

Fledging the great chestnut tree

ÁLVARO FALEIROS

The Song of the chestnut tree

ONE OF the central moments of *Araweté: cannibal gods* is the analysis of the “song of the chestnut tree.” This chant, produced by the Indian Kãñipaye-ro at dawn on December 26, 1982, was used by Viveiros de Castro to illustrate the enunciative-quotational complexity of the shamanistic chants of the Araweté. As stated by Viveiros:

The music of the gods is a vocal solo, but linguistically it is a dialogue or a polyphony, in which several characters appear in different ways. The basic problem lies in knowing who sings, who says what to whom.¹

Besides the girl, adds Viveiros, another soul speaks – that of her dead “father” Yowe’i-do (who, like the “dead brother” is a spirit that lives in another dimension). He appears in verse 17, but will only be named in verse 33. We are therefore faced with a multiplicity of enunciative places uttered by a single voice.

As regards theme and structure, the chant consists of three blocks (see original in Annex I), the chorus of blocks I and II is “Nai dai dai” and has no meaning. The chorus of the second block is “Kadine-kãñi”, the name of a female deity, Canindé-Woman, a blue and yellow macaw that seems to act as the interlocutor or image of the dead girl. Block I introduces the theme:

- (1) “*Por que você empluma a grande castanheira?*”
(Why do you fledge the great chestnut tree?)
- (2) “*Por que os deuses estão emplumando a grande castanheira, Modida-ro?*”
(Why are the gods fledging the great chestnut tree, Modida-ro?)
- (3) “*Por que os deuses solteiros emplumam a face da castanheira?*”
(Why do the single gods fledge the face of the chestnut tree?)
- (4) “*Eis aqui os deuses, a emplumar a face da castanheira, Arariñã-no*”.
(Here are the gods fledging the face of the chestnut tree, Arariñã-no)
- (5) “*Eis aqui os deuses emplumando a grande castanheira*”.
(Here are the gods fledging the great chestnut tree.)

Viveiros explains that all of these sentences are uttered by the dead girl; the “you” in the first verse is a question addressed to a Maî, i.e., a god. The central image is that of the great celestial chestnut tree being decorated with the white plumage of a harpy. The gods are doing it because they are angry with the dead girl and because they burn with desire for her. The desire of the dead for the women of the living is a central aspect of Araweté cannibalism.

Block II is marked by an increase in intensity (see brackets in Annex I, verse 8).

However, in the body of the text Viveiros points out that the chorus which introduces the second block had already been accompanied by an increase in vocal volume and emotional intensity; this block is connected to the descent of the gods to earth.

- (6) “*Eis aqui os deuses emplumando a face da castanheira, ei-los*”.
(Here are the gods fledging the face of the chestnut tree, here they are)
- (7) “*Por que assim fazem os deuses, (Mulher-Canindé), emplumando a grande castanheira?*”.
(Why are the gods doing that (Canindé-Woman), fledging the great chestnut tree?)
- (8) “*Cá estão os deuses, cá estão, (Mulher-Canindé), emplumando a face da castanheira, cá estão, cá estão os deuses*”;
(Here are the gods, here they are, (Canindé-Woman), fledging the face of the chestnut tree, here they are, here are the gods)
- (9) “*Porque deseja sua filha, disse o deus, (Mulher-Canindé), por isso ele disse: vamos emplumar a grande castanheira*”.
(Because he wants your daughter, said the god (Canindé-Woman), is why he said: Let us fledge the great chestnut tree)
- (10) “*Foi isso que disse o deus, (Mulher-Canindé), as pessoas não comeram a coisa, disse o deus*”.
(That is what the god said (Canindé-Woman), people did not eat the thing, said the god)
- (11) “*Por que fazem assim os deuses, (Mulher-Canindé), por que disseram: vamos emplumar a castanheira?*”.
(Why do the gods do that (Canindé-Woman), why have they said: Let us fledge the chestnut tree?)
- (12) “*Eis aqui, veja deuses emplumando a face da grande castanheira, Modida-ro*”.
(Here they are, look at the gods fledging the face of the great chestnut tree, Modida-ro)
- (13) “*Acenda meu charuto jogado fora, disse o deus*”.
(Light my discarded cigar, said the god)
- (14) “*Eis aqui os deuses a emplumar a face da castanheira, veja, Arariñã-no*”.
(Here are the gods fledging the face of the chestnut tree, look, Arariñã-no)
- (15) “*Eis aqui os deuses emplumando a grande castanheira, ei-los*”.
(Here are the gods fledging the great chestnut tree, here they are)
- (16) “*Eis o que os deuses disseram, (Mulher-Canindé), vamos emplumar a grande castanheira, eles se entredisseram*”.
(This is what the gods said, (Canindé-Woman), let us fledge the great chestnut tree, they said to one another)
- (17) “*Porque desejam nossa filhinha, por isso os deuses disseram: vamos emplumar a grande castanheira*”.

(Because they want our little girl, that is why the gods said: Let us fledge the great chestnut tree)

(18) “*Por que fazem assim os deuses, (Mulher-Canindé), emplumando a face da castanheira?*”.

(Why are the gods doing that (Canindé-Woman), fledging the face of the chestnut tree?)

The enunciative complexity of the second block is much greater. Verses 6 to 8 are accompanied by the beat of the shaman’s feet, used to indicate the presence on earth of the one who is singing, but the dead girl prevails as the enunciative place as far as verse 9. Indeed, it is she who continues to enunciate through verse 16, but with some interpolations. Verse 10 refers to the “thing”, which is the turtle (at the time when the tribe was preparing for the turtle hunting season); thus serving as the general message to the village. In verse 13 the girl suggests to the father that he should offer his cigar to Maî, precisely when the shaman’s cigar went out and, on earth, the shaman asks his wife to light it. The evocation of the cigar therefore had a function other than pure evocation of heaven.

It is verse 17 that brings into play another enunciator. As Viveiros de Castro explains, “he who says the gods said they want *our* little girl can be neither the girl nor the gods”.³ It is Yowe’i-do, who is the girl’s dead “father”, because at the celestial level an entire network of spiritual kinship, different from and complementary to terrestrial kinships is built. But only in verse 33 we will know that it is Yowe’i-do. Verse 18, which closes the second block, passes the word back to the girl.

The third block is resumed with the initial chorus and the usual questions from the girl to the god.

(19) “*Por que você empluma a face da castanheira, de manhã?*”.

(Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree in the morning?)

(20) “*Por que você empluma a face da castanheira?*”; “*Acenda meu charuto abandonado, disse o deus*”.

(Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree? Light my abandoned cigar, said the god).

(21) “*Por que você empluma a face da castanheira?*”; “*Por desejar nossa filhinha, disse o deus a si mesmo, Arariñã-no*”.

(Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree? Because he wants our little girl, said the god to himself, Arariñã-no).

