance, but their dance has a different meaning; it is linked to self-expression, affirmation, and empowerment. According to Sandra, it has a more aesthetic sense. On the other hand, singing is an action that creates the feminine body. The song is associated with crying, with listening to emotions. A body will vary in intensity in singing depending on how much it can listen to itself. Nhandesky (which is the ground, the earth itself) and its narrative provide knowledge about listening to oneself, respecting and embracing one's processes, so that one can move forward. Recognizing the paths to follow, making good choices in the direction of well-being. The act of doing seems closely related to feeling and thinking, in which there are no hierarchies among the terms, but rather simultaneities.

Another important dimension appears in the knowledge of women, which is the non-opposition between death and life. Thus, “[...] the body itself [...], is our ground, our space of action, our space of creativity. [...] So, woman is both death and life. We, women, are life, so blood relates to both life and death” (Benites, 2023a, p. 12-13). In the paths of these processes of embodiment, there is a welcoming and a “feeling at ease” with what dies; the processual nature of life seems to be primary, and with this, the trust in moving forward fosters a loving disposition towards this dual living-dying.

## **Clue 2: Constellation of Forces: The Earth, Brazil, and the Guarani Body Expression**

To resist, to persist, even under constant violence. In the processes of embodiment of these peoples, one observes that a prominent line, since the invasion of this land, is that of violence, which divides into symbolic and physical forms, both equally important.

If the place where I live is part of who I am, based on what has been presented, being expelled and having your space invaded is to have a part of yourself violated; it means being prevented from continuing to form who you are. The body becomes mutilated. The gravity of this violence is immense and invisible. Missionaries, military personnel, and representatives of the Brazilian state have historically disrespected “the Guarani way of walking”, preventing them from what they called “nomadism” and forcing them to remain in one location, which suffocates the potential to exist and to form a body to move forward, considering the cosmology of this people. As Xemorai Timoteo points out:

[...] for us, it is just one land. [...] Like Nhanderu. He doesn't say that here is Mexico, here is Peru, here is Uruguay. For him, it is just one land, and they made it. So nowadays, white people want to consider us as a white population. [...] If white people knew us as we are, if they valued our culture, our system [...] they couldn't prohibit those coming from Argentina from entering Brazil [...]. In the past, we walked a lot to visit other villages, to see our relatives, to make Nhemongarai<sup>18</sup> [...] today everything is closed, everything is prevented from passing. For white people, it's better [...] for us, these paths are closed. In the past [...] we walked, [...] we moved freely, fishing, hunting, gathering

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<sup>18</sup>In a loose translation, it refers to the celebration where people and food are baptized.

honey, cutting palm hearts to eat. Everything was ours. But now, everything has an owner. It's not just the land. The land in each state, for the state government, belongs to them. All springs, all trees, all birds, all animals – everything has an owner now. It's no longer ours. [...] Thus, we have no more paths [...] we are surrounded; everything around us is fenced in. Where can we go? *Xeramói Timoteo Oliveira* (Ladeira, 2015, p. 62).

In the important work of Longhini (2022), we confront the fact that for 504 years, Indigenous peoples could not have their names respected, and when their births were registered, their names were replaced by others. The hetero-declaration in Brazil lasted until 2004, “[...] when ILO Convention 169 was promulgated in Brazil” (Longhini, 2022, p. 35). This meant that until that year, the existence of the Indigenous population had to be certified by third parties acting in their own interests—a colonial strategy that persisted. However, the author shows the strength of resistance of the Guarani people. She tells us that against the baptism preached by missionaries, Guarani spiritual leaders operated what became known as “debaptism” or “counter-baptism”. Ironically using Catholic liturgical parameters, the spiritual leader sought to erase the marks imposed by priests on the souls of children (Longhini, 2022). Another strategy was “[...] the shamans' visits to Christian temples, with the goal of un-catechizing their relatives” (Longhini, 2022, p. 97).

Geni points out in her thesis that the narrative that Guarani peoples had a peaceful and submissive contact with colonizers does not reflect the reality of their experiences, and she shows the true meanings of their actions concerning the colonizers, grounded in Guarani cosmology, cooperation, good words, and the principle of sharing what one has among all (Longhini, 2022).

Within the lines that weave this territory of structural violence against these peoples, there are discourses that understand them as a category of the past, or even as civilizational and developmental, pointing to the ways of living and being in the world of Indigenous peoples as backward, precarious, and insufficient.

Many studies and works have examined the effects of racism on the production of subjectivity, and although this work does not focus on this aspect, it is important to understand that this is one of the strongest marks that traverse Indigenous and Black bodies, especially mixed-race bodies in this Brazil we share (Longhini, 2022; Angatu, 1998; Carneiro, 2005; Potiguara, 2002, among others).

