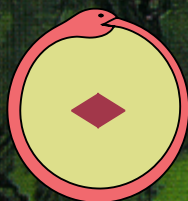


THE LIFE OF THE SUN
ON EARTH
Carlos Papá and Verá Kanguá



notebooks
SELVAGEM

This Wild Notebook is a transcription of the book with the same name, published by Editora Anhembi Morumbi in 2003, which tells the story of the adventures of Kuaray and Jaxy, twin sons of Nhanderu. Papá and Verá had the impulse to transform the narrative of the creation of the world that they had heard from their parents and grandparents from an early age – and which the Guarani people have passed on to their children for countless generations – into a book. They wrote it down and translated it orally, with the help of Renata Amaral, who organised the book and prepared the Portuguese version of the text.

BRIEF CONTEXTUAL NOTE

“There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

A God emerged

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

God thought

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

God created a light

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created a bird, the owl, messenger of the night

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created the hummingbird, messenger of the day

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created a tree, original

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created a snake

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created the protecting gods

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created the planet

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created the sun

There are thousands and thousands in the middle of the dark

Created the water, the wind, the life on the planet

That’s why you can not be afraid of darkness.

Darkness is the mother of the whole universe, including God.

Darkness does not choose anyone.

Darkness is the place where true love hides”

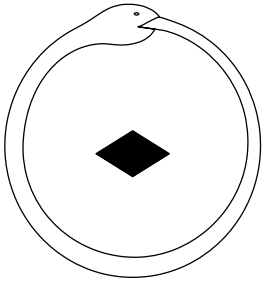
Guarani poetics narrated by Carlos Papá.

There was an original sun, which appeared in the dark when the early father made the first light on his altar. *Kuarai*, *Nhandesy*’s son, is the future of the sun, the second sun. Today we live under the second sun, *Nhamandu Mirim*.

Mirim, in guarani, means little.

As the brazilian thinker Ailton Krenak says: indigenous people do not tell bedtime stories, they tell stories to awaken children.

This is a story to awaken our senses.



THE LIFE OF THE SUN ON EARTH

Carlos Papá and Verá Kanguá

When she was young, *Nhandesy*, the mother of the sun, was in the world. She was a beautiful young woman who, one day, had the idea of making a lasso to catch the bird *nambu xororó*, but instead of catching the *nambu*, in her lasso a little owl fell.



She liked the owl so much that she took it home to raise it.

When she arrived home, the mother of the sun tried to feed the little animal, offering it some crickets she had hunted, but the owl would not accept them. She went back in search of food, and brought back many butterflies, but the owl did not accept them either. She didn't know what else to do when she offered it *mbeju bran*¹, and the little owl finally ate.

1. A type of pancake made of mashed corn or manioc.

The girl liked the owl so much that she let it sleep next to her head, and sometimes, during the night, felt it flap its wings.

Before long, the mother of the sun realised that her belly was beginning to grow, and that she was pregnant. She was very frightened and worried then, not understanding what had happened.

The owl, noticing her sadness, appeared as it was, transforming itself into a man. And the young woman saw that it was *Nhanderu'i*, our God, who said to her:

– I am going back to my throne, do you want to go with me?

And she said:

– I won't go, because your wife, who is back there in your kingdom, might not like it. – And she decided to stay.

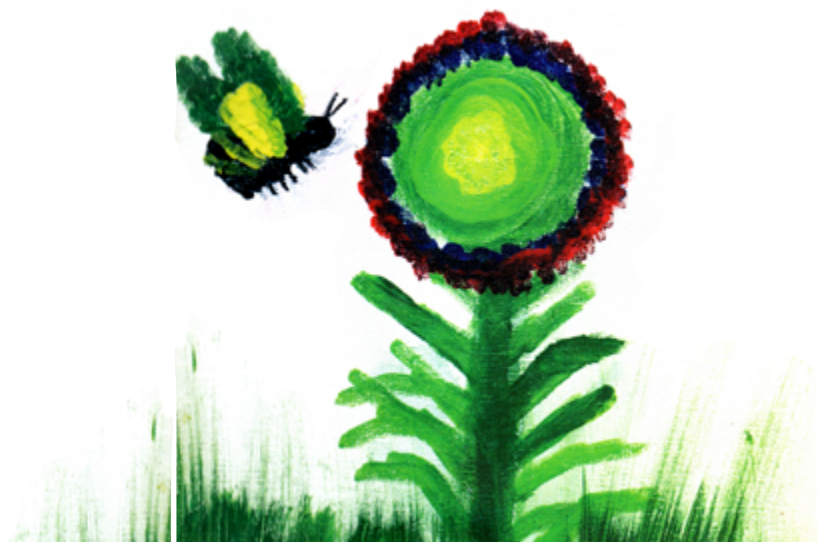
– If you change your mind, sooner or later, go after me. If you struggle to find the way, ask my son *Kuaray*, the little Sun, and he will know how to guide you.

