

**NOTES ON THE JUREMA RITUAL: PEOPLE-RELATIONS AND THE  
ENCHANTED AMONG THE IBIRAMÃ KIRIRI PEOPLE OF ACRÉ*****NOTAS SOBRE O RITUAL DA JUREMA: PESSOAS-RELAÇÃO E ENCANTADOS  
ENTRE O POVO IBIRAMÃ KIRIRI DO ACRÉ******APUNTES SOBRE EL RITUAL JUREMA: PUEBLO-RELACIONES Y LOS  
ENCANTADOS ENTRE LOS IBIRAMÃ KIRIRI DE ACRÉ***

Maria Carolina Arruda BRANCO<sup>1</sup>  
e-mail: mariacarolinaarrudabranco@gmail.com

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Prof. Me. Thaís Cristina Caetano de Souza  
Prof. Me. Paulo Carvalho Moura  
Prof. Thiago Pacheco Gebara

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<sup>1</sup> Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), São Carlos – SP – Brazil. Doctoral candidate in Social Anthropology at PPGAS/UFSCar. Master's degree in Sociocultural Anthropology from PPGANT/UFMG. Her interests include Indigenous ethnology, anthropological theory, leadership, Indigenous women, public policies, and territoriality.

**ABSTRACT:** This ethnographic work seeks to present the *Kiriri* of Acré as a people and to highlight their trajectories and relationships, as well as to situate the complex ritual of Jurema, which is widespread among indigenous peoples in northeastern Brazil, and its practices. Through dialog with *Kiriri*, notions of science and play are explored, and the way in which these contexts are activated in the relationship with the Enchanted, humans, and non-humans is explored through the ritual in its public and/or private aspects. The categories of enrapturement and gift, as well as the gendered relationships between the Enchanted and women, are addressed to understand certain crossings of the toré in the relationship between the *Kiriri* of Acré with the physical territory they occupy and with the cosmological contexts provided by the exchanges in the ritualistic context.

**KEYWORDS:** Ritual. Jurema. Kiriri People of Acré. Women. Enchanted.

**RESUMO:** O presente trabalho etnográfico busca apresentar os *Kiriri* do Acré como povo e evidenciar suas trajetórias e relacionamentos, bem como situar o complexo ritual da Jurema, amplamente difundido entre os povos indígenas no Nordeste brasileiro e suas práticas. Através do diálogo com noções *Kiriri* de *science* e *play*, e a forma pela qual esses contextos são acionados no relacionamento com *Encantados*, humanos e não-humanos através do ritual em seu aspecto público e/ou privado. As categorias de enramação e dom, bem como as relações generificadas entre os *Encantados* e as mulheres são abordadas a fim de compreender certos atravessamentos do toré no relacionamento entre os *Kiriri* do Acré com o território físico que ocupam e com os contextos cosmológicos proporcionados pelas trocas no contexto ritualístico.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Ritual. Jurema. Povo Kiriri do Acré. Mulheres. Encantados.

**RESUMEN:** Este trabajo etnográfico pretende presentar a los *Kiriri* de Acré como pueblo y destacar sus trayectorias y relaciones, así como situar el complejo ritual de Jurema, muy extendido entre los pueblos indígenas del nordeste de Brasil, y sus prácticas. A través del diálogo con las nociones *Kiriri* de ciencia y juego y la forma en que estos contextos se activan en la relación con los *Encantados*, humanos y no humanos a través del ritual en su vertiente pública y/o privada. Las categorías de embelesamiento y don, así como las relaciones de género entre los *Encantados* y las mujeres son abordadas para comprender ciertos cruces del toré en la relación de los *Kiriri* de Acré con el territorio físico que ocupan y con los contextos cosmológicos proporcionados por los intercambios en el contexto ritual.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Ritual. Jurema. Pueblo Kiriri de Acré. Mujeres. Encantado.

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## Introduction: The *Kiriri* of Rio Verde

This study is part of the Master's research in Anthropology conducted at the Federal University of Grande Dourados, focusing on the *Kiriri* people of Acre in Caldas, a municipality in the state of Minas Gerais. The research was funded by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES 2021-2023). This article aims to revisit aspects of the devotional practices of the *Kiriri* people of Acre previously discussed in the dissertation and to explore further hypotheses that emerged after the completion of the text for the author's Master's degree in Sociocultural Anthropology.

Historical records about the *Kiriri* people indicate that they were numerous and occupied extensive territories in the interior of what are now the states of Maranhão, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte, Ceará, Pernambuco, Paraíba, and also the lower course of the São Francisco River, including Sergipe and Bahia (Bandeira, 1972, p. 19). In the mid-17th century, the Catholic Church began its missionary activities among the *Kiriri*, initially led by French missionaries, later replaced by Italians, and eventually by Portuguese Jesuits (Maria Lourdes Bandeira, 1972). While there was once extensive occupation, the present-day reality, in the 21st century, is markedly different. Indigenous realities in Brazil are characterized by persecution and confinement to very small territories. At that time, there were several missionary settlements, including *Saco dos Morcegos*, now Mirandela, located in *Banzaê* in the state of Bahia, founded in the 17th century by Portuguese Jesuit João de Barros, with the aim of gathering the “*Kipeá-Kiriri*” (Brasileiro, 1996, p. 48). This settlement persisted and is still *Kiriri* territory today, particularly relevant because it is the origin of the *Kiriri*, who now occupy the Rio Verde region in Caldas/MG<sup>2</sup>.