(22) “*Por que os deuses ficam assim, a errar suas flechas nos tucanos grandes?*”.

(Why are the gods like that, missing their arrows in the big toucans?)

(23) “*Por que você empluma a face da castanheira, deus?*”; “*Ande, ponha-passe sua filha para mim, disse o deus*”.

(Why do you fledge the face the chestnut tree, god?; Go ahead, give me-pass me your daughter, said the god).

(24) “*Por sua causa, realmente, se emplumam as castanheiras, (Refrão), não fui servido-oferecido de coisa nenhuma, disse o deus*”.

(Because of you, really, the chestnut trees are fledged (Chorus), I

- have not been served-offered anything, said the god).
- (25) “*Por que os deuses solteiros emplumam assim a face das castanheiras, Modida-ro?*”.
(Why do the single gods fledge the face of the chestnut tree like that, Modida-ro?).
- (26) “*Por que os deuses emplumam assim a face da castanheira?*” “*Vou devorar o finado Kãñipaye-ro, disse o deus*”.
(Why do the gods fledge the face of the chestnut tree like that? I will devour the late Kãñipaye-ro, said the god).
- (27) “*Assim o deus me levará, para cozinhar-me em sua panela de pedra*”.
(So the god will take me, to cook me in his stone pot).
- (28) “*Comeremos seu finado pai, os deuses disseram repetidamente*”; “*Vão cozinhar-me em sua panela de pedra, disseram os deuses*”.
(We will eat your late father, the gods said repeatedly;
- (29) “They will cook me in their stone pot, said the gods).
“*Enfim, mais uma vez os deuses vão-me devorar do outro lado do céu, é o que disseram*”.
(Finally, once again the gods will devour me on the other side of the sky, is what they said).
- (30) “*Pergunte-peça à sua filhinha, disse o deus, (Refrão), para nós dois irmos flechar os tucanos grandes, disse o deus*”.
(Ask-request your daughter, said the god, (Chorus), for both of us to go shoot an arrow at the big toucans, said the god).
- (31) “*Por que você unta (com urucum) a face da castanheira?*”.
(Why do you anoint (with annatto) the face of the chestnut tree?)
- (32) “*Cá estão os deuses untando, untando completamente a face da castanheira*”.
(Here are the gods anointing, completely anointing the face of the chestnut tree).
- (33) “*Por que os deuses acendem-iluminam assim a face da castanheira, Yowe’i-do?; Ande, passe sua filhinha para mim*”.
(Why the gods light up-brighten like that the face of the chestnut tree, Yowe’i-do?; Hurry, pass me your daughter).
- (34) “*Eeeeh! um comedor-de-pequenos-jabotis espantou os grandes moneme, disseram os deuses*”; (Refrão); “*Nossa futura comida fez debandarem as grandes juritis, disseram os deuses*”.
(Eeeeh! A small-turtle-eater scared the big *moneme* away, said the gods; (Chorus); Our future food scared the big doves away, said the gods).
- (35) “*A plumagem das grandes araras-canindé-eternas, moneme, disseram os deuses; ande, vamos flechar os grandes tucanos*”.
(The plumage of the big eternal-canindé-macaws, *moneme*, said the gods; come on, let us shoot an arrow at the big toucans).

- (36) “Eeeeh! quanto àquilo de ‘passar a filha pra mim’, que disseram os deuses; para mim os deuses (desnecessariamente) disseram (tal coisa)”.
(Eeeeh! About that ‘pass me the daughter’ thing, which the gods said; to me the gods (unnecessarily) said (such a thing)).
- (37) “Nada me foi oferecido, ande, (dê) pequenos jabotis para mim, disse o deus”.
(Nothing was offered to me, hurry, (give) me small turtles, said the god).
- (38) “Por que você empluma a face da castanheira?”
(Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree?)
- (39) “Eeeeh! Nossa futura comida fez debandarem as grandes juritis”.
(Eeeeh! Our future food scared the big doves away).
- (40) “Por que você empluma a grande (árvore) iciri’i?”
(Why do you fledge the great (tree) iciri’i?)
- (41) “Por vontade de levar a mulher para caçar, o deus empluma a face da castanheira”.
(Because he wants to take the woman hunting, the god fledges the face of the chestnut tree).
- (42) “Por que você unta (de urucum) a face da grande iciri’i?”
(Why do you anoint (with annatto) the face of great iciri’_i?)
- (43) “Por que os deuses acabam com meu tabaco?”
(Why do the gods use up my tobacco?)
- (44) “Nossa terra (solo) é fragrante, disse o deus, (Refrão), assim que tiver untado a grande iciri’i perfumar-nos-emos um ao outro (com a resina da árvore), disse o deus”.
(Our land (soil) is fragrant, said the god, (Chorus), as soon as we have anointed the great _iciri’i we will scent each other (with the tree resin), said the god).
- (45) “Por que os deuses emplumam a face da castanheira?”
(Why do the gods fledge the face of the chestnut tree?)

In this, which is the longest of the blocks, the enunciative system remains overlapped. The girl takes the enunciation place from verse 19 halfway through verse 21, when Yowe’i-do, the girl’s dead “father” (or “spiritual” father) once again intervenes. She goes back to enunciating halfway through verse 23, when there is a direct order from the gods for the girl to be delivered to them. The first half of verse 24 brings the word of the gods directly. In verse 25 the girl goes back to talking to grandfather Modida-ro and, in the next verse, it is through her that the shaman declares himself “dead”. This self-declaration is, according to Viveiros de Castro, the highlight of the chant, the moment that fosters greater excitement in the audience: not by chance, in the transcript of the chant (see Annex 1), in verses 26 to 29 we see the indication of “strong”. This is the moment when the double cannibalistic act that organizes the Araweté culture is enunciated: the shaman enunciates that, once dead, he will be devoured by the

gods, a condition for him to become a kinsman, and the gods enunciate their desire to (sexually) eat the girl; a symbolic exchange of goods and women at the celestial level, which is the social function of the shaman. Verse 30 brings precisely the request which, if accepted, will ensure the shaman's entry in heaven.

Verses 31 and 32 mark the return of the girl as enunciator, but in verse 33 Yowe'ido questions the girl's dead "father" ("spiritual" father) for the third time. In these verses there is also the introduction of the olfactive theme and a curious anthropomorphization of the chestnut tree, which starts to be anointed with annatto. Verses 34 and 35 are an interesting quote of the speech of the gods in the girl's voice, the "small-turtle-eaters" are the men who enter the celestial sphere and are then referred to as "future food", a classic motif of Tupi-Guarani cannibalism. Verse 36, as explains Viveiros de Castro:

[...] brings back the shaman as a subject, and is decisive in the plot. Kãñipaye-ro, quoting the gods' words, asking for his daughter, says (to no one in particular) that such a request is unnecessary. The disallowance of the audience was this: Kãñipaye-ro said to the Maí, "You can take Kãñipaye, she is not mine, she is yours, I did not come here to get her back ...". The verse itself is a kind of elliptical summary of what had happened in heaven, and not exactly a dialogue between the shaman and the Maí.