The next day she decided to go after *Nhanderu'i* but, through the woods that he had passed, there were several tracks, and she didn't know which to choose. Recalling what *Nhanderu'i* had said, she asked the baby, who was in her belly, which was the way, and *Kuaray* replied that she should take the right trail.

On the right trail there were many flowers and *Kuaray* said to his mother:

– Pick some flowers for us to take because when we arrive at my father's yard I'll feel like playing with them.

The baby asked her to gather all the flowers on the path and she couldn't bear carrying so many flowers anymore when, at last, a beautiful sunflower turned up, which *Kuaray* also asked her to harvest. But, when she was going to pick it, a huge bumblebee stung her finger. So she got really angry, saying to the baby:



– You haven't even seen the world yet and you are already willing to play! Now look at what you have done to your mum – and furiously started slapping her own belly.

Continuing the journey, she came once more to a point where there were three trails: in the middle one, the bushes were dense; the one on the right was full of thorny plants and the other one was very clean.

She asked:

– Son, where did your father go, where should I go? – But the baby didn't answer. She asked three times, but the baby didn't answer. She then chose the trail on the left, as it was the cleanest, not knowing the danger she was in.

Following through this trail, she arrived to the den of an old jaguar, that said to her:

– Child, you shouldn't come this way, return immediately to the place where you came from, for my sons are very fierce and may devour you. But the girl didn't know how to return anymore, and said she would have to sleep there.



When the old jaguar saw that there was no way back for the girl, she turned her cauldron upside down and hid her inside. She asked her if she was hungry, and the girl said yes, she would like to eat corn, but jaguars did not eat corn, and so the old jaguar took some fruit for the girl.

The next day, the first young jaguar arrived, started to sniff and said:

– Grandma, did you hunt anything? – to which she replied:

– Of course not! I am no longer young, you're the ones who should hunt for me.

Then another jaguar came saying:

– Mom, did you hunt anything? – but she answered again:

– If even you can't hunt, imagine me, such an old lady...

And so it was. At night, the den was packed full of jaguars, until the smartest of them all arrived, the one with the best nose, that, sniffing a lot, said:

– You are lying! – and turned up the cauldron. It immediately took the girl from her hideout, and the jaguars devoured her mercilessly. One of them screamed:

– There is a baby!

So the old jaguar said:

– Leave this baby for me, for I am old and I want to cook it to eat the very soft meat.

She then put the boy on embers, but the embers died out. She tried to put him on the skewers, but he was too smooth and she couldn't spike him. She put the baby on a rock and tried to smash him, beating him with a stick, but he jumped back and forth and she could not hit him at all, so she gave up eating him.

She then put him in the sun to dry, because he was still wet from the placenta. As he dried out, he already started to walk and asked her to make him a bow and arrows, and the old jaguar made the bow and the arrows for him.

Very clever, he already went hunting, and with his bow and his little arrows he hunted butterflies which he brought for the old jaguar to eat. Having grown a little, he already hunted lots of small birds. The jaguar liked it very much.



The young jaguars looked at the boy, mouths watering, but the old jaguar told them to leave him alone, saying that he was her pet.

Kuaray felt very lonely, and one day he caught a leaf from the **kurupika**'y tree, and, with his wisdom about things, said:

– Brother, stand up! – and having said that, the leaf transformed itself into a boy. He said to this boy:

– You're my brother, my name is **Kuaray** and your name is **Jaxy**.

When they came back home the old jaguar asked:

– Where did this boy come from?

Kuaray answered:

– I met him on the trail, we played together and I brought him over.
He is my little friend.