According to Bandeira (1972) and reiterated by Sheila Brasileiro (1996), the *Kariri* from the hinterlands of Bahia and Sergipe were from the *Kipeá* branch, different from the *Dzubukuá* branch, which inhabited the São Francisco region. The authors suggest that the difference between the branches appeared to be linguistic. Among the *Kiriri* of the *Kariri* family who lived in the northeastern hinterlands and belonged to the *Kipeá* branch, there is not only a linguistic unity, unlike other groups, but also a cultural unity in beliefs. Bandeira (1972) also notes that

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<sup>2</sup> The *Kiriri* people who currently live in Caldas/MG once lived in Mirandela/BA, but after disagreements, they migrated to Serra do Ramalho/BA. There, after receiving an offer of land from their then-friends Xukuru-Kariri, they migrated to Muquém do São Francisco/BA and later migrated to Caldas/MG. For more information on this migration path, see Henrique (2019).

in addition to these two “dialects” *Kipeá* and *Dzubukuá*, two other dialects are documented: Pedra Branca and *Sabujá* or *Sapuya*.

To refer to the *Kiriri* residents in Caldas, there are several alternatives: *Kiriri*<sup>3</sup>, *Kiriri* from Minas Gerais, *Kiriri* from Caldas, *Kiriri* from Rio Verde, and *Kiriri* from Acre. All these designations have been used by the *Kiriri* themselves. Except for the first alternative, which directly refers to ethnicity, the others refer to a place, to the state of Minas Gerais, to the municipality of Caldas, and to the rural district of Rio Verde. Acre, which is also mentioned, means “Rio Verde” in the *Kiriri* language, referring to the rural district where the *Kiriri* reside in Caldas. Thus, all these names relate the *Kiriri* to their location, indicating they are from Minas Gerais, Caldas, and Rio Verde, and not from anywhere else. This connection to the place is crucial for interactions with both non-Indigenous and Indigenous individuals, particularly in relation to the *Encantados*.

Regarding the *Kiriri* language, some observations are pertinent. The *Ibiramã Kiriri* people of Acre are in the process of reclaiming their language. According to Henrique and Ramos (2021), reclaiming the Indigenous language is a project for the *Kiriri* of Acre that integrates knowledge, science, and education. In the context proposed by the authors, reclaiming the language is closely linked to the struggle for land undertaken by the families of the *Ibiramã Kiriri* village in Acre. Roseni Ramos, one of the authors of this text, is my interlocutor, and during one of my visits to the village, I had the opportunity to attend a native language class she taught to all school grades. I had the privilege of observing a lesson for the 5th-grade class, where Roseni explained that the native language in that context is *Pankawá*, a language spoken exclusively by the *Kiriri* in Minas Gerais, as it represents a blend between the languages spoken by the *Kiriri* people and the *Pankaru* people, combining the languages of the *Kipeá* and *Zebupúa* families. Aside from the work of Henrique and Ramos (2021), little has been ethnographically documented about the *Kiriri* language in Minas Gerais.

The people living in Caldas mostly migrated from the municipality of *Muquém* do São Francisco (BA). They have occupied the territory in Caldas since 2017, and since then, some children have been born and have grown up with their relatives in the southern Minas Gerais lands. When they moved to Caldas, the *Kiriri* were a small group from the same family, and today the village houses more than 60 people, including women, men, and children of various ages. The *Ibiramã Kiriri* village in Acre brings together *Kiriri*, *Pankaru*, and *Xukuru-Kariri*

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<sup>3</sup> Throughout this text, italics will be used to indicate direct references to terms and expressions used by the *Kiriri* of Acre, as well as to situate foreign words.

individuals. The residence among the *Kiriri* serves as a refuge for Indigenous people from other villages who chose to leave their original villages due to disagreements with local leaders, such as some *Xukuru-Kariri*; others chose to live with the *Kiriri* due to marital unions, friendships, and the welcoming nature of the *Kiriri*, who are very receptive and open to building new relationships.

The current chief of the *Kiriri* people is Adenilson, who is married to Carluisa, the current vice-chief. In addition to her leadership role in the community, Carluisa also serves as the director of the *Ibiramã Kiriri* State School, located within the village. Adenilson's initial visit to the town of Caldas was prompted by a relationship he had with one of the sisters of the chief of the *Xukuru-Kariri* people. After this relationship ended, Adenilson returned to Bahia, where he began his relationship with Carluisa. On his second visit to Caldas, he was accompanied by his current partner, Carluisa, and, as she recounted, *they both spent some time with the Xukuru-Kariri* but never lived with them. The third visit of Adenilson and Carluisa to Caldas aimed to find a place to establish residence in the southern Minas Gerais lands, motivated primarily by the search for fertile territory where they could access employment and abundant food.

The *Kiriri* of Rio Verde currently occupy a territory that was officially registered as belonging to the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG). However, through research and investigations, they discovered that this land was, in ancient times, inhabited by the *Tapuia* people. The *Kiriri* have gathered evidence of Indigenous occupation in the Caldas region and believe that the territory where they are located is, in fact, an ancient Indigenous cemetery. This assertion is based both on information acquired through exchanges with the *Encantados*, via the *Toré* ritual, and on the historical context of Caldas, which indicates that the area was inhabited by the *Tapuia*. These circumstances reinforce the *Kiriri's* sense of belonging and their desire to preserve the place where they currently live.

According to the guidance received from the *Encantados*, the *Kiriri* were instructed to care for the land because those who previously occupied it did not preserve it properly. It is observed that the *Kiriri* maintain a relationship of profound respect and reciprocity with the *Encantados*, the spirits of their ancestors, who teach and guide them about life, decisions to be made, and future possibilities.