Verse 37 is an arrogant request from the gods, who are yearning to eat turtles. The final part of the chant is dominated by the girl's voice, she utters verses 38 to 40, verse 42 and the two final verses; the gods speak through her. The shaman utters verse 41, in which he says in general terms that the gods fledge the chestnut tree because they want to take the women, and not just the little girl, hunting, i.e., to have sex, and verse 43, in which he mentions there is no more tobacco, which marks the end of the inspiration and of the chant itself.

Palavras canibais (Cannibal words)

"*Palavras canibais*"⁴ is the name of Antonio Risério's essay dedicated to Viveiros de Castro's book. Included in his important collection of texts on African- Amerindian poetry, Risério's reflection seems to be the first incorporation of Viveiros de Castro's work into the world of literature. Originally published in the *USP Journal* in 1992, the article attempts to resume the center of the arguments contained in Viveiros de Castro's thesis, noting at the outset that "the Araweté imaginary proliferates in the words and in the chant".⁵ Let us just remember, with Viveiros de Castro, that the spirits, known as *Maí*, "are first and foremost music: *marakã*. They are not just singers, but sung".⁶

Risério then resumes the typology of Araweté chants, highlighting the distinction between war chants, also called "chants of the enemy", and shamanistic chants. As the good anthropologist that he is, Risério describes the functions of both chants in society and their usage contexts to, at the end, focus precisely on the "Song of the Chestnut Tree." Risério highlights "the constant movement of the enunciators and the quotational game". He also notes that it is "impossible to follow these ver-

bal movements without a deep knowledge of the code.” Only an Araweté is able to discern, with a “minimal level of ambiguity”, the “regime of voices”.⁷

Before presenting his retranslation of the chant (which we reproduce in Annex 2), Risério leans on one of the most delicate aspects of Amerindian chants: their performativity. Risério highlights, at this point, an important difference between his and Viveiros de Castro’s views:

What matters is that a text like the Song of the Chestnut Tree imposes itself upon the reader. Poetically. And here I have to disagree with Viveiros. By showing a picture of contrasts between the great Araweté textual genres, he makes an untenable distinction: the Mai marakã text [shamanistic chant] would be governed by the referential function of language, while in the awi marakã [war chant] the poetic function would prevail. *Non è vero*. At least with respect to the Song of the Chestnut Tree, the supremacy of the poetic function is indisputable.⁸

Risério’s argument is intended to enhance the “poetic quality” of the chant, placing it within a legitimized space of that which has aesthetic value. Risério means well, in the sense of broadening the spectrum of that which makes up the space of Brazilian Indigenous poetry. He also highlights the fact that “the regency of the poetic function, while implying a concentration of the message in itself by promoting the ‘palpable character of the signs’ does not lead to a suppression of the contextual dimension”.⁹ The issue is that the consequences of his semiotic-textual posture produce, in my view, a discursively opaque translation.

Viveiros de Castro in *Araweté: os deuses canibais* presents the “Song of the Chestnut Trees” in two ways: first he presents a transcription of the chant in Araweté, accompanied by some performative indications, which are important indicators of the context in which the chant occurs; the second presentation of the chant is a very literal translation (at least that is how he introduces it), in which each block of texts has its verses numbered and is commented separately, verse by verse. That is the form that we take as a model for the presentation of the chant at the beginning of this essay. In both cases the chant is contextualized, explained and translated for the reader.

Risério, to some extent, adopts a similar posture by presenting his translation of the “Song of the Chestnut Tree” only at the end of his long essay, in which he provides a very detailed synthesis of the functions of the chant in Araweté society and of the chant itself, highlighting also its main enunciative shifts. However, his translation presented at the end emerges as an autonomous text; but the reading of his “Song of the Chestnut Tree” is much too opaque, since the enunciative complexity of the text and the symbolism of the images are neutralized: a reader unaware that the regime of the Araweté enunciative-quotational regime will not be able to understand that there are voices intertwined in the shaman’s discourse; a reader who is not at least minimally familiar with Araweté metaphors will not know that “shooting an arrow at toucans” means

having sex. Another gray area is that of foreignizing lexical choices (Maî, Modidaro, Kadîne-kanhí...), which in Risério's translation are unmediated.

Translation and shamanism

Here we start the central point of the discussion. Viveiros de Castro, upon reflecting on the translation, points out that to him:

[...] translating is always betraying, as the Italian saying goes. However, a good translation - and here I am paraphrasing Walter Benjamin (or Rudolf Pannwitz through Benjamin) - is that which betrays the target language, not the source language. A good translation is one that allows the alien concepts to deform and subvert the translator's conceptual toolbox so that the intention of the original language can be expressed within the new one.¹⁰

Risério's translation would apparently correspond to that proposed by Viveiros de Castro, as it causes in the reader, in fact, an estrangement that some might mistake for "conceptual deformation". The strangeness, however, does not go as far as causing, I believe, any deformation or subversion of conceptual tools: Risério operates fully within the textual logic of Western poetics as regards textual organization; the "poem form" is recognizable, codifiable. The strangeness is therefore superficial, as it is restricted to the lexicon and, at this level, becomes pure opacity. Thus, the very poetic value of his poetic translation is compromised, as it depends on a whole ethnographic apparatus external to the text. The poetic function that he wanted to put in the foreground has become hostage to referentiality. This paradox is due to the *modus operandi* of the shamanistic chant; going back to Viveiros de Castro:

A shaman almost never changes the tone or pitch to indicate that the subject of the enunciation of the sentences sung has changed; part of this information depends on the internal context, part on the external context, and part on a metalinguistic procedure: the quotational embedment by the apposition formulas such as "so said x".¹¹

Indeed, the translation of Amerindian poetry is extremely complex. As pointed out by Cláudia Neiva Matos,¹² "translation involves barriers of all sorts," chief among which are: the absence of a true poetic collection within the reach of our understanding; the huge gap between our culture and Indigenous culture, which produces an intertextual and contextual void; an ontological difficulty of the West in dealing with the sphere of the sacred Amerindian world and their fear of trivialization of and disrespect for their his spiritual universe; linguistic ignorance itself; deletion of performance, which is the vital core of the form, even poetic form, which vanishes in the written word; difficulty to reproduce rhythms, sound expressiveness and metaphoric associations, because it is poetry.