– Where are your parents? – asked the old jaguar.

– I have no mother, I have no father – answered **Jaxy**.

The jaguar told them:

– Always play around here, you should never go to the bigger green forest, it is very dangerous.

And they played around there and killed many birds, which they would bring for the jaguars to eat. One day **Jaxy** asked:

– Why doesn't grandmother let us go to the forest? Why don't we go there?

Kuaray didn't want to go and he would tell his brother that no, they couldn't, but **Jaxy** insisted, saying that there might be lots of birds there, that they would hunt a lot more. In time, he convinced his brother and they went to the bigger green forest.

Once there, the forest was indeed full of birds and they soon started hunting. They killed many, many birds. **Kuaray** said:

– Let's tie these birds by their legs so that it will be easier to carry them – **Jaxy**, the future Moon, replied:

– Tie them up while I go for a walk.



Kuaray told him to go, but to come back soon. **Jaxy** started strolling through the woods, until he looked up and saw a wonderful parrot, fully coloured, and thought:

– I'll surprise my brother. I'll kill this parrot and take it to him.

He took his bow and pointed it, releasing the arrow and being sure to strike him, but the parrot dodged the straight arrow, and furiously returned to the same place, saying so:

– **Jaxy**, why do you want to kill me? Why will you take a bunch of birds to those fierce jaguars that devoured your mother?

Scared that the bird was talking to him, **Jaxy** pulled and shot another arrow, but, again, the parrot dodged, went back to his site and said the same thing. **Jaxy** then called his brother:

– **Kuaray**, come here to see a talking bird – **Kuaray** came and **Jaxy** shot again, and again the parrot dodged, went back very upset and said to the children:

– You killed a lot of birds to feed those fierce jaguars that killed your mother – **Kuaray**, puzzled, said:

– Now it's my turn – pulled his arrow and shot precisely, but the parrot dodged and went back to his site again, saying the same thing.



Kuaray then understood the whole truth, and leaning his bow on the ground, started to cry. He and *Jaxy* cried a lot, and they rebelled.

Kuaray asked:

– Do you know where I can find the bones of my mother?

The *Parakau* parrot answered:

– Near the den of the jaguars there are two big rocks, between them you will find the bones of your mother.



Outraged by what they had discovered, they went back to where the dead birds were, and by untying them, he freed them one by one saying their names:

– Toucan! Thrush! Tanager! Sparrow! Bellbird! Hummingbird! Cardinal! Guan! White-tipped Dove! Small-billed Tinamou! – and the once nameless birds flew off, alive again.

Kuaray crumpled up the rope that he had made to tie the birds and threw it into the air, and this rope became the *Jayru* bird, and they returned home without any birds this time.

So the old jaguar asked:

– Where are the birds? Didn't you bring any bush meat?

Kuaray replied:

– Today we didn't feel like hunting.

The jaguar asked:

– What happened? You have red eyes, it looks like you have cried...

Kuaray answered:

– Yes, we cried because we were stung lot by wasps.

They left and went in search of the mother's bones. And at the place indicated by the parrot, they found them.

They put the skeleton together, and **Kuaray** said:

– **Jaxy**, go for a walk in the forest to scare away some tinamou birds, leave me alone a bit.

When **Jaxy** left, **Kuaray**, the future Sun, with his wisdom about things, talked to his mother:

– Mom, get up.

Jaxy was curious to know why **Kuaray** wanted to be alone by asking him to leave, so he stepped away just a little bit. Soon he returned to sneak in, and then he saw **Kuaray** holding his mother in his arms, who was very weak. **Jaxy** then ran onto her saying "I want to snuggle", but he knocked her down, making a sound of bones to be heard, because she had become a skeleton once more. **Kuaray** told him off:

– Why did you come back so soon? Haven't I told you to leave me alone? Now go further away.

But **Jaxy** wanted to be breastfed and, as soon as he saw **Kuaray** demanding her once again to get up, he ran onto her making her fall again, and the noise of bones was heard once more. Then **Kuaray** said:

– Mother, from today on, you will be a little animal, you will be considered a prey to help humankind. With his wisdom about things, he blew the skeleton, and she transformed into a paca that went on skipping away into the bushes.