## Contextualizing the Complex: A Sad Science is One in Which There Is No Play

The *Toré* is a ritual that falls within what is conventionally referred to in the literature as the “Jurema Ritual Complex,” which consists of a set of religious practices of which the *Toré* is just one manifestation (Nascimento, 1994). According to Estêvão Palitot and Fernando Júnior (2004), the *Toré* is the most emblematic expression of the ethnicity, culture, and religiosity of Indigenous peoples in the Northeast. The literature presents the diffusion of the *Jurema* ritual in northeastern Brazil, a diffusion linked to the power and secrecy surrounding the *Jurema*, both as a tree and as a drink, entity, and ritual complex. It is known that the secrets of *Jurema* have transcended the colonial period and remain alive as a secret within the communities that practice it.

Various plants are referred to as Jurema. There are very ancient records of the ritual use of this plant. In Brazilian botanical dictionaries, there is reference to *Jurema Preta* (*Acacia jurema*, Mart - Fam. Legum), found in the hinterlands, which is noted as “a large plant from which the caboclos made a beverage with which they say they become enchanted and transported to the sky. However, it is also medicinal; a *sertanejo* assured us of its efficacy for removing cancers, using only the inner bark in a poultice. We cannot guarantee this” (Lima, 1946:54 apud. Nascimento, 1994:91, our translation). Additionally, in Brazilian botany in 1881, *Jurema* (*Mimosa jurema*) is described as

a medium-sized tree that grows in poor and dry soils. The *sertanejos* use the bark of this tree to cure fatigue and cachexia. The Indians extract a certain kind of wine from Jurema that causes a pleasant intoxication. For this purpose, they remove the bark, infuse it for 24 hours, strain the infusion, add bee honey to correct the astringent taste of the intoxicating drink, and store it for use (Lima, 1946, p. 53 apud Nascimento, 1994, p. 92, our translation).

The connecting link between the various practices that constitute the Jurema ritual complex is the ritual use of a drink named Jurema, made from the plant of the same name. Among the religious practices that use the drink ritualistically are *Candomblé de Caboclo*, Mixed *Torés*, and *Catimbós*<sup>4</sup>, associated with religious practices performed by Afro-Brazilian

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<sup>4</sup> To delve deeper into the similarities and even the ritual use of Jurema in each of these practices, I suggest checking out the work of Nascimento (1994).

communities<sup>5</sup>. The Indigenous practices that use Jurema as a sacred drink and are part of the Jurema Ritual Complex include *Ouricuri*, *Praia*, and *Toré*<sup>6</sup>.

*The Enchanted Beings, also known as Masters or Guides*, are primarily benevolent entities that assist Indigenous people in all aspects of life, including political, public, and private decision-making. Regarding the Enchanted Beings, some literature emphasizes their nature as living entities, meaning they are either forces of nature or, if they were once human, they did not undergo the experience of death (Nascimento, 2004; Ahlert, 2021). Therefore, they are not considered dead spirits, often referred to as “white people’s things” in a nod to Spiritism, Umbanda, or other practices not considered “Indigenous” (Nascimento, 2004, p. 39). Despite much of the literature describing the Enchanted Beings as entities that did not experience death, the Enchanted Beings associated with the *Kiriri* of Acre present a different reality. They have undergone the experience of death, became enchanted, and yet retained their status as living entities, as my interlocutors explained; *they reside in the Kingdom of Jurema*. Thus, the Enchanted Beings may have had human experiences and may have been ancestors who became enchanted. They have never ceased to live but now inhabit another plane known, in the case of the *Kiriri*, as the *Kingdom of the Enchanted or the Kingdom of Jurema*. The Enchanted Beings share a relationship of exchange and mediation with some *Kiriri* individuals.

For the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde, the Enchanted Beings are *Spirits, entities, or guides* that the *Kiriri* cannot see. It is believed that these Enchanted Beings are ancestors who died, became enchanted, and now visit the *Kiriri* to provide guidance. Having become enchanted and experienced life on this plane, the Enchanted Beings are capable of guiding the *Kiriri*. They live in the *Kingdom of the Enchanted*, which no *Kiriri* has access to; communication with them only occurs when the Enchanted Beings come to the *Kiriri*. According to Carlusa, they do not know what the *Kingdom of the Enchanted* is like or how its inhabitants live; they only know of its existence but not its nature or location. The Enchanted Beings do not possess the *Kiriri*; instead, *they make contact to deliver their messages*, and the person whose body is contacted

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<sup>5</sup> The standard norm of the Portuguese language, in the new orthographic agreement, dictates that national adjectives be written with a word + hyphen + word, which in this case would be Afro-Brazilian. However, I use the spelling “*afro-brasileiras*” without the hyphen, because I understand that the relationship proposed in this ethnographic context does not allow for the separation of the two terms, because when juxtaposed in this way, they signal a divided unity, a proposal for anti-miscegenation discussed by Kelly (2011; 2016). Neither Afro nor Brazilian finds power, much less Afro-Brazilian; the proposal deals specifically with the equation  $a+b=a/b$ . That said, it is indicated that Afro-indigenous will be written without a hyphen, following the same logic.

