

## STUDY CYCLE

### WOMEN, PLANTS, AND HEALING

#### Guide

Dates: 6 - 27 September 2022

Time: Tuesdays, from 4 pm to 6 pm (BRT or GMT-3)

Guests: Tai Tuwixana, Aline Tertuliano, Maria Silvanete Lermen, Verônica Carvalho, Valéria Carvalho, Mãe Dôra Pankararu, Jula Pankararu, Sanderline Ribeiro, Helena Tenderini and Luiza Cavalcante

Facilitators: Ana Paixão de Carvalho and Marília Nepomuceno

Invited artist: Chonon Bensho

Realization: Selvagem Ciclo de Estudos

Partnership: Chã - coletiva da terra

#### About the cycle

“All medicine is nature. The clash between Traditional Peoples’ science and the Western one is something that should not exist. We, as beings, inhabit the same Earth. Laboratory science only exists because before that there was the science of the people of the Earth, the science of nature. Health and healing are in the ground, in food. If we have good soil, we have abundance, we have health and we have life. Land, good soil, water, those are the conditions for our survival. Ours and all humanity’s. When we think of this house – mother Earth – as a common home, we need to think of the woods, the forests, the *caatinga*, the *sertão*, as a space of existence, resistance, and healing.” (Maria Silvanete Lermen in conversation with Ana Carvalho: *Há sempre uma árvore que somos nós*, [There is always a tree that is us], *forumdoc.bh.2021 Catalog*).

“Our territory is a deep well of living knowledge among our many Brazils (...). When we see the subsistence farmers of the world, or the memory weavers, we are invited to look, or to rediscover the politics of what in Brazil we call people, the politics of the community, and the

knowledge and actions that women and commons have in their territories. To look, think, listen, or (re)sing in chorus, or collectively, about the strategies that we must arm ourselves with, not to reassemble the past, but to re-enchant and rebuild the future. Safeguarding our traditional knowledge and practices of healing and care, between ourselves and the environment, as a strategy of collective re-enchantment of the world.” (Marília Nepomuceno in *Tecer, Saber e Fazer* [To weave, to know and to make], opening text of Notebook 2- [\*As Filhas da Terra da Serra dos Paus Dóias\*](#) [The Daughters of Serra dos Paus Dóias]. This notebook was published as part of the *Regenerative Cosmo Nucleation and Enchantment in the Management of Traditional Territories in Pernambuco* project, which is fostered by Gender Responsive Resilience and Intersectionality in Policy and Practice (GRRIPP) - Networking Plus Partnering for Resilience’, funded by Global Challenges Research Fund.)

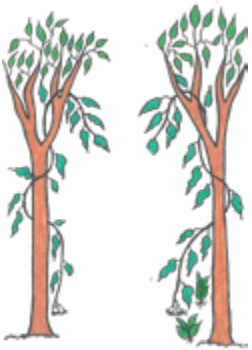
“In our peoples’ culture, despite the contradictory history of evidently genocidal colonization, these bodies, these peoples express themselves in the sense that land is health. A fundamental principle to be in health is to live on the land. Health comes from food, from good quality water, from a state and a social disposition to produce health. Health is produced collectively by the community, within bodies. This understanding of health as production of life is so wonderful” (Ailton Krenak, *Aula inaugural do Mestrado Profissional em Saúde das Populações Negras e Indígenas*, Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia, 2021 [Ailton Krenak, Inaugural class of “Health for Black and Indigenous Populations” Graduate program, Federal University of the Recôncavo da Bahia, 2021]).

The traditional knowledge associated with medicinal plants and herbs is the result of centuries of coexistence between traditional peoples’ and communities’ and their biomes of origin, exploring their potential in various ways. Thus, they reflect a body-territory relationship as existence in the world. These types of knowledge are closely related to other dimensions of social life, family histories, and knowledge transmission systems and cosmovisions, and are intrinsically associated with spiritual dimensions, personal trajectories, and the cultural identity and collective

memory of each community, group, or region. Inspired by the knowledge of four women from black and indigenous territories of Pernambuco and Paraíba, this reading cycle – Women, Plants, and Healing – proposes a drift through the practices and knowledge of these women-territory from their narratives, trajectories and from their medicinal and edible backyards, where a collection of herbs and plants used in their midwifery, healing, blessing and prayer practices inhabit.