Geni shows that confronting violence is very old, recounting the story of the tamoios conference<sup>19</sup>. It shows that the indigenous population, as a subject of rights, only entered the constitution in 1988, and the “indigenous” category only became part of the Census of the Brazilian population in 1991, since there were many processes of destruction of this difference – through extermination<sup>20</sup> of entire groups that lived in villages were affected

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<sup>19</sup>Kaka Werá explains that Cunhambebe, from the Tupinambá people, was a leader who sought peace and equality. There were two Cunhambebe: “in the 1550s, the first in this story was the elder (tamãe, in the Tupi language), who organized a meeting of leaders with elders from different native peoples that became known as the Tamãe confederation. Unfortunately, some history books call it the Tamoio confederation [...] the Tamoio people never existed. [...] Cunhambebe was able to dialogue with elders from seven different peoples who had differences and even enmities and create a consensus for the liberation of warriors from the most diverse origins who were enslaved by sugar cane monoculturists and gold predators and silver called bandeirantes” (Jecupé, 2020, p. 105).

<sup>20</sup>In a report for BBC News Brasil (2020), in July 2020, Leonardo Neiva, makes a map of different situations in various historical moments where it is possible to have a small dimension of this sad reality. On the ISA website, there are detailed reports that show and denounce a series of these reports. In the current year, 2023, for example, leaders of the Yanomami people denounced



by firearms, fires, disease transmission, rape, and the deaths of women, among other forms of violence. In her research, we can see the processes of erasure in the census and its effects on the construction of identity and the affirmation of Indigenous ways of life in Brazil.

For the state, “Indians” were seen (and still are, by many) as a transient social category, within an assimilationist perspective where, once an Indigenous person became “civilized,” they would cease to be Indigenous and would instead belong to other non-Indigenous racial categories (POVOS INDÍGENAS NO BRASIL – PIB, 2021). It is important to highlight the role of compulsory Christianization in this violent “integration,” as evangelization propelled a strong disconnection from Indigenous customs, spirituality, and ways of life (Longhini, 2022, p. 72).

“Evangelization” from the perspective of Christianity remains present in the daily lives of villages and cities. Coming from different religious groups, missionaries seek to catechize these populations and often live in their territories. There are many accounts in the texts read and in the spoken narratives regarding the harmful effects of this presence on the dismantling of care practices, the moralization of their philosophies, the devaluation of their cosmologies and ways of living, the capture and destruction of their prayer houses<sup>21</sup>, and the invasion and interference in the education processes of their children. Far from being merely symbolic violence, many of these representatives of Christianity perpetrate physical violence – destruction of artifacts, objects, and sacred spaces, punishments and corporal punishments, among others that are frequently reported (Longhini, 2022; Barreto, 2022; Krenak, 2023; Krenak & Cohn, 2015; Krenak & Campos, 2021 among others).

Another important aspect that Geni addresses, which directly relates to our study, refers to genetic miscegenation as part of the civilizing project of the Brazilian state. And points out that the indigenous phenotypic diversity in Brazil is enormous and that it is rarely or never recognized, creating an image of a supposed “Indian face”<sup>22</sup>, which would be associated with a racist imaginary of a certain type of housing, fluency in the native language, “typical” clothing, and the distancing from technologies, for example (Longhini, 2022).

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violence in their lands arising from contact with invading miners – illness of the population, violence against women, men and children, contamination of rivers and the fish on which they feed, among others. This demonstrates that the barbarity against these people continues to be present in their daily lives since the invasion in 1500.

<sup>21</sup>In 2023, several reports of arson of prayer houses belonging to the Guarani people and others were made by associations of indigenous movements in Brazil. For more, see: Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Rio Negro (FOIRN) (Federação das Organizações Indígenas do Rio Negro, 2024); Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon – COIAB (Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira, 2024); Portal Kaingang (2024); Articulação dos Povos indígenas do Brasil (2024); Hutukara Associação Yanomami (2024); among others.

<sup>22</sup>“This is one of the great ways in which ethnogenocidal homogenization is structured (Munduruku, 2017). This generalization ranges from appearance to customs, languages, ways of life. Even though in Brazil we have around 375 indigenous peoples and 275 languages, as Gersem Baniwa (2018) points out, the idea that “Indian people are all the same” is still strong. It is also in this sense that we have guided the importance of criticizing this type of homogenization, as this imagery refers to a stereotypical indigenous person who lives in 1500, making our lives in 2020 something anachronistic. Munduruku (2017) comments that ‘[...] despite my appearance, my straight hair, my slanted eyes, my high cheekbones, I am not Indian. I would even say more: there are no Indians in Brazil’. What exist are peoples, indigenous nations, each with their own identity and diversity” (Longhini, 2022, p. 70).