<sup>6</sup> The similarities and differences between these three practices can also be seen in the work of Nascimento (1994). This composed the three practices in a tenuous field since the differentiation between them is presented in a sinuous way, which can be presented in a similar way; however, it recognizes that the difference between them, in fact exists, since whoever claims to practice them, signals their approximations and their distances.

remains there physically but not mentally. As Carliusa explained, the Enchanted *Beings take over one's mind*, and when asked if the Enchanted Beings have domains such as rivers or forests, she said they do not, distancing the concept from Afro-Brazilian religiosity, where entities are often associated with specific locations. What is known, therefore, is that the Enchanted Beings do not have domains, a point *revealed* by Carliusa and other *Kiriri* in conversation<sup>7</sup>. Interacting with the Enchanted Beings is not a visual experience, as reported by Carliusa and Dona Alzira, who stated: “*I don't see anything, but I feel everything*”. The relationship between the Enchanted Beings and the *Kiriri* requires an understanding and attention to other senses beyond sight.

The *Toré* ritual practiced by the *Kiriri* is part of the Jurema Complex. As noted above, Jurema can be understood as a plant, with various botanical species referred to as Jurema; a drink and/or an entity. The latter sense involves an Afro-Indigenous blend where groups “substituted the plant drink with a representation of native forces” (*Grünwald*<sup>8</sup>). However, I do not agree with *Grünwald's* characterization of a “representation” of native forces. What is observed are forms of manifestation of entities that do not necessarily relate to a “representation,” as if the entity were not present and was being “represented” by something. My understanding is that the *drink is indeed a potent manifestation of Jurema as an entity*, as the *Pajé* mentioned; unlike *Jurema, the sacred tree*, which seems to be primarily viewed as a symbol of resistance for the *Kiriri*. This process, therefore, involves different ways of relating to and activating the entity. For the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde, there has been no substitution of the plant drink; it remains central to their knowledge. However, mediation with the Enchanted Jurema enables the use of the plant's root and, when necessary, the substitution of the drink based on the plant. The relationship with the entity mobilizes a network of actions that constitutes the life of these people. Thus, even when substitutions authorized by the Enchanted Beings occur, it is not enough to have the root or another substance replacing the root in the ritual; one must know how to activate it, and this activation only happens through continuous relationships.

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<sup>7</sup> There are studies on the categories of “owner” or “master” in the Amazon (Fausto, 2008), which reflect on these key categories for understanding indigenous cosmology. Although dialogues with the *Kiriri* indicate that there is no connection between entities and certain places, such as water, forests, and other domains, as we will see shortly in this text, there are some ethnographic clues that would allow us to affirm the existence of these domains. However, as this is an aspect that has not yet been explored in relation to the *Kiriri* of Acré and based on their signaling of rejection of this idea, in this piece, I will not delve into this point in order not to overlap ideas from other fields and other studies, even classic ones, when I notice my interlocutors communicating something else to me.

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <http://cienciaecultura.bvs.br/pdf/cic/v60n4/a18v60n4.pdf>. Accessed on January 15, 2022.



Among the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde, Jurema is regarded as the *symbol of indigenous peoples*. In the territory of Caldas, a Jurema tree was planted, which was brought from Bahia to Minas Gerais. Shaman Adenilson told me that the Jurema planted in the village is Jurema Preta. It underwent a series of adaptations; it was necessary to move it from a lower location to a higher one. When the Jurema tree had *grown* quite a bit in its new location, a frost occurred, and it dried out completely. Everyone was certain it had died, but after about three days of rain, it started sprouting again. Since then, they have taken care of it, and it has developed well. The Shaman also mentioned that, being Jurema, *the sacred tree*, the place where it is planted is also a sacred site. The Jurema tree planted in the village is about 1 meter tall. The *Kiriri work with Jurema* due to its significant importance; they brought and planted it to have it in their territory, and it is understood as the *symbol of the village. Jurema is the sacred tree*. Carliusa reports that among the *Kiriri*, it is not seen through a gender distinction; as a tree, it is simply a tree, and it is understood as a *sacred tree*. The Jurema tree differs from the Enchanted *Cabocla* Jurema. The Jurema tree itself is not an enchanted being, and Carliusa distinguishes it by explaining that the *Jurema tree is used to make Jurema wine*, which is used in ritual practices. Additionally, the Jurema tree can be *applied to the body, whereas the Enchanted Jurema is not visible*. Referring to what Carliusa told me about the Enchanted beings, which are other entities that experienced earthly life, died, and became enchanted, occupying an important role in guiding the *Kiriri*, but emphasizes that they do not see the Enchanted beings. The experience with the Enchanted is not visual, as Dona Alzira also shared, stating: "*I feel everything, but they do not physically touch me; only Carliusa and Roseni interact with them.*"

*The Jurema tree moves*, Dona Alzira told me. "It is the *sacred tree*, and it walks along with the *Kiriri*. The primary wine used in ritual practices is Jurema wine; *it serves as protection*. In addition to Jurema wine, cassava wine, corn wine, and wild passionfruit wine are also used, which differs from the fruit known as passionfruit in the southeastern region of Brazil. The *Kiriri* refer to this as *maracujina*. The movement of the *Kiriri* through space demonstrates how they are able to *build their territory*, and this process involves the participation of the Jurema, the *sacred tree*, which accompanies the *Kiriri*, shares their hardships, and remains there, adapting and persisting in a new environment. 'You will suffer, but you will prevail,' was the message from *Tapuia, the true owner of the land*, to the *Kiriri* when they first arrived on the land. *Tapuia* refers to an ancient people who once lived in Caldas, in the same territory now occupied by the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde. The relationship with *Tapuia, the true owner of the land*, who grants permission for the *Kiriri* to establish themselves in Rio Verde, guides the *Kiriri's*

relationship with Rio Verde in Caldas. Dona Alzira mentioned that the 'mother tree,' or root, is located in the Brazilian Northeast, and from this *mother tree*, the *branches* emerge. The movements *pull branches*, and for the *Kiriri*, Jurema, the sacred tree, also allows for an analogy with their lives.