### SEPTEMBER 06 – FIRST MEETING – BIRTH

Guests: Tai Tuwixana and Aline Tertuliano



It is from the seeds of the present that the future is reborn.

A new generation of women, apprentice healers, being born and giving continuity to the counter-hegemonic and ancestral knowledge in their communities.

**TAÍ TUWI'XAWĀ (TAÍZA NUNES)** is a poet, writer, teacher, art educator, researcher, cultural producer, screenwriter, actress, and film director. Coordinator of the NGO *Os Sertões in Taperoá*, in the Cariri Paraibano. Coordinator and creator of the *Balaio Poético* and *Liberdade Escrita*, projects that encourage reading and poetic production for children, youth, and adolescents. She gives workshops on indigenous literature, poetic sensitization and reading for children, youth and adolescents, besides lectures and workshops about traditional indigenous medicine, indigenous women's protagonism, territory, and land uprising. She is a Master student in Social Sciences at UFCG (research topics - Ethnicity, Indigenous health, anti-coloniality, gender, politics, affective cartographies). Member of the research, teaching and extension group RERUMOS (Religion, Realities and Social Movements) and the research, teaching and extension group *Devires-UFCG*. Member of the indigenous literature group, coordinator of the *Literatura indígena PB*. She is a member of the Brazilian national book and project of indigenous women of letters. She is part of the group *MOARA* indigenous women of the Barra de Gramame village in Paraíba. She is also a member of AMIP - Articulation of Indigenous Women of Paraíba. She is a natural judge of the TOAJ - Court of Justice of Abya Yala. She released in 2021 her first independent

book *Parindo sementes: Memórias poéticas de nós* (Birthing seeds: poetic memories of us).

ALINE TERTULIANO is an apprentice *raizeira* (herbalist), grassroots health educator, agroecology technician, creator of the [@feitiodaterra](#) project and seed worker at [@coletivasementeiras](#). Since 2014 she has been building knowledge, practices and education in grassroots health and women's health, based on ancestral and decolonial knowledge.

### SEPTEMBER 13 – SECOND MEETING – GERMINATE

(in dialogue with the in-person experience of the Cycle)

Guests: Maria Silvanete Lermen in dialogue with Verônica Carvalho and Valéria Carvalho (*Terreiro das Pretas do Cariri*)



There is always a tree that is us in the forest.

This tree is us on the path of life.

Health, food, body and territory. Three women farmers, agroforesters workers, healers, *raizeiras* (women herbalists), holders of care, land, regeneration and fight knowledge.

VERÔNICA NEUMA DAS NEVES CARVALHO is a herbalist and *mioleira* [endemic term which means small talk enthusiast] from the Cariri Cearense, biologist, retired social worker and grassroots educator. Co-founder of the Groups of Black Valorization of Cariri / Grunec and Residents of the Terreiro Encantado das Pretas.

VALÉRIA GERCINA DAS NEVES CARVALHO is a healer and *mioleira* [endemic term which means small talk enthusiast] from the Cariri Cearense, biologist, retired teacher and grassroots educator. Co-founder of the Groups of Black Valorization of Cariri / Grunec and Residents of the Terreiro Encantado das Pretas.

MARIA SILVANETE LERMEN is a grassroots educator, community health counselor, traditional healer, ancestral portals counselor, agroforester, practitioner and researcher of peoples' experiences.

Serra dos Paus-Dóias, Exu, Sertão do Araripe, PE.

([@espacodevivencia](#) | [@silvanete lermen](#))

## SEPTEMBER 20 – THIRD MEETING – CARE

Guests: Mother Dôra Pankararu and Jula Pankararu



It is from being born and from caring that this world is made –  
“God grant us good luck”.

Mother Dôra and Juliana, Pankararu midwives who are a reference in the universe of Pernambuco indigenous midwives, will talk about knowing how to be born, and how to care for, in order to make a world based on collective well-living sprout.