Many of these barriers are the very space of translation production and all of them are the space in which the translator moves. The construction of the

poetic collection is a gradual gesture, to which every translation and retranslation project contributes. The distances between cultures, which are linked to ontological difficulties, have been discussed by anthropologists; respect is key, such as avoiding simplistic stances, but misunderstanding is also inevitable and basic,¹³ it comes close to the concept of “difference” as understood by Eni Orlando, in its relation to the paraphrase, as the author says:

In the difference, one is different from the other. They are at the same distance, and it is on the movement between one to the other that we can grasp their relations. One is not the model and the other the copy. This is neither about considering a first and a second (hierarchically and regularly), nor about two equal and clearly separated from each other, in each other. The game of paraphrases is what determines the (relative) distances of the meanings in the relationship of different discursive formations. Through the paraphrases, meanings (and subjects) come close and stand back. They are mixed up and distinguished. That is what one sees if, instead of taking (in the production of the meaning) the subject centered in himself, one thinks of the game of relations between different discursive formations.¹⁴

Translating an Amerindian chant for the impervious space of a page can only be done if the translation is understood as a paraphrase, whose meaning occurs in the shift from one to the other. This shift, I believe, can propose precisely a “game of relations between different discursive formations.” In this case, going back to Claudia Neiva Matos’ concerns, a discursive form that considers the ontologies and somehow establishes a relationship between the symbolic universes and the ways of building meaning of what differs. This way of understanding translation comes close to shamanism. According to Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, the shaman is a translator and in his translation work:

What is (re)constructed is an original synthesis, a new way of relating levels, codes, of putting them in resonance, in correspondence, so that this new world gains the desired consistency in order to become evident [...]. In short, to acquire a meaning, because the meaning is, ultimately, the perception of relations, a “network of associations that refer to each other, similar to a dictionary or to a relational database”.¹⁵

Back to Carneiro da Cunha, “translation is not only the task of arranging, of saving the new in old drawers; it is rearranging more than arranging”.¹⁶ Rearranging implies “giving consistency”, and giving consistency is getting the “new world” to acquire meaning; and for this new world to acquire meaning, it is necessary “to perceive relationships.” With this in mind I propose, below, a retranslation of the “Song of the Chestnut Tree” that seeks to stage, within the space of the page, the enunciative and performative complexity of the shamanistic chant. I say “stage within the space of the page” because at least since Mallarmé some awareness has been produced and the possibility of a scenic performativity in writing has been explored, to which, for example, the blanks and graphic types are

significant. These rewriting experiences are not new, there are important studies in ethno-poetics that have proposed, since the mid-twentieth century, a series of written forms of the so-called oral cultures;¹⁷ however, they have not gotten to the point of becoming a direct source of inspiration for this essay.

In the specific case of this rewriting, I have chosen to adopt, first, a procedure found in Viveiros de Castro's transcript: parentheses with "performative notes". Inspired by those of the anthropologist, some of which I have reproduced verbatim, I created some others to produce context. Besides the "performative notes" I have included in the text, also as typographical distinction, two other types of notes: some brief poetic comments on the symbolic universe involved therein, to make some central metaphors less obscure (like some indications of what is implicit in the metaphors "act of fledging" and "go hunt toucans"); and a few other comments to highlight the main enunciative movements of the text, since the codes of that enunciative regime are totally unknown to the uninitiated reader. There is also the inclusion of some "epithets" in the body of the text itself, explaining the degree of kinship of the characters, but developed in a way that they dialogue with the way of building meaning of Araweté cosmology. These insertions enable perceiving relationships, such as between "hunting toucans" and "having sex", which does not mean that the meaning of "making sex" is revealed, but a network of relationships is open; therein lies the act of translating.

The poetic dimension of the text has also been considered: parallelisms, repetitions, sounds, including with the expansion of the chorus whenever it appears in the chant. The reorganization of the text into different blocks, interspersed with blank lines or parentheses is not incompatible with the shamanic performance, which is also dynamic, sometimes more concentrated, others more intense and inhabited by silences. Once again, the pace of the text is not the same – neither can it be nor will it ever be – but the rearrangement can explain not the new world, but that it is about another world. Translation understood as such is like a shamanistic discourse, "a theatrical play of quotations, reflections of reflections, echoes of echoes – an endless polyphony where the speaker is always the other, he speaks of what the Other speaks. The Other's word can only be understood in its reflections".¹⁸

Thus, the proposed rewriting that follows, far from being definitive is a mere fractal produced within a poetics of motion revised in the light of Amerindian perspectivism. Remember that in his book *Significância e movência na poesia trovadoresca*, Celso Cunha points out the importance of the concept of motion for understanding the medieval text. Cunha, upon reflecting on "motion", notes that "this permanent making-up of the medieval work would naturally increase in troubadour poetry, widespread in the form of song, with different performances in which additions, trivializations, would grow from achievement to achievement".¹⁹

Viveiros de Castro in turn, in his essay "*Perspectivismo e multiculturalismo na América indígena*" points to the "highly transformational world proposed by

Amazonian cultures.” Motion, transformation, the rearrangement that follows, as it does not complete the text but merely opens, updates, mediates and multiplies it.

The Song of the Great Celestial Chestnut Tree, by Kãñipaye-ro Araweté
[Dawn of December 26, 1982, Kãñipaye-ro comes out of his tent and begins to chant. I am Kãñipaye, the dead daughter of Kãñipaye-ro, now listen to my chant, listen, for I now speak here through my father’s voice...]

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Por que você, espírito, empluma a grande castanheira celeste?

Por que os espíritos agora emplumam essa grande castanheira?

Diga-me, Modida-ro, você espírito-avô que habita o outro lado do céu.

Por que os espíritos solteiros emplumam a face da grande castanheira?

Vejo aqui os espíritos emplumando a face da grande castanheira,

Arariñã-no”, espírito-irmão do meu pai que habita o outro lado do céu.

Vejo aqui os espíritos emplumando essa grande castanheira.

(Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Why do you, spirit, fledge the great celestial chestnut tree?

Why do the spirits now fledge this great chestnut tree?

Tell me, Modida-ro, you, grandfather-spirit that inhabits the other side of the sky.

Why do the single spirits fledge the face of the great chestnut tree?

I see here the spirits fledging the face of the great chestnut tree,

Arariñã-no, brother-spirit of my father that inhabits the other side of the sky.

I see here the spirits fledging this great chestnut tree.)

[Plumagem branca de harpia, plumagem branca de harpia, cobre a grande castanheira, assim fazem os espíritos porque irados com a morta; por ela ardem de desejo; descem então à terra.]

[White harpy plumage, white harpy plumage, covering the great chestnut tree, so do the spirits because they are angry at the dead girl; they burn with desire for her; then they descend to earth.]