The *Toré*, being a ritual widespread in northeastern Brazil and practiced by various ethnic groups, presents itself differently depending on the people practicing it. Among the *Xocó* and *Kariri-Xocó* of Alagoas studied by Clarice Mota (2004), it is described as “a form of dance and singing that these communities present both as a religious performance and as a festivity or ‘play’” (p. 143). The author reflects on the *Toré* as a “group invention,” a movement that prompts them to reflect, reformulate, and authenticate their “existence through faith,” which is not related to religion but to faith in the power of the collective. According to Estêvão Palitot and Fernando Júnior (2004), the *Toré* performed among the *Potiguara* in São Francisco and Vila Monte-Mór highlights the ritual’s ancient roots among practitioners. The authors emphasize that, in both villages, their observations link the *Toré* to Catholic devotion and Indigenous ancestry. They also identify the *Toré* as an “expression of Indigenous being” and as “an important symbolic resource in political relations with official bodies” (p. 171).

In José Vieira’s (2019) work on the *Potiguara* people of Paraíba, the *Toré* is seen as a tradition passed down orally from ancient times, from the “old trunks,” meaning the generation of grandparents. The *Toré* is understood as “a line of work involving masters and enchanted caboclos, where the concept of ‘incorporating’ primarily refers to the enchanted being ‘making contact’ and acting (‘working’)” (p. 53). Marcos Albuquerque’s (2004) research with the *Kapinawá* in Pernambuco reveals the creation of a unique ritual called *Torécoco*, a political manifestation and space for updating the tradition practiced by these people.

The four works mentioned above share many similarities with each other and with the *Kiriri*, as we will see further. The *Toré* performed by the *Ibiramã Kiriri* people of Acre shares experiences with different ethnic groups in the Brazilian Northeast, especially within the context of the need to reaffirm their indigenous practices. The *Toré* is experienced in two distinct phases, public and private, but in both, it is expressed as a symbol of political relationships. It is in these spaces that the *Kiriri* of Acre mobilize and establish commitments with political allies, whether human or non-human. Their perceptions as branches of the mother territory, from where they originated in Bahia, are present and profound in their shared experiences and with Dona Alzira, Carluisa's mother and one of the main preservers of *Toré* practices among the *Kiriri*. It is also worth mentioning that the *Toré* was taught to the *Kiriri* in

1976 by the *Tuxá* people in Rodelas, Bahia. Since this contact, the *Kiriri* have "rescued" or in some way (re)learned the *Toré* ritual. As a fundamental element of sacred practices for peoples in the Northeast, and considered an indicator of authenticity and the veracity of a people's indigenous identity, recognized by the State in the Brazilian Northeast (Brasileiro, 1996; 2012), the practice of *Toré* as tradition is updated and shared. The ritual performed today by the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde is not the same as that learned from the *Tuxá*; it is an updated version of the tradition experienced by them with their *members and teachers*.

*Toré* can be seen in two very distinct moments: the category of *Toré/Play*, which pertains to the public practice of the ritual, and the category of *Ciência*, which corresponds to the private practice of the ritual. Regarding these categories, it is worth noting a conversation I had with Carliusa in 2020. When I explained my research interests and expressed my desire to study the *Kiriri Toré*, Carliusa was emphatic in rejecting my proposal: "*We do not conduct research on our Toré*" (Carliusa, 2020, personal communication). This placed me in a position where I had to clarify that I was fully aware that participation in the private dimension of *Toré* (*ciência*) would not be possible, but that my interest was precisely in its public dimension (*toré/play*) and what is made public to those outside the group. Therefore, Carliusa was categorical in indicating that they, the *Kiriri* people of Acre, do not research their *Toré*. Although I obtained some insights and explanations from Carliusa about certain aspects of *Kiriri* science, I acknowledge that the description of this ritual is limited.

The *Toré* consists of many ritual practices that lead us to the realm of secrecy. The ritual takes place in the midst of the forest, away from the gaze of those who are not part of the group, and involves elements specific to the ritual. In the various accounts of *Toré* that I have encountered, particularly those referring to the *Toré* performed by the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde, the categories of *ciência* and *play* are employed to address the complexities present in the ritual's performance in its different forms and with different audiences.

The dimension of *play*, in the context of public exposure through social media, is often associated with the term "presentation," referring to the act of performing the *Toré* in its public form as a way to *showcase aspects of indigenous cultures*. This understanding is expressed by Chief Adenilson in a Facebook post (2022), where he states: "to present a bit of our cultures." Such phrases are recurrent, as seen in the *Kiriri* people's presentation during the São João festival on June 19, 2022. Additionally, there was a presentation on April 19, in celebration of "Indian Day."

Beyond these thematic celebrations, the *Kiriri* are frequently invited by the Caldas city government to perform cultural presentations. When they conduct public activities, the invitation is widely disseminated through social media, particularly on Carliusa's Facebook profile and the *Aldeia Ibirimã Kiriri* page on the same platform. In these posts, the invitation is extended to the entire local community as well as to anyone who has seen the post and wishes to participate. All are welcome to participate in these activities, thus promoting openness to dialogue and appreciation of *Kiriri* culture.