This is why, when the paca is hunted, the sun rises very weakly, because he gets sad and sorrowful for his mother.

So they decided to avenge their mother's death and made a **mondé**² trap, which has a weight made out of corn cobs. One jaguar saw them

2. Trap placed on the animals' trackway, which when they pass unlocks the lashing of a heavy log that then falls on them.

and asked what they were doing, and they said they were setting a trap to catch kingbirds.

The jaguar laughed and said:

– With such a light cob, this trap won't even catch a fly.

Kuaray said:

– Come in then, to see.

The jaguar came in and the **mondé** trap fell on top of him, killing him instantaneously, because the cob weighed a ton.

The jaguars were very dumb. Soon another one came and did the same thing. When they saw the trap, they came right away to ask, mocked and went into it to prove that they were right, being caught by the **mondé** trap. So, all the male jaguars ended up dying, only the female jaguars remained.

When they were taking the last dead jaguar off the **mondé** trap, the old jaguar saw them and told them off:

– Boys! What are you doing to your brothers?

– Well, we don't know, they were the ones who wanted to go in there and they died.

– So destroy this trap right now!

They destroyed the **mondé** trap.

Then they thought of another strategy to get rid of the female jaguars. They made a huge lagoon with a small island inside. On this island, with his wisdom about things, **Kuaray** made a fruit tree called **quavirova** appear.

They brought the fruit home and started eating in front of them. The jaguars wanted to try it and they loved it, asking where there was more. They were starving, because there were no more male jaguars to hunt. So they told them that there were many of these fruits on an island. The jaguars then asked them to build a bridge so they could go there and pick up the fruits, eat as much as they want, and rest.

So they agreed to put a huge log of wood that would cross the lagoon to the island, and, standing one at each end, they would overturn it when the jaguars were passing over the log, and so they would fall into the water.

Kuaray began to gather several things from the bushes and throw them into the water, saying:

– You will be all living beings of the water, some dangerous, others not.

Thus, through his wisdom about things, the vine became a large snake, the thorns became swordfish, and the leaves became different types of fish. He further said:

– This river will be called *Paraguaxu*, and its waters will be salty.

Later they returned to the jaguars' den. They arrived there in the afternoon, saying:

– Everything is ready. Tomorrow morning we'll get the fruits – and everyone became happy.

When dawn came, they all went to the lagoon and, when they got there, *Kuaray* thus said:

– My brother stays here, and I cross to the other side, holding the log so it doesn't turn over, and you can cross safely.

The jaguars started to slowly cross the bridge, but there was one that was left behind because she was pregnant and couldn't climb the log.



Kuaray made a sign for *Jaxy* to wait, as this jaguar was the only one left to climb, but *Jaxy* understood that he should turn the log, and he overturned it. Then they all went underwater, except the pregnant jaguar that didn't manage to climb up.

At that moment, *Kuaray* yelled:

– You are the only one that is going to stay to reproduce the species.

Upon hearing these words, she began to make the actual jaguar roar (because they used to speak, now they just roar), and had a male cub which continued the species.

Kuaray got upset, thinking that he shouldn't have done that, and at that moment, the log turned into a giant serpent and plunged into the river. Then *Kuaray*, the future Sun, was on one side of the lagoon and *Jaxy*, the future Moon, was on the other.

The brothers went off walking one on each side, but *Jaxy* didn't know what to do and kept looking at the fruits there in the middle of the bushes. He shouted to *Kuaray* from the other side:

– Which fruit is this? Can you eat it? – and *Kuaray* would answer, also shouting:

– What does it look like?

– It is red with a little round spot underneath.



Kuaray answered:

– It's *guavirova*, wait, don't eat it. In order not to cause you any harm, you have to smudge it with the pipe first.

Jaxy kept walking and found another fruit, shouting again to **Kuaray**:

– Which fruit is this?

– What does it look like?

– It's hard and has a very reddish peel.

Kuaray answered:

– It's *guapytã*. You can eat it, just hit it with a stone to open it.

Jaxy kept walking and asking **Kuaray**:

– Which fruit is this? Can you eat it?

– What does it look like?

– It's long, yellowish and very soft.

– So it's *aguaí*. You can bake it and eat it, and save its little seeds for later.

Jaxy shouted one more time:

– Which fruit is this?