[beginning of the second chorus. Increased vocal volume and emotional intensity]

Kadine-kãñi [Arara azul-amarela, espírito-Mulher-Canindé] Kadine-kãñi

[Arara azul-amarela, espírito-Mulher-Canindé]

Kadine-kãñi [Arara azul-amarela, espírito-Mulher-Canindé]

Kadine-kãñi [Blue-yellow Macaw, Canindé-Woman-spirit] Kadine-kãñi
[Blue-yellow Macaw, Canindé-Woman-spirit] Kadine-kãñi [Blue-yellow
Macaw, Canindé-Woman-spirit]

[Kãñipaye-ro entoa mais forte e alto, bate o pé repetidamente]

[Kãñipaye-ro sings stronger and louder, stomping his feet repeatedly]

Kadine-kãñi... Os espíritos estão aqui

*Kadine-kãñi... Emplumando a face da castanheira. Kadine-kãñi... Por
que os espíritos fazem assim? Kadine-kãñi... Emplumando a grande cas-
tanheira. Kadine-kãñi... Os espíritos estão aqui, estão aqui. Kadine-kãñi...
Emplumando a face da castanheira. Kadine-kãñi... Os espíritos estão aqui, estão aqui.*

(Kadine-kãñi... The spirits are here

Kadine-kãñi... Fledging the face of the chestnut tree.

Kadine-kãñi... Why do the spirits do that?

Kadine-kãñi... Fledging the large chestnut tree.

Kadine-kãñi... The spirits are here, they are here.

Kadine-kãñi... Fledging the face of the chestnut tree.

Kadine-kãñi... The spirits are here, they are here.)

[Kãñipaye-ro já não bate o pé]

[Kãñipaye-ro no longer stomps his feet]

Kadine-kãñi... Porque deseja sua filha, por isso o espírito falou.

Kadine-kãñi... Vamos emplumar a castanheira, foi isso que o espírito disse.

Kadine-kãñi... A gente não comeu jaboti,²⁰ o espírito disse assim.

Kadine-kãñi... Por que os espíritos fazem assim?

Vamos emplumar a castanheira, por que disseram assim?

*Veja aqui os espíritos emplumando a face da grande castanheira, Modida-ro,
você espírito-avô que habita o outro lado do céu.*

*Veja aqui os espíritos emplumando a face da grande castanheira,
Arariñã-no”, espírito-irmão do meu pai que habita o outro lado do céu.
Acenda meu charuto abandonado, disse o espírito.*

[e a esposa do xamã acende seu charuto.]

Aqui os espíritos agora emplumam a grande castanheira, ei-los.

[Movimentos de chocalho sobre o peito da esposa.]

*Kadine-kãñi... É isso o que os espíritos disseram:
Vamos emplumar a grande castanheira, eles se entredisseram.*

(Kadine-kãñi... Because he wants your daughter, that is why the spirit spoke.
Kadine-kãñi... Let us fledge the chestnut tree, that is what the spirit said.
Kadine-kãñi... We have not eaten turtle, the spirit said so.
Kadine-kãñi... Why do the spirits do that?
Let us fledge the chestnut tree, because they said so?
See here the spirits fledging the face of the great chestnut tree,
Modida-ro, you, grandfather-spirit that inhabits the other side of the sky.
See here the spirits fledging the face of the great chestnut tree,
Arañã-no”, brother-spirit of my father that inhabits the other side of the sky.
Light my abandoned cigar, said the spirit.
[and the shaman’s wife lights his cigar.]
Here are the spirits now fledging the large chestnut tree, here they are.
[Rattling movements on the wife’s chest.]
Kadine-kãñi... That is what the spirits said:
Let us fledge the great chestnut tree, they said to one another.)

*Porque desejam nossa filhinha,
Por isso os espíritos disseram: vamos emplumar a grande castanheira.
[Fala Yowe’i-do, espírito-pai da menina morta]*

(Because they want our little girl,
That is why the spirits said: let us fledge the great chestnut tree.
[Says Yowe’i-do, father-spirit of the dead girl])

*Kadine-kãñi... Por que os espíritos fazem assim,
Emplumando a face da castanheira?
[retoma a palavra na voz do pai, Kãñipaye, a menina morta]*

(Kadine-kãñi... Why do the spirits do that,
Fledging the face of the chestnut tree?
[the dead girl speaks again in the voice of the father, Kãñipaye])

[Longa pausa... Silêncio... Kãñipaye-ro agachado fuma. Ouvem-se as batidas cadenciadas de seu chocalho; quando repete o refrão inicial...]

([Long pause ... Silence ... Kãñipaye-ro crouching, smokes. The rhythmic beats of his rattle are heard; when the initial chorus repeats...])

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Por que você, espírito, empluma pela manhã a face da castanheira?

Por que você, espírito, empluma a face da castanheira? Acenda meu charuto abandonado, disse o espírito.

Por que você empluma a face da castanheira?

(Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Why do you, spirit, fledge the face of the chestnut tree in the morning?

Why do you, spirit, fledge the face of the chestnut tree?

Light my abandoned cigar, said the spirit.

Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree?)

[responde Yowe'i-do, espírito-pai da menina morta...]

Por desejar nossa filhinha, disse o espírito a si mesmo,

Arariñã-no", espírito-irmão do meu pai que habita o outro lado do céu.

([replies Yowe'i-do, father-spirit of the dead girl ...])

Because he wants our little girl, said the spirit to himself,

Arariñã-no", brother-spirit of my father that inhabits the other side of the sky.)

[volta Kãñipaye, a menina morta...]

Por que os espíritos ficam assim, a errar suas flechas nos tucanos grandes? Por que você, espírito, empluma a face da castanheira?

([Kãñipaye, the dead girl, returns...])

Why are the spirits like that, shooting their arrows at the big toucans?

Why do you, spirit, fledge the face of the chestnut tree?)

Ande, disse o espírito, passe sua filha para mim.

[e agora falam os espíritos assim...]

Por sua causa, realmente, se emplumam as castanheiras, Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Ande, disse o espírito, não me serviram o jabuti.

[Volta Kãñipaye, a menina morta]

Por que os espíritos solteiros emplumam assim a face das castanheiras?, Diga Modida-ro, você espírito-avô que habita o outro lado do céu.

Por que os espíritos emplumam assim a face da castanheira?

(Hurry, said the spirit, pass me your daughter.

[and now so say the spirits ...]

Because of you, really, the chestnut trees are fledged,

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai ...

Burry, said the spirit, I was not served the turtle.

[Kãñipaye, the dead girl, returns]

Why do the single spirits fledge like that the face of the chestnut tree?,

Say it, Modida-ro, you, grandfather-spirit who inhabits the other side of the sky.

Why do the spirits fledge like that the face of the chestnut tree?)

[De novo fala o espírito...] Vou devorar o finado Kãñipaye-ro.

([The spirit speaks again ...] I will devour the late Kãñipaye-ro.)

[Ponto alto, aumento considerável de intensidade; voz mais grave, entoação macabra; entusiasmo da audiência...]

([Highlight, considerable increase in intensity; deeper voice, macabre intonation; excitement in the audience ...])

Assim o espírito me levará, para cozinhar-me em sua panela de pedra. Comeremos seu finado pai, os espíritos disseram repetidamente.