The *Kiriri* are very receptive and open to forming alliances with those willing to collaborate with their cause. It seems to me that the presentation of *Toré* in its *play* dimension represents a political space for potential relationships between the *Kiriri* and those who wish to be allies in their journey and struggle. My hypothesis is that the restriction on the sacred Jurema drink and the controlled relationship with the Enchanted Masters are ways of establishing certain limits of access to “culture”<sup>9</sup> for those outside the group. For the *Kiriri*, building relationships with non-Indigenous people in the political realm is crucial for achieving their goals. This is evident in a *toante* where the *Kiriri* sing: “*I am from the Kiriri ethnicity, I want to play with you.*” These two brief phrases explicitly invite relationality, reflecting the *Kiriri*'s conscious desire to engage in this *playful* interaction, which is far from lacking in interest and depth.

The *science* pertains to what would be a ritual moment involving the presence of the Enchanted. It is a time of more intense circulation of power and energy between humans and these other beings, particularly because the sacred drink is present, and the consumption of Jurema fosters connections and potential transformations for those who engage with it. Thus, the category of *science* is depicted as a more “serious” ritual moment due to its potential for transformation and connection with the *Enchanted Masters*.

In a video posted on Facebook on January 8, 2021, in the context of the approval of Law No. 23.758, dated January 6, 2021, which authorizes the Executive Branch to donate a 60-

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<sup>9</sup> . The presentation of “culture” is conceived here based on the work of Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (2009), in which the author establishes the difference between “culture” with quotation marks and culture without quotation marks, emphasizing that they are two different processes. Since culture without quotation marks, defined by the author, is a scheme that has been internalized and that guides people's actions, ensuring a degree of communication between groups, the author uses examples to point out that culture operates based on accumulation, loans, and transactions. While “culture” with quotation marks refers to a reflexive notion that speaks of itself and is characterized by operating based on the regime of ethnicity. The author understands that there is an analytical distinction between “culture” and culture that is based on the different principles of intelligibility that each one possesses, since “the internal logic of culture does not coincide with the interethnic logic of ‘cultures’” (Carneiro da Cunha, 2009, p. 159).

hectare property located in the Rio Verde neighborhood, municipality of Caldas, for the purpose of “regularizing the territory traditionally occupied by the Kiriri indigenous people,” Carluisa states that it is at the *Casa da Ciência, at the Terreiro do Toré, where the Kiriri are born and die*. This statement can be understood from the perspective of the formation and identity of the *Kiriri* subject, the development of their bodies, and the shared experiences of indigenous subjects who experience and share with their peers the journey and manifestation of the sacred. This location is also where objectives are defined and put into practice, where decisions are made, and where meetings occur, as it is here that *everyone’s* opinion is considered. “*Everyone*” includes all *Kiriri* in the community—women, men, elders, and youth—who all participate in decision-making. I also understand that this includes the *Enchanted Masters*, as they are the ones guiding the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde along the right paths. Thus, I would like to emphasize that the place of *science* is primarily the site of the powerful manifestation of *being Kiriri*, with all the implications of relationships that this entails.

In the mentioned video, we see the *Kiriri* celebrating, a moment of deep festivity and gratitude towards those who, working alongside them, achieved a collective gain of permanence on the land, which was only occupied with the authorization of *Tapuia, the true owner of the land in Caldas*. The diplomacy of the *Kiriri* is crucial for achieving political gains in the material and terrestrial realms, but the paths leading to this are pre-established by the *Enchanted Masters*.

These reflections on the dimensions of *science* and *play*, their intersections and interpenetrations inevitably lead to the question: *is there no play in science? Is there no science in play?*<sup>10</sup> I dare to say that, indeed, there is *play in science*, and there is *science in play*, as relationships occur in both moments in an intertwined manner. *Science* is the place where actions are planned and initiated, but it is also the place for gratitude, where festivity, the “*Toré da Alegria*,” laughter and smiles, and joyous leaps amidst the firm marking of the foot on the ground all belong. Similarly, *play* is the space for establishing relationships with the Other, the outsider, those who are outside the group. The approach to this Other happens through *play*, the possibility of forming allies during a moment of relaxation and presentation of “culture,” and thus, there is an element of *science* in this, in the formation of serious relationships, connections with different domains of existence, and political action, as expressed in the statement: “*I am from the Kiriri ethnicity, I want to play with you.*” All of this leads to collective achievements because, as Isabelle Stengers (2016) reminds us, a path does not exist on its own; it is made

<sup>10</sup> I thank Luiza Flores for asking me about this in 2021 and making me think.

through encounters. Thus, “*a sad science is one in which there is no dance*”; in the case of the Kiriri of Rio Verde, one could say that a *sad science* is one in which there is no *Brinca*.

### The *Toré*

The literature on the *Toré* performed by the *Kiriri* points to the reality of the Enchanted only interacting with women, meaning that the Enchanted seems to have a preference for contacting the bodies of women. Regarding the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde, the Enchanted maintain a direct communication channel with two women, Carluisa and her sister Roseni. According to the literature on the *Kiriri Toré*, it is observed that:

It is important to note that the ‘enchanted beings’ indeed only ‘enram’ (a term used for spiritual possession) with women during the ritual, although, from the native perspective, there is nothing preventing them from ‘enraming’ anyone they choose. However, this uncontrolled ritual behavior is typically characteristic of ‘malevolent spirits’ or ‘spirits of the dead,’ and such unwanted possession is understood as the cause of self-destructive and/or antisocial behaviors, which the ritual and the assistance of the ‘enchanted beings’ aim to remedy (Nascimento, 2004, p. 39, our translation).

What I observe in my ethnographic context confirms what has been noted in other ethnographic contexts concerning the *Kiriri*. My point of interest is specifically the mediation between worlds that these two women achieve through their relationships with the Enchanted, as well as with humans and non-humans.