– What does it look like?

– This one has a kind of bluish peel.

– It's *guaviju*, this one you also shouldn't eat before smudging it.

He continued walking, and everything he saw he asked to **Kuaray**. Already impatient with so many questions, **Kuaray** said:

– Make a fire and put burning coals on the *aguaí* seeds. Hold your bow and arrow firmly.

Suddenly the seeds exploded and with the explosion **Jaxy** was thrown upwards, landing right next to his brother. **Kuaray** then said:

– On this island we are going to make our world, the *Land With No Harms*, that will be big.

There, they started walking until **Kuaray** said:

– It's time for us to leave, we've already accomplished our mission. And they continued walking along the original island, which became so large that it seemed to have no end.

They started travelling around the island and, in a river, they found the *anhã* fishing with a trap called *pari*³. **Kuaray** said:

3. Fish trap, a type of long basket that traps the fish that enters it, attracted by the food.

– Let’s play a trick on him. Stay here waiting for me and let me go, because it’s too dangerous.

Kuaray dove and went under the water to the place where the *anhã* was fishing, and when a fish was caught by the *pari* trap, he would take the fish out and shake the *pari*, and so the *anhã*, thinking that the trap was full, would quickly pull out the rope, but found nothing. *Kuaray* caught six fish, which he and *Jaxy* took to roast and eat.

Next, *Jaxy* wanted to steal the fish. *Kuaray* didn’t want to let him, but *Jaxy* insisted a lot, and then *Kuaray* recommended that he wait for the fish to get in the *pari* before he handled it. *Jaxy*, wanting to show off to his brother, poke his head in the *pari* to catch the fish with his mouth, ended up getting stuck, and was pulled out by the *anhã* along with the fish.

The *anhã* killed *Jaxy* and took him home to eat. That’s why sometimes there’s an eclipse: that’s when *anhã* eats *Jaxy*, the future Moon.





Kuaray then went to *anhã*'s house pretending to be a visitor, and when he got there, the *anhã* had already cooked *Jaxy* and made a soup, which he was eating.

He invited *Kuaray* for lunch, but *Kuaray* said:

– Not now, because I'm in a hurry and have to get on my way. But if you can offer it to me, I would like to take some of this soup with his skull to eat it later.

The *anhã* gave him the soup; *Kuaray* thanked him and continued walking. On the way, *Kuaray* took the skull, cleaned it all and put the soup inside. With his wisdom about things, he said:

– Get up, brother! – the soup then became a brain and the skull turned back into *Jaxy*.



Kuaray scolded him:

– Have I not told you to be careful?! You didn't listen to me, now see if you can learn!

Walking a little further, **Kuaray** said:

– Now we've already arrived, it's time for you to use your bow. Point it toward the sky and shoot an arrow.

Jaxy stretched out his bow and released the arrow. The arrowhead hit the sky floor and got stuck there. **Kuaray** ordered him to keep shooting, and each arrow hit exactly the fork of the other arrow, one stuck in the other until they reached the earth. **Kuaray** said:

– Leave your bow on the earth, because it will transform in the tree called *amarelinho*, which will be used to make bows and arrows.



So they went up the arrows, and **Kuaray** went on picking them up one by one as he went up. Thus, they reached the sky, where his father was already waiting for them on his throne. He embraced them, complimenting them on the examples they had left for men. Their mission on earth was over, but much still awaited them.

The story continues...

GLOSSARY

ANHÃ - Anhã means, to the Guarani people, an energy of speed, of unbalance and lack of concentration. Some understand it as a bad spirit, or even a “devil”, but in the conception of Guarani philosophy there are the energies of anhã and of mbegueí, the fast and the slow. To understand the dimension of these energies means to understand time and our relationship with our own body and with the space that surrounds us.

MAMANGA – Mamangava, mangangá, a type of bee whose sting hurts a lot.

MEBJU – *Beiju*, a type of pancake made of mashed corn or manioc.

MONDÉ – *Mundéu*, trap placed on the animals’ trackway, which when they pass unlocks the lashing of a heavy log that then falls on them.

PARI – Covo, fish trap, a type of long basket that traps the fish that enters it, attracted by the food.