Vão cozinhar-me em sua panela de pedra, disseram repetidamente.

Vão me devorar, é o que disseram, do outro lado do céu.

[É ele mesmo Kãñipaye-ro quem fala] Peça à sua filhinha, disse o espírito,

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Para nós dois irmos, disse o espírito, flechar os tucanos grandes.

(So the spirit will take me, to cook me in his stone pot.

We will eat your late father, said the spirits repeatedly.

They will cook me in their stone pot, said they repeatedly.
They will devour me, that is what they said, on the other side of the sky.
[It is Kāñipaye-ro himself who speaks]
Ask your daughter, said the spirit,
Nai dai dai
Nai dai dai
Nai dai dai ...
For the two of us go, said the spirit, shoot an arrow at the big toucans.)

[ir flechar tucanos, ir pro mato fazer sexo; o espírito te deseja menina, se fores, teu pai, Kāñipaye-ro, quando morrer, poderá ser devorado pelos espíritos, tornar-se um afim]

([go shoot an arrow at toucans, go into the woods to have sex; the spirit wants you, girl, if you go, when your father, Kāñipaye-ro dies, he could be devoured by the spirits, become a kinsman])

Por que você, espírito, unta de urucum a face da castanheira?

[volta a dizer Kāñipaye, a menina morta]

Aqui estão os espíritos untando, untando toda a face da castanheira.

(Why do you, spirit, anoint with annatto the face of the chestnut tree?)

[says again Kāñipaye, the dead girl]

Here are the spirits anointing, anointing, the entire face of the chestnut tree.)

[Kāñipaye-ro bate aqui o pé no chão, bate o chocalho sobre a esposa]

([Kāñipaye-ro stomps his feet, swings the rattle over his wife])

Por que os espíritos assim fulguram a face da castanheira?

Diga Yowe'i-do, espírito-meu-pai que habita o outro lado do céu? Ande, passe sua filhinha para mim.

(Why do the spirits lighten like that the face of the chestnut tree?)

Say it, Yowe'i-do, my-father-spirit that inhabits the other side of the sky?

Hurry, pass me your little girl.)

[No patamar celeste, um homem – Kāñipaye-ro – se aproxima, os espíritos o chamam de comedor-de-pequenos-jabotis...]

([At the celestial level a man - Kāñipaye-ro - approaches, the spirits call him small-turtle-eater ...])

Eeeeh!

Um comedor-de-pequenos-jabotis, disseram os espíritos, afugentou as cotingas. Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Nossa futura comida, disseram os espíritos, afugentou as grandes juritis.

A plumagem das grandes araras-canindé-eternas, as grandes cotingas, Disseram os espíritos, ande, vamos flechar os grandes tucanos.

(Eeeeh!

A small-turtle-eater, said the spirits, scared the big doves away.

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai ...

Our future food, said the spirits, scared the big doves away.

The plumage of the great eternal eternal-canindé-macaws, the big doves,

Said the spirits, hurry, let us go shoot an arrow at the big toucans.)

[Kãñipaye-ro sintetiza o diálogo ocorrido do outro lado do céu...]

Quanto àquilo de os espíritos pedirem a filha, não precisavam pedir.

([Kãñipaye-ro synthesizes the dialogue occurred on the other side of the sky...])

As for the spirits asking for the daughter, they did didn't have to ask.)

Nada me foi oferecido, ande, disse o espírito, me passe os pequenos jabotis.

(Nothing was been offered to me, hurry, said the spirit, pass me the little turtles.)

[O canto vai se concluindo, alternam-se a menina e o xamã...]

([The chant comes to an end, the girl and the shaman take turns...])

Por que você empluma a face da castanheira?

Eeeeh! Nossa futura comida afugentou as grandes juritis.

Por que você empluma a grande árvore cheirosa iciri'i?

(Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree?

Eeeeh ! Our future food scared away the big doves.

Why do you fledge the great fragrant iciri'i tree?)

Por vontade de levar a mulher para caçar,

O espírito empluma a face da castanheira.

(Because he wants to take the woman hunting,

The spirit fledges the face of the chestnut tree.)

Por que você unta de urucum a face da grande iciri'i?

Por que os espíritos acabam com meu tabaco?

(Why do the spirits use up my tobacco?)

Nosso chão é cheiroso, disse o espírito.

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Assim que untar a grande iciri'i, disse o espírito, Vamos nos perfumar um ao outro com sua resina.

Por que os espíritos emplumam a face da castanheira?

(Our ground smells good, said the spirit.

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai ...

As soon as we anoint the great iciri'I, said the spirit,

Let us scent each other with its resin.

Why do the spirits fledge the face of the chestnut tree?)

[A partir do último verso, a voz vai morrendo aos poucos, repetindo o refrão...]

([From the last verse on, the voice gradually dyes, repeating the chorus ...])

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai

Nai dai dai...

Notes

- 1 Viveiros de Castro, *Araweté: os deuses canibais*, p.548.
- 2 The explanation which we reproduce below is a simplified paraphrase of Viveiros's analysis contained in *Araweté: os deuses canibais*, p.553-65.
- 3 Viveiros de Castro, *Araweté: os deuses canibais*, p.556.
- 4 In: Risério, *Textos e tribos*, p.149-81.
- 5 Risério, *Textos e tribos*, p.153.
- 6 Viveiros de Castro, *Araweté: os deuses canibais*, p.231.
- 7 Risério, *Textos e tribos*, p.174-5.
- 8 Risério, *Textos e tribos*, p.177.
- 9 Risério, *Textos e tribos*, p.178.
- 10 Viveiros de Castro, *Perspectival Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Equivocation*, p.5.
- 11 Viveiros de Castro, *Araweté: os deuses canibais*, p.548.

- 12 Matos, “A tradução de cantos indígenas”, p.173-208.
- 13 Cf. Viveiros de Castro, “Perspectival Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Equivocation”.
- 14 Orlandi, *Terra à vista*, p.48.
- 15 Carneiro da Cunha, “Pontos de vista sobre a floresta amazônica: xamanismo e tradução”, p.14.
- 16 Carneiro da Cunha, “Pontos de vista sobre a floresta amazônica: xamanismo e tradução”, p.12-13.
- 17 Highlights in this field include, among others, the works by Richard Bauman, Dell Hymes, Dennis Tedlock and Jerome Rothenberg.
- 18 Viveiros de Castro, *Araweté: os deuses canibais* (Jorge Zahar, 1986), p.570.
- 19 Cunha, *Significância e movência na poesia trovadoresca*, p.36.
- 20 Message to the village: the collective turtle-hunting season was beginning.
- ^{TN} The free translation of the poem has the sole purpose of helping the reader capture the idea of the source text.

