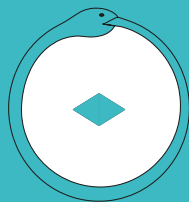
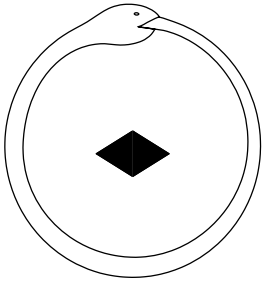


NHE'ËRY, REC.TYTY
and OTHER PULSARS
Ailton Krenak, Carlos Papá
and Cristine Takuá



notebooks
SELVAGEM



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Transcript of the [conversation held on April 7, 2021](#)

AILTON KRENAK: We are experimenting at the Selvagem school; we are learning all the time from each other. It is wonderful for me, a gift, to celebrate the cosmovisions. How wonderful to be able to unite, in such a difficult time, these poetics that give us life, that animate us and take us out of the sameness. The terrorist sameness of the capitalist, industrial world; this world that we conventionally call “civilization”. It has created a rush so unrestrained in itself that it seems to not even admit the night can exist.

The night, which separates this journey from the sun, and which puts us in another place, where we can dream, meditate, contemplate the stars in the sky. Speed has made us stretch the day. I found it scandalous when I saw an advertisement for a bank that said it was on the air for thirty-odd hours. Then I went on thinking: “Wow, what a lie!”. These untruthful narratives create a misplaced mental world. And it occurred to me that a day of thirty-odd hours, which an institution invented to sell something, in addition to being a lie, is a damage to the imaginary; a damage to the spirit of the person, who obviously knows that there is no such thing as a thirty-odd-hour day.

Let’s talk a little about this entity that we celebrate: the night. And I want to commemorate the publication of the [Selvagem] notebook [PYTUN JERA, NIGHT BLOSSOM](#), a wonderful sight. Cris and Papá, how nice to have you in this dialogue! I am going to learn a lot of good things and I am going to tell you some. *Aguyjevete!*

CARLOS PAPÁ: *Aguyjevete! Aguyjevete*, uncle Ailton. I am the one who learns a lot from you, actually. I learn a lot! I see it this way: that every day we are learning from each other. And there is also this energy that *nhe'ery*, the Mata Atlântica [Atlantic Forest], brings us so we are more integrated with her, always talking, always inspiring, always walking to-

gether and taking these dream ideas, that we dream and think about. And we inform you where this child comes from, this new project that we create. Because from the moment we create, we create a child, and we must take care of it, in order for it not to fall, not to get hurt. This *nhe'ery* and *rec.tyty* project is a responsibility that we have created and we have to take good care of it so it does not fall and does not get hurt. I see it this way: that at each passing day, we are learning. And we know that this mechanism is coined by capitalism. We are living in parallel, in the sense that we must bear this. Unfortunately, we have to endure; to let it go and keep walking, carrying our ideas, our thoughts. Because capitalism does not buy our ideals, and that is of great importance.

CRISTINE TAKUÁ: *Aguyjevete*, Ailton and all. It is also a joy for me to be here. A few days ago, I dreamed that you were here, Ailton. We were talking from here, at the Ponto de Cultura [Culture Point], which is a new space that we have created. [In the dream] I was stretching some threads to weave, and you were sitting there arranging some books. Then you said that I had to organize the threads like I organize the books, and we started talking about threads and books. And today you are here, even if from a distance, you are inside here, speaking about this energy of this movement of the *nhe'ery*, of the *tyty*, which is this pulsar. We are together in this thought, in this feeling. For me it is a great joy that we can be together, pulsing inside this same energy of spreading little seeds of consciousness, of thought, at this moment when I see so many people a little unbalanced with all this suffering that the Earth is going through. But we keep trying to re-enchant ourselves each new day.

So these meetings are a great joy. Yesterday, I told Anna [Dantes] that many years ago, when I studied [at the faculty of] Philosophy, nobody talked about opening a space for other epistemologies. And I recently received an email from a professor, with whom I had not spoken for many years and who had given me an epistemology class, to tell me that the *Selvagem* notebooks are being read in epistemology classes at Unesp [São Paulo state university], in Marília. I rejoice to realize that the university is opening itself to these other seeds, these other ways of seeing the world, of being and of inhabiting the territory in other ways, which

were not the same ways as Kant, Aristotle and all those men there across the ocean lived and thought.

AILTON KRENAK: Nice of you to mention *rec.tyty*, which is this action that we are developing together. In fact, the workshop at the cultural center over there, the activities which are already taking place are exactly about this experience that we propose ourselves to do as an action that connects, from your community there on the Silveira river, other geographies, of territories where our relatives have the *tekoa*, where the other villages are. And also the other sites and locations.

When we thought of *nhe'ery*, we thought of making that GPS that can find places where there is meaning: Ibirapuera, Anhangabaú, Páteo do Colégio. In colonial history, in *bandeirante*¹ history, Páteo do Colégio has a meaning filled with celebration of the colonial event. But we have another narrative about these sites, these places; they appear even in ancestral narratives, which would be the mythical narratives.