SMALL GUARANI VOCABULARY

Ankā – Head

Arai – Cloud

Ava – Man

Avati – Corn

Aynka – Ready

Ejapo – To do

Guata – To walk

Guaxu – Big

Guyra – Bird

Guyrapa – Bow

Hu~u – Black

Hu'y – Arrow

Iporã – Beautiful

Ita – Rock

Jaa – To go

Jagua – Dog

Jake – To sleep

Japorai – To sing

Ja'u – To eat

Jeroky – To dance

Kuaama – To know

Kunhã – Woman

Kyryngue or mintã – Child

Mboi – Snake

Mombyry – Far

Nhemongueta – To think

Ōky – Rain

Ōo – House

Paraguaxu – Sea

Pave – All

Pira – Fish

Popo – Butterfly

Pota – To want

Poty – Flower

Pytã – Red

Tata – Fire

Tape – Road

Tĩ – White

Tory – Laugh

Xara'u – To dream

Xivi – Jaguar

Yva – Sky

Yva'a – Fruit

Yvytu – Wind

Ywyrã – Tree

Yxyro – Vine

Yy – Water

Yyankã – River

CARLOS PAPÁ

Carlos Papá Mirim Poty belongs to the Guarani Mbya people. He lives in the village of Rio Silveira and is the guardian of the sacred Guarani words. Over the last few years, Papá has been blowing messages to the world about the importance of valuing and respecting the Nhë'ery, the Atlantic Forest. Through Ayvu Porã, the good and beautiful words, he transmits the philosophy and ancestral memory left by his grandparents. He has been working with audiovisuals for over 20 years, cultivating the memory and history of his people through cultural workshops with young people. He also acts as a spiritual leader in his community, as he is connoisseur of the plants that heal and guide our walk. He is a representative of the Guarani Yvy Rupa Commission and is also the founder and counsellor of the Maracá Institute. There have been countless projects and events in which he has participated and to which he has been invited in recent years, such as: Jogos Mundiais dos Povos Indígenas, in Tocantins, 2015; the cycle of debates Mekukradjá - Círculo de Saberes, at Itaú Cultural; various screenings, exhibitions and film festivals, such as Aldeia SP - Bienal de Cinema Indígena, Festival Tela Indígena, held in Porto Alegre, and Festival de Culturas Indígenas at Memorial da América Latina, in São Paulo. He was the curator of rec.tyty - Festival de Artes Indígenas. He took part as an artist in the Moquéem-Surari exhibition at the São Paulo Museum of Modern Art (MAM-SP) during the 34th São Paulo Biennial, and is a collaborator with Selvagem, cycle of studies on life.

VERÁ KANGUÁ

José Duda is an indigenous Guarani. He lived for many years in the village of Ribeirão Silveira, where he transcribed and translated Guarani songs and stories into Portuguese.

The editorial production work of the Selvagem Notebooks is carried out collectively with the Selvagem community. The editorial coordination is by Mariana Rotili and the design by Isabelle Passos. The editorial coordinator of English translations is Marina Matheus.

All the paintings in this notebook were created by Carlos Papá.

More information at selvagemciclo.com.br

TRANSLATION

ANA LUISA GREIN

I'm a woman, graduated in history and at the end of the master's degree in philosophy. I would like to contribute as much as possible to the expansion of knowledge and visions. I work with translation and revision, as well as GT English Translation classes.

MARGIT LEISNER

Margit Leisner is an artist and independent curator. In 2014 she founded Farol Arte e Ação, an artist-run initiative devoted to the notion of movement (transit between languages, urban mobility, etc.) She participated in residency programs like Capacete in Rio and FLAT Station in Amsterdam. She studied visual arts and performance at the F + F Schule für Kunst und Design in Zürich - Switzerland under the guidance of the artist and researcher Boris Nieslony. She lives in Piraquara, Paraná, Brazil.

REVISION

MARINA MATHEUS

Marina is a dance maker, researching and practicing conversation between dance, literature, anthropology, philosophy and yoga. Born in Petropolis, raised in Santos, living in Joanópolis nowadays. Marina collaborates with the collective Carolina Bianchi Y Cara de Cavalo as a performer and dramaturgist. Alongside Joana Ferraz, the artist coordinates the dance creation platform and publishing house Acampamento. Marina also coordinates the English translation group of the Selvagem study cycle.