Annex 1 – Transcription of the chant by Viveiros de Castro (reproduction)

SONG OF THE CHESTNUT TREE

BLOCK I - Initial and final chorus in the form of “Nai dai dai”

- (1) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'ĩ ohō rarawōñĩ ye?*
- (2) *Marĩ mō pa Maľ ia'ĩ ohō rarawōñĩ-wōñĩ tka ye Modida-ro?*
- (3) *Marĩ mō na ha Maľ ytyehā-we ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ ye?*
- (4) *Ka Maľ reka ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ neka ye, Ararĩñā-no*
- (5) *Ka Maľ reka ia'ĩ ohō rarawōñĩ-wōñĩ*

BLOCK II - Initial and final chorus in the form of Kadini-kāñi

- (6) *Ka Maľ reka ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ neka*
- (7) *Marĩ mō na ha Maľ reka, Kadľne-kāñĩ, ia'ĩ ohō rarawōñĩ-wōñĩ?*
- (8) (Forte, alto) *Maľ reka reka, Kadľne-kāñĩ, ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ, ka Maľ reka reka (bate o pê repetidamente)*
- (9) *Ne raiyi pťtā-mō ye Maľ pťe, Kadľne-kāñĩ, ia'ĩ ohō čawōñĩ mľ*
- (10) *Da kť Maľ reka pťe, Kadľne-kāñĩ, dohā-nā kť wĩ me'e i kť Maľ reka*
- (11) *Marĩ mō na ha Maľ reka, Kadľne-kāñĩ, ia'ĩ twā čawōñĩ mľ?*
- (12) *Ča Maľ reka ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ ye, i e Modida-ro*
- (13) *He petĩ hēñā-mi-re meni i kť Maľ tka*
- (14) *Ča Maľ reka ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ reka, da hť kť Ararĩñā-no*
- (15) (Forte: o xamā bate o chocalho contra o peito da esposa) *Ča Maľ reka ia'ĩ ohō rarawōñĩ-wōñĩ neka*
- (16) *Ča Maľ reka pťe, Kadľne-kāñĩ, ia'ĩ ohō čawōñĩ i kť Maľ oyo*
- (17) *Ñane raiyidť pťtā-mō ye Maľ reka, ia'ĩ ohō čawōñĩ mľ*
- (18) *Marĩ mō na ha Maľ reka, Kadľne-kāñĩ, ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ?*

BLOCK III - back to chorus I after pause

- (19) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ kťe ye?*
- (20) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ? He petĩ hēñā-mi-re meni i kť Maľ*
- (21) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ ye? Ñane raiyidť pťtā-mō ye Maľ odľ-pťe ye, i e Ararĩñā-no*
- (22) *Marĩ mō na ha Maľ točĩ ačo awi-awi tka?*
- (23) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'ĩ twā narawōñĩ, Maľ? Eya eiayidť mara he rehe-we i kť Maľ*

- (24) *Ne-rehe ye ia'i oho rarawōñĩ ye, Nai dai dai, adĕ-odĕ-odĕ ne'e*
me'e i kĕ Maĕ
- (25) *Marĩ mō na ha Maĕ yiyeĥā-we ia'i twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ ye e Modi-*
da-ro?
- (26) *Marĩ mō na ha Maĕ ia'i twā narawōñĩ ye? Kāñĩpaye-ro-reme ye*
he a-o i kĕ Maĕ oyo (forte)
- (27) *Nĩ te kĕ Maĕ he rereka he rāñā itā nā'ē ne (forte)*
- (28) *Ne re'eme ye he a-o i kĕ Maĕ oyo, Nai dai dai, he rāñā itā*
nā'ē nehe i kĕ Maĕ (forte)
- (29) *Aye yĕpe Maĕ he o iwarawĕ kĕpe kati (forte)*
- (30) *E-pĕrano eiaiyidĕ nehe i kĕ Maĕ, Nai dai dai, tĕrĕha nehe toĕĩ*
aĕo'iwā i kĕ Maĕ
- (31) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'i twā moiyi-moiyi ye?*
- (32) *Ka Maĕ reka ia'i twā moiyi-moiyi (Bate o chocalho sobre a es-*
posa)
- (33) *Marĩ mō na ha Maĕ ia'i twā meni-meni, Yowe'ĕ-do? Eya eiaiyidĕ*
mara he rehe-we
- (34) *Ĉeee yaacĕ-dadĕ a re moneme oho o-mo-poĩ-poĩ, i kĕ Maĕ, Nai*
dai dai, ĩre rĕmĕ-do rĩ dorocĕ oho mopoĩ-poĩ i kĕ Maĕ
- (35) *Kadĕne-yo oho rewe, moneme, i kĕ Maĕ, eya ĕaha toĕĩ aĕo 'iwā*
- (36) *Ĉeee erĕpa dĕto haiyi mara he rehe-we, he rehe tĕde Maĕ reka*
pĕe
- (37) *Adĕ-odĕ-odĕ kĕ ne'e me'e, eya yaacĕ-dadĕ he rehe, i kĕ Maĕ*
- (38) *Marĩ mō pa ne ia'i twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ ye?*
- (39) *Ĉeee, nane rĕmĕ-do rĩ dorocĕ oho o-mo-poĩ-poĩ*
- (40) *Marĩ mō pa ne iĕiri'i oho rarawōñĩ?*
- (41) *Kāñĩ nero-atā pĕtā-mō ye Maĕ ia'i twā narawōñĩ*
- (42) *Marĩ mō pa ne iĕiri'i oho moiyi?*
- (43) *Marĩ mō na ha Maĕ he petĩ he petĩ momā-momā?*
- (44) *Ĕre pĕrāñā hewo-hewo ye i kĕ Maĕ, Nai dai dai, tĕrĕdĕ-wĕkā-wĕ*
kā nehe iĕiri'i oho moiyi dĕdĕ i kĕ Maĕ
- (45) *Marĩ mō na ha Maĕ ia'i twā narawōñĩ-wōñĩ?*

(From the last verse, the voice gradually dies, repeating the chorus)

SONG OF THE CHESTNUT TREE

Nai dai dai

Por que você empluma a grande castanheira?

Por que os Maí emplumam a grande castanheira, Modidaro?

Por que os Maí solteiros emplumam a face da castanheira?

Eis aqui os Maí, Ararinhano, emplumando a face da castanheira.

Eis aqui os Maí emplumando a grande castanheira.

(*Nai dai dai*

Why do you fledge the great chestnut tree?

Why do the Maí fledge the great chestnut tree, Modidaro?

Why do the single Maí fledge the face of the chestnut tree?

Here are the Maí, Ararinhano, fledging the face of the chestnut tree.

Here are the Maí fledging the great chestnut tree.)

Kadîne-kanhí

Aqui aqui os Maí, emplumando a face da castanheira.

Por que fazem assim os Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – emplumando a grande castanheira?

Aqui aqui os Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – emplumando a face da castanheira, aqui aqui os Maí.