**MÃE DÔRA PANKARARU** is a midwife, and spiritual and political leader of her people. She started in the vocation at the age of 18, accompanying the elders. Since then she has promoted the revival of the largest training of indigenous midwives in the State of Pernambuco, in Pankararu. Maintaining and transmitting the ethnic traditions, Dôra is responsible for the insertion and training of new women in the craft. Her work guarantees that Pankararu women will not stop having children in the territory, strongly reinforcing the indigenous identity and promoting the valorization of knowledge and practices of Pankararu midwives. Born in 1964, since her childhood, Dôra, as the niece of Maria Quitéria (midwife and well-known leader among the indigenous peoples of Brazil), has accompanied her relatives in events and traditional indigenous rituals such as the *Corrida do Umbu* [Umbu’s Race], the *Menino do Rancho* [Ranch’s Boy], healing roundtables, novenas and all regular and daily rituals and celebrations that make life in Pankararu. Her participation in these events is active and prominent, be it as a dancer in the front lines – being the first female figure arm in arm with the male leadership that is pulling the pace of the ritual – be it as a singer, *maracá* player, godmother (of the boys that go to the Rancho), basket bearer (in the Umbu’s Race) or cook, i.e., occupying places of great relevance for the realization of each one of these rituals. This openness that Dôra has to circulate and participate in different activities within the Pankararu community is mainly due to the enormous respect and recognition that the community has for her, a feeling reinforced by her activity as a midwife – a figure that walks around the whole territory being greeted as

Mother or Godmother and asked to give “the blessing”, translated into the powerful and following way:

Passing Pankararu Indigenous person: – Your blessing Godmother.  
Dôra Pankararu answers: – May God give you good luck.

**JULA PANKARARU** (Juliana Maria da Silva), born in 1974, is a Pankararu midwife. She began her work as a young girl, accompanying older midwives when women from nearby villages gave birth, maintaining and transmitting the traditions of the ethnic group, reinforcing the indigenous identity, and promoting the appreciation of knowledge. Ever since she was a child, Jula, niece of Maria Quitéria (midwife and well-known indigenous leader), has accompanied her relatives in participating in traditional indigenous events and rituals, such as the *Corrida do Umbu* [Umbu’s Race], *Menino do Rancho* [Ranch’s Boy], healing roundtables, novenas, and others. Her participation in these events is active as a dancer, singer, maracá player, godmother (of the boys who go to the ranch), basket maker (in the Umbu Run) and cook, i.e., occupying places of great relevance for the realization of each one of these rituals. This openness that Jula has to circulate and participate in different activities within the Pankararu community is mainly due to the enormous respect and recognition the community has for her, a feeling reinforced by her activity as a midwife.

## **SEPTEMBER 26 - FOURTH MEETING**

### **COMPOSTING AND TRANSFORMING LIFE CYCLES**

Guests: Sanderline Ribeiro, Helena Tenderini Luiza Cavalcante and Ana Claudia Rodrigues.



In the spiral of time, the path of life and the power of transformation. Three women: one indigenous and two from black territories, holders of healing knowledge, guide paths of listening, blessing, birth, cultivation, transformation, and the continuity of life.

“Our mission is a form of blessing, a form of prayer, to move and transform the world.”

**SANDERLINE RIBEIRO** is an indigenous woman. A Shaman, she is a Pedagogy undergrad, with a degree in Portuguese Language Arts. Specialist in Rural Education (UFPB), graduate student in Science of Religions (UFPB) and teacher of Basic Education. Sanderline Potiguara is part of the group of medicinal plants formed by indigenous leaders, shamans, traditional healers, and *raizeiras* (women herbalists), accompanied by the DSEI POTIGUARA team, as well as part of the *Articulação de Mulheres indígenas da Paraíba* [Articulation of Indigenous Women of Paraíba - AMIP]. Daughter of an indigenous potiguara, granddaughter of a midwife, traditional healer and blesser. For over 10 years, she has been dedicated to the occupation of physical and spiritual care passed on by ancestry and ensured by spirituality. Rio Tinto, PB.