It has been about three years since we started dreaming about *nhe'ery*. It was well before the pandemic that we started to make our concentration, meditation, on *nhe'ery*. I remember that in 2019, when we had the last in-person Selvagem meeting, there was a collective of ours over there at the Botanical Garden [of Rio de Janeiro] and you asked “When are we going to do the first action of this *nhe'ery*?”

We imagined that it would be going to the city, calling the people from Jaraguá and making some interventions like that jaguar that Denilson [Baniwa] spreads around, stamping in the city “São Paulo is Indigenous Land”. It is interesting for those who are listening to us to be able to approach the idea that *rec.tyty* is an action within a thought that has been articulating for some years now, which is to highlight, in geographic points of São Paulo city – and also on the coast, since many villages are there –, these sacred sites of the vast Guarani tradition.

CARLOS PAPÁ: There is a lot of talk about the Mata Atlantica [Atlantic Forest], but many relatives – my late mother, my late father and my

1. *Bandeirante*: early colonial mercenaries explorers, individuals belonging to a *bandeira* (armed expedition) that was going to explore the Brazilian hinterland, exploit mines and capture and enslave indigenous people.

grandfather, for example – did not know what the Mata Atlantica was. When someone would say “Atlantic Forest”, they would ask “But what does ‘Atlantic Forest’ mean?”. Then [someone would answer] “Atlantic Forest is where we are today, this forest, the environment where we live. It is the environment from there to here, from Rio de Janeiro to Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul; it is a coastal forest.” But even so, that being said, what the Atlantic Forest was would not enter their minds. And then I asked “But what about you? How do you know this place we live, this place that the juruá call the forest? What do you call this forest we live?”. Then they told me “Our ancestors, our grandparents, know it as *nhe’ery*”. And I asked “But why *nhe’ery*?”. [They replied] “It’s *nhe’ery* because it’s a very sacred place. You can’t go to the beach in swimming trunks or a bikini, showing off. This place, the beach, is sacred. Only healers, only illuminated people can reach the beachside or seaside to receive enlightenment from spiritual elevations in order to attain the *yvy marae’y*, which is the perfect world. So it’s the place where one bathed to bid farewell to their imperfect body. It’s a very sacred place”. That is why I asked them why they said *nhe’ery*, this word in Guarani that means “where the soul bathes”. The people who stayed on the seashore, hoping that one day the body could bathe to be purified, to have a spiritual elevation and attain *yvy marae’y*.

So, the Atlantic Forest is not the Atlantic Forest. “Atlantic” is the name of the sea that the *juruá* has created, the “Atlantic”. For us, the sea is the sea. Wherever it is, the sea is the sea. It may even be in a different place, but it is salted, it is a single body. For us, there is no such thing as the Pacific and the Atlantic. The Guarani cosmology goes through this: “where souls bathe”, that is, *nhe’ery*, which is the Atlantic Forest.

CRISTINE TAKUÁ: We have already been talking about the possibility of retelling the history of *nhe’ery*; of the sacred spaces, both in São Paulo and here on the coast, of the presence that comes for many, many centuries with a memory that is often unknown to the Brazilian people. Because you do not tell it in schools, history books do not talk about the *nhe’ery* in the way it is seen ancestrally. So, our dialogues about *nhe’ery* have been, for a few years now, bringing the potency of this willingness

to retell, to again remap these spaces, which are inhabited today and where many things are built on top of the sacred *nhe'ery*. Many are unaware of what really happened there. Many rivers today are completely grounded by cement. Thus, the idea of bringing up this dialogue about *nhe'ery* is precisely to make the Brazilian people – especially here in this region where the *nhe'ery* is located – able to reconnect with this ancestral memory.

Within this thought, we are in this dialogue to construct *rec.tyty*, which is an indigenous art festival. The *nhe'ery* is inside this festival, with small workshops that we have developed within our community here on the Silveira River and also over there in Jaraguá, with the support of Tamikuã Txihi, a great Pataxó artist who lives there in the indigenous land of Jaraguá. Together with young people, we have started to tell stories, to produce artworks and drawings about the *nhe'ery*; about these sacred spaces and the beings who live within them. Vegetable beings, animal beings, mineral beings who are alive and pulsing inside the *nhe'ery*, resisting all this sea of cement and resisting capitalist colonization, which has been dirtying, burying, silting up the rivers. And it is always willing to come back.

I find it very impressive when, walking around the city, I see little plants sprouting amid the cement. Many of these little plants are edible or are medicines sprouting amid the cement. The *nhe'ery* resists all this cement. So, this festival that we are proposing to do together, thinking of dialogues along with Ailton Krenak, Carlos Papá, Naine Terena, Sandra Benites, with artists who are out there everywhere. Indigenous artists who produce cinema, incredible drawings and literature. They produce thought. Art is thought. So this festival, which is called *rec.tyty*, means to bring this *nhe'ery* pulse for us to reconnect with that memory. The memory of the river, the memory of the tree, the memory of all beings that are out there resisting with us.