Por que quer sua filha, diz Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – que empluma a grande castanheira.

Foi o que disse Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – ninguém comeu, disse Maí.

Por que fazem assim os Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – falando em emplumar a grande castanheira?

Veja aqui os Maí, Modidaro, emplumando a face da castanheira. Alumia meu charuto caído, disse Maí.

Veja aí os Maí, Ararinhano, emplumando a face da castanheira. Aqui aqui os Maí, emplumando a grande castanheira.

Disseram entre si os Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – vamos emplumar a castanheira.

Por que querem nossa filha, os Maí emplumam a grande castanheira.

Por que fazem assim os Maí – Kadîne-kanhí – emplumando a face da castanheira?

(*Kadîne-kanhí*

Here here the Maí fledging the face of the chestnut tree.

Why do the Maí do that - Kadîne-kanhí – fledging the great chestnut tree?

Here here the Maí - Kadîne-kanhí – fledging the face of the chestnut tree, here, here the Maí.

Because he wants your daughter, says Maí - Kadîne-kanhí – he fledges the great chestnut tree.

That is what said Maí - Kadîne-kanhí - nobody has eaten, said Maí.

Why do the Maí do that - Kadîne-kanhí – talking about fledging the great chestnut tree?

Here the Maí, Modidaro, fledging the face of the chestnut tree.

Light my fallen cigar, said Maí.

Look at the Maí, Ararinhanho, fledging the face of the chestnut tree.

Here here the Maí, fledging the great chestnut tree.

Said the Maí among themselves - Kadîne-kanhí - let us fledge the chestnut tree. Because they want our daughter, the Maí fledge the great chestnut tree.

Why do the Maí do that - Kadîne-kanhí – fledging the face of the chestnut tree?)

Nai dai dai

Por que você empluma na manhã a face da castanheira?

Por que você empluma a face da castanheira?

Por querer nossa filha, disse Maí a si mesmo, Ararinhanho.

Por que ficam assim os Maí, errando flechas nos grandes tucanos? Por que você empluma a face da castanheira, Maí?

Vamos, passe Sua filha para cá, disse Maí.

Por que os Maí solteiros emplumam assim a face da castanheira, Modidaro?

Por que os Maí emplumam assim a face da castanheira? Vou comer o finado Kanhipaiêro, disse Maí.

Assim Maí vai me levar, me cozinhar na panela de pedra.

Vamos comer seu finado pai, disseram e redisseram os Maí.

Vão me cozinhar na panela de pedra, disseram os Maí.

Mais uma vez vão me comer no avesso do céu, eles disseram. Mande a menina, disse Maí – nai dai dai – flechar os grandes tucanos comigo, disse Maí.

Por que você passa urucum na face da castanheira? Aqui os Maí, untando a face da castanheira.

Por que os Maí acendem assim a face da castanheira, Yoweído? Vamos, passe sua filha para cá.

(*Nai dai dai*

Why do you fledge in the morning the face of the chestnut tree?

Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree?

Because they want our daughter, said Maí to himself, Ararinhanho.

Why are the Maí like that, shooting arrows at the big toucans?

Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree, Maí?

Hurry, pass me your daughter, said Maí.
 Why do the single Maí fledge like that the face of the chestnut tree, Modidaro ?
 Why do the Maí fledge like that the face of the chestnut tree?
 I will eat the late Kanhipaiêro, said Maí.
 So Maí will take me, cook me in the stone pot.
 We will eat your late father, said and repeated the Maí.
 They will cook me in the stone pot, said the Maí .
 Once again they will eat me in the opposite side of the sky, they said.
 Send the girl, said Maí - nai dai dai – to shoot an arrow at the big toucans
 with me, said Maí.
 Why do you spread annatto on the face of the chestnut tree?
 Here here the Maí, anointing the face of the chestnut tree.
 Why do the Maí light the face of the chestnut tree like that, Yoweído?
 Hurry, pass me our daughter)

Eeh! Um comedor-de-pequenos-jabutis espantou as grandes cotingas, disseram os Maí – nai dai dai – Nossa futura comida afugentou as grandes juritis, disseram os Maí.

Plumagem das grandes cotingas, araras-canindé-eternas, disseram os Maí; vamos, vamos flechar os grandes tucanos.

Eeh! Quanto àquilo de Maí pedir a filha, não precisava pedir.

Nada me foi oferecido; vamos, dê jabutis para mim, disse Maí. Porque você empluma a face da castanheira?

Eeh! Nossa futura comida afugentou as grandes juritis.

Por que você empluma a grande icirí?

Por querer levar mulher pra caçar, Maí empluma a face da Castanheira.

(Eeh ! A small-turtle-eater scared the big doves away, said the Maí - nai dai dai - Our future food scared away the big doves, said the Maí.

Plumage of the large doves, eternal-canindé-macaws, said the Maí; let us go, let us go shoot an arrow at the big toucans.

Eeh! As for the Maí asking for the daughter, he didn't need to ask.

Nothing was offered to me; come on, give me turtles, said Maí.

Why do you fledge the face of the chestnut tree?

Eeh! Our future food scared the big doves away.

Why do you fledge the great icirí?

Because he wants to take women hunting,

Maí fleges the face of the chestnut tree.)

Por que você passa urucum na face do grande iciríí?
Por que Maí acaba com meu tabaco?
Nosso chão é cheiroso, disse Maí – nai dai dai – assim que untar
Iciríí, vamos nos perfumar um ao outro, disse Maí.
Por que os Maí emplumam a face da castanheira?
Nai dai dai
(Why do you spread annatto on the face of the great iciríí?
Why does Maí use up my tobacco?
Our ground is fragrant, said Maí - nai dai dai – as soon as we anoint
Iciríí, we will scent one another, said Maí.
Why do the Maí fledge the face of the chestnut tree?
Nai dai dai).

ABSTRACT – The aim of this paper is to offer a retranslation of a chant of the Araweté, originally translated and annotated by anthropologist Viveiros de Castro in *Araweté: the cannibal gods*. According to Castro, the “Song of the Chestnut Tree”, the name he gave to the chant, illustrates the enunciative-quotational complexity of the shamanistic chants of the Araweté. For Castro, these chants are “a song of songs, a polylogical speech of speeches.” That is why we first analyze the chant’s enunciative complexity and only afterwards provide a retranslation.

KEYWORDS: Amerindian poetry, Translation, Viveiros de Castro, Araweté.

Álvaro Faleiros holds a degree in Social Sciences from the State University of Campinas (1994), a Master’s degree in Linguistics from Université du Québec à Montréal (1998) and a PhD in French Language and Literature from the University of São Paulo (2003). He is a professor of French literature at USP. He has experience in Poetry and Translation, working especially in the following areas: translation, compared poetics and poetry. He is also a translator and poet. @ – alvarofaleiros@gmail.com / faleiros@usp.br

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