Both the literature and my fieldwork highlight the potential of the Jurema plant to ‘enram.’ Firstly, referring to the action of the Jurema on the person who ingests it, not everyone is ‘enramed’ by it; this process depends on the intention of the person consuming it and the entity’s choice to possess that particular individual. If we think about the ‘enram’ of a plant, one of the first examples that come to mind might be chayote. There are even popular expressions such as “more than chayote on the fence,” which reference its process of growing and thriving—multiplying its fruits and clearly demonstrating the plant’s tendency to climb and expand<sup>11</sup>. Plants that ‘enram’ seek to extend their reach, thus occupying and expanding their space. Another explanation for the Jurema’s ‘enram’ is shared by Dona Alzira, who described ‘enram’ as the possibility of spatial displacement, where the *Kiriri*, as a collective, being far

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<sup>11</sup> The analogy with the chayote and the visual idea of entangling is from the author, and this visual model of taking root, sustaining, and expanding is thought of, as these were verbs used by the *Kiriri* in dialogue with the author and brought about this reflection. In the literature, there are other dialogues with the entangling of plants (Cf. Mura, 2013; Nascimento, 2012).

from the root—the mother Jurema in the Brazilian Northeast—are still connected to it through cosmological and virtual extension, meaning the ability of the displaced branch to adapt and thrive. Thus, ‘*enram*’ in this context refers to the branch that originated from a root and then gains life in another place.

In 2017, when the *Kiriri* entered the territory in Caldas, in southern Minas Gerais, a scientific consultation was held in which the Enchanted beings were asked about the possibility of the *Kiriri* occupying that territory in southern Minas. Through this scientific process, the indigenous people gained access to *Tapuia*, the true owner of the land, a representative of the *Tapuia* people who lived there long ago. The relationship with this *Tapuia* ancestor, who claims to be the rightful owner of the land, allowed the *Kiriri* to remain in that location. One of the entity’s demands was that “the chief should place sacred, blessed lances at the four corners of the area they would occupy in Rio Verde to protect the chosen site and thereby establish *Kiriri* domains” (Henrique, 2019, p. 87-88, our translation).

However, the occupation was tumultuous. The State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG) claimed ownership of the territory, and in 2018, the *Kiriri* faced an eviction. In an effort to establish dialogue and build a relationship with the State, the indigenous people agreed to be relocated to *Patos de Minas*, a city in the *Triângulo Mineiro* region, with the promise of land they could occupy. Upon arrival, they found that the land was already occupied by *quilombolas* and members of the Landless Workers’ Movement (MST). In an improvised scientific process, the *Kiriri* were informed by an enchanted *quilombola*, relative of the *quilombolas* claiming that territory, that they could stay for a while but would soon be notified when it was time to leave.

The adaptation of the *Mesa da Ciência* (Science Table) in *Patos de Minas* represents the possibility of maintaining relationships with the *Encantados* (Enchanted Beings) even in adverse contexts. Among the *Encantados*, there are those who hold a privileged position in mediating between other *Encantados* and human subjects, such as the Chief of the Forest, the enchanted master responsible for representing the *Kiriri* at the *Mesa da Ciência*, who connects with *Roseni*, a point highlighted in Fernanda Borges Henrique's work (2019, p. 120). The Chief of the Forest is the *Encantado* who intermediates between the *Encantados* and the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde. Thus, it seems possible to consider the similar positions held by *Roseni* and *Carluisa*. Among the *Kiriri* of Rio Verde, they are the only ones who can facilitate communication with the *Encantados* and, in the same way, establish a mediating relationship between subjects and worlds, being responsible for the political formulations of indigenous religiosity. Both, like the

*Encantados*, possess the ability to traverse different realms. The literature points to similar cases where individuals who facilitate communication with the *Encantados*, particularly through their involvement in *Toré* obligations, can traverse different cosmological planes (Durazzo; Segata, 2020).

If it were not Carluisa and Roseni, other women would occupy this role of mediation with the *Encantados*. However, the ethnographic fact we find is that they, two sisters and leaders in the community, constitute themselves as relational beings; that is, bodies in relation that enable communication, and with it, the territorial occupation of the environment, which is interwoven with the relationship between the *Kiriri* and other beings, characterizing the occupation environment primarily as a space of political relations. Roseni is recognized as a leader for facilitating the Chief of the Forest's presence and for being responsible for some ritual obligations in the *science*.

[The Chief of the Forest is the] master responsible for representing the Kiriri at the Mesa da Ciência. Thus, it is the Chief of the Forest who summons other Encantados who need to speak with the Kiriri, depending on the content of the conversation. If an Encantado appears without being invited, it is the Chief of the Forest who requests their departure. In this way, in addition to organizing and controlling the ritual, the Chief of the Forest acts as a mediator between the humans and the non-humans present, following a logic of representation and mediation in the face of a situation of alterity (Henrique, 2019, p. 120, our translation).

Thus, while the Chief of the Forest is seen as a mediator "in the face of a situation of alterity," as Fernanda Henrique (2019) describes, Roseni is also viewed in this way because it is through her body and her relationship with the entity that the possibility of *facilitating communication* is configured. She is also responsible for the purification of those present, using a pipe called *paú*, recognized by the community as a sacred instrument and the primary weapon of protection for the *Kiriri* of Acre, made from the root of the Jurema tree and anointed with Jurema wine. This sacred accessory is surrounded by some taboos and specific usage guidelines, such as prohibitions against its use during moments of play and by women during menstruation (Ramos *et al.*, 2021).