AILTON KRENAK: How nice to be able to invite our friends to the festival. In an environment where we can make a poetics about this world and produce, as Cris has said, knowledge about the territories, about our cultural diversities, and also help constituting another narrative, which

can confront other epistemologies that have always configured these worlds – including that idea about the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean. This is geopolitics. It dates to when the empires decided, with the Treaty of Tordesillas, who would get which part of the world. This slicing up of the world established a colonial cartography; a geography also determined by the political game of history.

When we say “Atlantic Forest” and we are able to question this terminology, [we see that] the Atlantic Forest, the ocean itself and the forest formation were captured by an administrative world. Calling the Atlantic Forest the Atlantic Forest is to include her in the list of forest resources. She was devastated precisely because she is the “Atlantic” Forest. If someone knew that she is another place, that she is *nhe'ery*, that she has a transcendence, perhaps ancient Brazilians would have learned that they could not devastate her. The name also says a lot about what we think, how we name the world. Let's invoke this *nhe'ery* transcendence and see if we can also change that debate that takes place within the Instituto Florestal [Forestry Institute], which takes place there at the university, where people keep repeating the same old conversation.

I have recently learned that the *caiçaras*² in a region of Jureia are being harassed by the Institute of Forestry and other conservation organizations, saying that the *caiçaras* cannot stay inside the *nhe'ery*, inside nature, inside the forest, because they spoil nature. Now, if the *caiçaras* learned from our ancestors how to live inside the *nhe'ery*, how can they threaten the Atlantic Forest?

So, this Institute of Forestry should open its ears a little bit, be a little silent, stay a little in the dark and learn what *nhe'ery* is, instead of going around establishing rules and regulations about what to do with the Atlantic Forest. I could not miss the opportunity to make this comment, Cris and Papá, because this week I was warned by our *caiçara* relatives. They are not indigenous, but they have a 300-year history within this environment called the Atlantic Forest. Just as our villages were heavily

2. *Caiçaras* refers to a population formed by the miscegenation of peoples engendered by colonization. They usually live surrounded by natural fences within borders of the sea of our coastline and the Serra do Mar mountains. The name “*caiçara*” comes from the Tupi language *ka'aysá* (or *ka'aysara*), a rustic fence made of tree branches.

harassed by environmental conservationism, now environmentalists have decided to take on the caiçaras. And since we like the caiçaras, we could not let them get crushed alone. *Haux haux*, caiçaras! Stay firm, caiçaras!

AILTON KRENAK is a thinker, mystical poet, environmentalist and one of the main voices of indigenous knowledge. Ailton has created, along with Dantes Editora, the *Selvagem* cycle of studies about life. He lives in the Krenak village, by the margins of Doce River, in Minas Gerais, and is the author of *Ideias para adiar o fim do mundo* [Ideas to postpone the end of the world; Anansi International, 2020], *A vida não é útil* [Life is not useful], *O amanhã não está à venda* [Tomorrow is not for sale], and *Futuro Ancestral* [Ancestral Future] (Companhia das Letras, 2019, 2020 e 2022).

CARLOS PAPÁ MIRIM is an indigenous leader and filmmaker of the Guarani Mbya people. He has worked for more than 20 years with audiovisual productions, with the aim of strengthening and valuing the *guarani mbya* culture by producing documentaries, films and cultural workshops for young people. He also is a spiritual leader in his community. He lives in the village of Rio Silveira, where he takes part in collective decisions and helps his community to find ways to live better. He is a counselor at the Instituto Maracá and a representative by the north coast of the state of São Paulo in the Guarani Yvy Rupa commission (CGY).

CRISTINE TAKUÁ is a philosopher, educator and indigenous artisan, living in the village of Rio Silveira. In the community of Rio Silveira, she is a teacher at the **Txeru Ba'e Kuai'** Indigenous Public School and also helps in spiritual works at the house of prayer. She is also founder and advisor of Instituto Maracá. Cristine represents the unit of indigenous education at the São Paulo Secretariat of Education and is a founding member of the Forum for the Articulation of Indigenous Teachers in the State of São Paulo (FAPISP).

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More information at selvagemciclo.com.br

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Find out more here: selvagemciclo.com.br/colabore

TRANSLATION

ANA LOUREIRO JUREMA

Educator, she has developed and participated in several projects in Brazil and other countries – but she has always been a teacher, mainly focused on teacher’s capacity building. She did a doctorate, does research, has academic, technical and didactic publications, is a consultant and an everlasting learner. Proud member of the Selvagem Community, contributing as *brincante da língua*, a language craftswoman, a tongue-reveller.

REVISION

DANIEL GRIMONI

An artist, Portuguese grad student and Language teacher at a community pre-university course in Rio de Janeiro. He has published poems and short stories in literary magazines and anthologies, and is the author of *Todo (o) corpo agora* (2019), a poetry book. He also studies matters related to the dialogues between geography, ecology, art and education.

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