([@sanderlineribeiro](#))

**LUÍZA CAVALCANTE** is a black woman, afroecological farmer, grassroots educator. Mother, grandmother, writer, blesser. Matrigestor of smallholding *Ágatha*, a space for feminist and anti-racist agroecological exchanges and experiences. Presides over the Association of Education, Art, Culture and Agroecology *Sítio Ágatha* (small farm). She is part of forums, networks, articulations, and movements of social fights.

([@sitioagatha](#) | [@luizacavalcante62](#))

**HELENA TENDERINI** is a midwife, blesser, *capoeirista*, educator, artist and holder of knowledge and practices related to natural care with plants, medicinal herbs, food and knowledge of the hands. Mother of four children, Makambi, Malaika, Malakai, and Aluandê, she lives in community with her family on the Malokambo farm in Tracunhaém, Pernambuco's Zona da Mata Norte. Based on the traditions she practices and the knowledge she received from other women, she has been reflecting on the context of the Zona da Mata women with whom she works. with

([@sitio.malokambo](#) | [@helenatenderini](#))

**ANA CLAUDIA RODRIGUES** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Anthropology and Museology of UFPE and at the Graduate Program in Anthropology of UFPE. Coordinator of the Research Group

AYÉ: interdisciplinary laboratory of nature, culture and technique. She holds a PhD in Anthropology and a post-doctorate in Collective Health from UFPE. She works with the transversal themes of health, race, gender, environment, as well as human and non-human relations. (ana.crsilva2@ufpe.com)

## Facilitators

**MARÍLIA NEPOMUCENO**, Brazilian born in Pernambuco, is an afro-indigenous black cis-woman (also read as *parda*), mother of two children. Facilitator and cultural producer, grassroots educator, agroecology technician (SERTA), researcher holding a bachelor degree in Social Science from UFPE and currently a graduate student, also at UFPE. In the collectives she participates, she proposes and supports initiatives and dialogues between Ecological Politics, Human and beyond human Relations, and Relationships between Territories, Memory and Cultural Heritage. As a researcher, she takes part in the following groups: OBSERVAMUS – Museums and Cultural Heritage Observatory(DAM-UFPE); AYÉ – Interdisciplinary lab Nature, Culture and Technique (PPGA/UFPE); LACC – Study Lab on Collective Action and Culture (UFPE); Stories of Birth – Research and Extension (DAM-UFPE)

([@chadeterra](#) | [@akapiwara](#) | [@cartografia.parteirasindigenas](#) | [@museudaparteira](#))

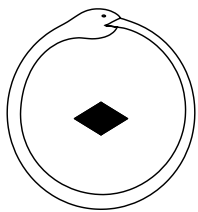
**ANA PAIXÃO DE CARVALHO** is an artist, filmmaker, agroecology technician and popular educator. She has been working for over 20 years with indigenous communities and traditional peoples throughout Brazil in shared artistic research and creation in the fields of visual arts, cinema, literature, and agroecology. She is a collaborator at *Vídeo nas Aldeias* [Video in the Villages], a project that supports the fight of indigenous peoples to strengthen their identities and their territorial and cultural heritages through audiovisual resources. Since 2019, she has developed research and creation in visual poetics investigating the relationships between memory, territory, healing communities and land regeneration. She integrates Chã – collective of the land, which promotes training,



research and cultural practices with a focus on regenerative agriculture and socio-environmental justice, through the development of cultural projects. Mother of two children, Ana lives and works in the rural area of Paudalho/PE.

**INVITED ARTIST: CHONON BENSHO**

Indigenous artist from the Shipibo-Konibo people of Peru. She is a descendent from the traditional Onanya medicinal sages and women who preserved the craft and artistic traditions of their ancestors. She was raised as a child in a traditional environment in her native language and was healed with the medicinal plants used by the people who strived to become masters of the Kené drawings. Her drawings express the philosophical and spiritual views of the indigenous nations and seek for beauty and balance. Kené art takes into account the deep relationship between human beings, ancestral territory, and spiritual worlds.



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