Ritual obligations exist within the context of the ritual, and both Carluisa and Roseni perform them. Literature on the *Kiriri* and Indigenous peoples in the Northeast indicates that only women facilitate the *Encantados*' (Enchanted Beings') presence, even though there is no issue with men receiving them; however, this is generally not perceived as a beneficial action, as previously noted. Among the *Kiriri*, the relationship with the *Encantados* is conducted by



these two women who possess the gift. It is possible to observe that, despite having the gift, they are assigned obligations and responsibilities related to the *Toré* ritual as a form of play, which is the account we have access to. Given that science is a private manifestation, and Carlusa has informed me that research is not conducted on it, I focus on the play and reflect on its possibilities alongside science.

Another important element is that for the *Toré* to be performed, it is crucial for individuals to have a clear mind, constituting another responsibility of those who conduct the ritual: to maintain a clean mind and thoughts. It is essential to highlight that while some individuals have specific obligations related to the ritual, all other members of the community are not exempt from responsibilities. Dona Alzira shared with me that she views certain moments of distress in the village as a breach of the chain. She mentioned that sometimes, at the time of the obligation, some people are absent for “other things,” referring to activities that could wait for other times, which is where errors occur. According to her, *breaking the chain is disastrous, she said with concern*. Every break in the chain has consequences; if one errs, everyone suffers.

If the gift is present in Carlusa and Roseni, *Kiriri* women, it also requires engagement in the relationship with the Master *Encantados* and the ritual responsibilities these women hold. This responsibility also extends to the collective of the village, as it is crucial for the ritual to be performed with a clear mind. Therefore, Carlusa and Roseni have a central role as they aggregate ritual responsibilities, but for the *Encantados* to connect with those who have the gift, the community must share the ritual responsibility.

Thus, in approaching Afro-indigenous studies, given the appropriate contextualizations, one concurs with Goldman’s (2012) reflection:

The relationship between gift and initiation is neither one of opposition, redundancy, nor direct causality. If we were to employ an outdated concept, we might perhaps say that it is a dialectical complementarity. But this would not help much, as the problem with dialectics, as Deleuze observed, is not perceiving that what matters is neither the terms, nor their contradiction, nor their possible or impossible synthesis: ‘What counts [...] is not 2 or 3, or whatever, it is E, the conjunction E [...]. E is diversity, multiplicity, the destruction of identities [...]. E is neither one nor the other, it is always between the two, it is the frontier, there is always a frontier, a line of flight or flow, but it is not seen, because it is the least perceptible. And yet, it is on this line of flight that things happen, that becomings occur [...]’ (Deleuze 1976:64-66).” (Goldman, 2012, p. 282, our translation).

The line of flight, the “E” in which things come into being, in the *Kiriri* context, seems to be precisely these same “E”s, between the *gift* and the creation of relationships with the

*Encantados*. It is what allows us to see beyond the given (*gift*) and reveals the subtleties of relationships being constructed through conscious actions of obligations and care with the ritual and the body, both individually and collectively. Thus, these women possess the *gift*, but alongside it, they are entrusted with the responsibility to care for the body, mind, and especially the relationships; having the *gift* also means having a predisposition to forming relationships. It does not surprise me that Carlusa has the gift of relating to the *Encantados* and, at the same time, is the person who, in relation to other humans, articulates and facilitates movements, contributing to the community's political gains.

Carlusa tells me that *everyone has a gift*; what happens is that some people have the gift but do not understand its *meaning*. There are those who have not developed the gift, but everyone is born with it. The process of developing the gift comes with time, *with each thing occurring in its own time*; when it is meant to develop, it will. Dona Alzira, in turn, says that everyone has their own gift and that people are born with inherent knowledge, but still, they learn to develop it with the elders, with those who have already gone through the development process. Dona Alzira mentions that she is always willing to teach those who want to learn, but occasionally, she hears people say that they are “afraid.” She is emphatic in her response: *afraid of what? Afraid of praying, afraid of doing good?* Indicating that there is no need to fear the gift; what is necessary is respect, learning, and development.

## Final considerations

This work briefly aimed to present who the *Kiriri* of Acre are, where they live, where they came from, and how they have traveled to build powerful relationships with people and *Encantados*. It highlighted aspects of the devotional practices of the *Kiriri* people of Acre in the performance of *Toré*. The complex ritual of Jurema was situated as the main ritual practice of the *Ibiramã Kiriri* of Acre. Finally, elements that enable the performance of the ritual were aggregated, from the objective conditions of the ritual to the subjective aspects of relationships and the choices of individuals within the community.

*Toré* is presented as the primary ritual practiced by the *Kiriri* people of Acre and consists of two distinct moments: one public (*toré/play*) and one private (*science*). These moments are characterized and differentiated by the forces present, the presence of the *Encantados*, the use of plants and wines produced from them, the ritual objects involved, and the space in which they are performed.

The presence and potency of the wines, which are produced to meet the specific purposes of each moment of the ritual, highlight important aspects of the ritual practice in both public and private spaces. This contributes to a material and objective approach to the ritual. Each drink, participant, element, and object has a specific meaning and a defined role in the different moments of the ritual.

In the constitution of the ritual, there is a certain inclination towards gender issues that pervade the community's daily life and highlight the female bodies and the construction of relationships with the Enchanted Beings. However, the commitment of all to the ritual is revealed, as the breaking of the chains impacts everyone, making the ritual a moment of shared responsibility within the community.

This work is ethnographic; these reflections are based on a broader context addressed by the author in the master's thesis (Branco, 2023). This article expresses an interest in the interplay between the public and private dimensions of the *Toré* ritual performed by the *Kiriri* people of Acre and aims to demonstrate how people, *Encantados*, plants, territory, rituals, objects, kinship, and gender are mobilized for the production of the ritual.

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