[...] genetic miscegenation is one of the historical characteristics of this territory, and it is essential to recognize that for Indigenous peoples, this requirement is especially violent [...] (Longhini, 2022, p. 71).

Therefore, it is fundamental that the racial criteria applied to non-Indigenous people are not uncritically used for Indigenous peoples, as relative Angatu (2019) emphasizes, we are the color of the earth, and the earth has all colors; all of our body realities should be celebrated and respected (Longhini, 2022, p. 72).

The relationship with the land, with belonging to a territory, can be perceived as a threat to those who claim to be the owners of the land, challenging the capitalist strategies and discourses of appropriation. It was necessary, the author points out, that descent not be manifested, that Indigenous peoples be assimilated and swallowed by this colonial civilizing intent, as their roots with the land would be severed.

The classification of Indigenous people by skin color and/or genetic miscegenation necessarily produces Indigenous erasure, reducing individuals to mere “descendants.” It is no surprise that the political subject of descent is denied the struggle for Indigenous lands and demarcation (Longhini, 2022, p. 74).

In the constellation of forces that weave the Guarani Indigenous bodies, we come into contact with the effort to persist and affirm who one is in this Brazil, amidst the erasure of the differences so dear and cultivated by the peoples of this nation, and the insistence of colonial logics even in what should guarantee them rights and visibility as citizens. Their ancestral existences in this land reveal lines that traverse Brazilian bodies, pointing to the erased images of Indigenous peoples that compose the genealogical trees of the members of this country, thus invisibilizing and hindering access to knowledge, belonging, feeling, imagining, and the ancestral practices cultivated here.

On the other hand, the affirmation, resistance, and creation emerge from a cosmology that fosters complementarity, cooperation, interspecies community, belonging, and therefore, care for the Earth and the land here. Thus, these peoples confront and resist capitalist and colonial entanglements, challenging them with their disparate existences.

## **Final Remarks**

We are faced with lives that embody a situated and singular “we.” They escape the confines of homogenizing discourses through the many interspecies alliances they establish and, in doing so, resist. They utilize all the sensitive potential in marking their bodily fabrics in relation to the other allied beings they are situated with, through paintings, movements, voices and songs, crafts, music, and gestures, through dialogues in various non-human languages, and through conversations and transit in territories invisible to non-Indigenous people. Ailton states:

We don’t need to transcend out of the body; we can transcend in the body, being body-memory, spirit-body, which should be a radical experience [...]

this disposition for a body-memory might be the novelty we can experience, share, transmit (Krenak, 2023, p. 4-5).

It should be noted that memory, here, is established in the junction of times, in the circularity of time, as well as in the understanding that the Earth is within us, that the memory of the planet is also ours. Cristine Takuá, while reporting the objectives of the rec-tyty, an Indigenous art festival<sup>23</sup>, states: “It’s to bring this pulse of *nhe’ëry* to reconnect with this memory. The memory of the river, the memory of the tree, the memory of all beings that are there resisting alongside us” (Krenak et al., 2021, p. 5).

Engaging this body-memory seems to configure the recognition of this “we” in the existential somatic architecture, creating possibilities for moving forward. Thus, moving forward is shaped as a cooperative act and as intertwining of an interspecies community that escapes the individualistic capitalist models, bringing us closer to other versions of politics and ethics.

In Cristine’s words:

So when I talk about changing habits, and how it hurts like shedding skin, I say it’s past time for us to have the courage to really create a balance – I even call it a kind of pact – that would allow us to balance the breath of love that comes from our mouths when we speak – our ideas, our concerns, our dreams – with the rhythm of our feet, our walk on the Earth. Because it doesn’t help for my mouth to go one way and my feet to go another. This balance between what we say and where we walk is what needs to guide our courage and ethical commitment to ourselves, to our children, and to all other beings (Takuá, 2020, p. 4-5).

Could we, as Brazilian occupational therapists, be capable of “shedding skin,” of remaking practical and conceptual paths from other ways of thinking-feeling-acting and imagining worlds that originate from the ancestral lines of this land, our Brazil?

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<sup>23</sup>To find out more, see: Nunes (2021) or the website of Instituto Maracá (2024), creator of the festival.

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### **Author's Contributions**

Andréa do Amparo Carotta de Angeli was responsible for the conception, writing and final review of the text. Flavia Liberman Caldas was responsible for supervising the research project, writing and final review of the text. All authors approved the final version of the text.

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