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ARVORAR:
toward an Afropindoramic rooting of the body-territory

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por um enraizamento afropindorâmico do corpo-território

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Abstract: This article proposes the verb *arvorar* as a conceptual translation of the term *reclaim*, as mobilized by Isabelle Stengers, arguing that this choice opens pathways for a cosmopolitical translation rooted in Indigenous and Afrodiasporic perspectives. Drawing on a dialogue with Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, Luiza de Aguiar Borges, and Guilherme Gontijo Flores, translation is discussed as an insurgent practice marked by productive equivocation, indeterminacy, and encounter. The proposal of *arvorar* invokes vegetal imagination, ritual performativity, and insurgent visibility as critical operators that reconfigure modern notions of resistance. It is a spell-translation, a jaguar-word, a world-practice that resists neutrality and erasure, rooting itself in the potency of plural worlds that cross and transform one another. Regarding the performing arts, this text is the seed-gesture of a performative program in becoming, a (rhizomatic) sprouting and a (de)(re) territorialization.

Keywords: *reclaim*; *arvorar*; performative translation; cosmopolitics; afropindoramic scene.

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Resumo: Este artigo propõe o verbo *arvorar* como tradução conceitual do termo *reclaim*, tal como mobilizado por Isabelle Stengers, argumentando que esta escolha abre caminhos para uma tradução cosmopolítica enraizada em perspectivas ameríndias e afrodiaspóricas. A partir de um diálogo com Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, Luiza de Aguiar Borges e Guilherme Gontijo Flores, discute-se a tradução como prática insurgente, marcada por equívoco produtivo, indeterminação e contato. A proposta de *arvorar* convoca a imaginação vegetal, a performatividade ritual e a visibilidade insurgente como operadores críticos que reconfiguram a noção moderna de resistência. Trata-se de uma tradução-feitiço, uma palavra-onça, uma prática de mundo que resiste à neutralidade e ao apagamento, enraizando-se na potência de mundos plurais que se cruzam e se transformam mutuamente. No que tange às artes da cena, este texto é o gesto-semente de um programa performativo em devir, brotamento (rizomático) e (des)(re)territorialização.

Palavras-chave: *reclaim*; *arvorar*; tradução performativa; cosmopolítica; cena afropindorâmica.



1 Introduction

This article is born as a scene gesture. A spell. More than proposing a lexical equivalence between languages, it is written as a choreography of thought, a theoretical performance that reclaims itself at the crossroads between translation, ritual, art, and cosmopolitics. By proposing the verb “arvorar” as a conceptual translation into Portuguese of the term *reclaim*, as mobilized by Isabelle Stengers in texts such as “Au temps des catastrophes” (2009) and “La sorcellerie capitaliste” (Stengers; Pignarre, 2005), this text wants to intervene in the way we think about the act of translating — not as transition, but as creative fiction; not as equivalence, but as a vibrational body.

In the context of the performing arts and practices, arvorar emerges as a verb-body: an enunciation that is planted, bent, and raised, opening space for knowledge, cosmologies, and forbidden alliances to emerge in the plane of visibility. In Portuguese, the verb summons multiple images: the tree that grows, the flag that rises, the gesture¹ that is inscribed in space. But it is above all in the body — the body that dances, sings, speaks, and listens — that arvorar materializes its strength: a power of presence that translates and at the same time displaces the gesture of *reclaim*. In this sense, arvorar is proposed here as a verb of the scene, a dramaturgical-conceptual operator, a force that can reverberate in the ways of conceiving and producing theater and performing arts in contexts of resistance, re-enchantment, and struggle for habitable worlds.

Therefore, we assume that arvorar not only translates *reclaim* but performs it: it inscribes it in an expanded grammar that conjugates sorcery, shamanism, embodied memory, vegetality, and insurgency. It is about thinking of translation as an act of the body, as Leda Maria Martins does when proposing the spiral time of the Afro-Brazilian rite, and as erasure of colonial chronology, as Jota Mombaça proposes when evoking fiction as a shaking technology. The writing of this text, in this sense, not only intends to describe the verb arvorar but arvorate with it, operating as a bend, as a scene of thought, as a body-without-organs (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995) in search of new forms of staging of the political and poetic.

On the stages of the forest, in the rituals of recapture, in the dances of the enchanted ones, and in the fabulations of minority languages, arvorar appears as a verb that sustains worlds not by

1 In Gilles Deleuze, the gesture is not reduced to a functional movement nor to the representative expression of a subject but designates an intensive bodily power, a thought in act, that operates by hystering the form and breaking with mimetic organicity. In cinema and theater, the gesture (or Gestus, in dialogue with Brecht) is what makes bodies emerge in “impossible postures,” suspended between two regimes – the everyday and the ceremonial – and, therefore, capable of producing difference. It is an aesthetic-political procedure that shifts the primacy of the image to the coordination of body attitudes, establishing a direct theatricalization of bodies. In connection with the concept of ritornello, the gesture participates in the processes of territorialization and deterritorialization: it provisionally marks a sensitive territory (a posture, a rhythm, a cadence) while destabilizing it, opening it to the outside and becoming. In this sense, the gesture can be understood as a micropolitical operator of resistance as it opposes the normative communication and informational capture of control societies, establishing new ways of inhabiting the body and space. Articulated to the notion of body-territory, the gesture ceases to be just an individual movement and starts to function as a bodily inscription of relations with the territory, making visible in the body itself the tension between rooting and displacement, belonging and escape.



rigidity but by porosity, by listening, by composition. Arvorar practices and alliances is also a way of writing. Thus, this text assumes itself as a performative practice, a verbal score made of layers, affections, gestures, and rhythms that intends not only to say something about the world' but to make it vibrate with other frequencies.

In the sections that follow, we will articulate this verb-translation with Stengers' proposal of a "minor science," with Gaiá's political theology in Latour (2015), and with Haraway's (2016) call to "make relatives". Through the concept of arvorar, we also summon cosmoperceptions of Indigenous and *Quilombola* thinkers, such as Davi Kopenawa, Ailton Krenak, and Nêgo Bispo, and performance knowledge as political fabulation and aesthetic ritual. As a whole, the article offers itself as translation-exu², as jaguar-word, as body-scene. A text that arvorates not to conquer a place of truth but to vibrate with the worlds it summons.

The translation proposal of *reclaim* as arvorar broke its dormancy in the "gyras" of "Laroyê! Terreyro de pesquysa com corpos, culturas e artes decolonays" of the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF) and flourished at the confluence of the research of Black and Indigenous intellectuals such as Carolyna Prymeyra, Thalita de Castro, and Vermelho, whose voices speak at this moment through my embodied mouth-tree. Ewé ó! Salve Ossain³ e a Titinhã Lonkê⁴. Salve!

2 *Reclaim* and the revival of sorcery

The term *reclaim*, as mobilized by Isabelle Stengers, especially in her collaboration with Philippe Pignarre in *La sorcellerie capitaliste* (2005), presents itself as a conceptual and practical tool for thinking modes of minority resistance in the face of what the authors call "sorcery without sorcerers" — a critical definition of contemporary capitalism. It is a category that, more than referring to the mere reconquest or resumption of something lost, implies a situated practice of

2 The concept of translation-exu was formulated by Guilherme Gontijo Flores and Rodrigo Tadeu Gonçalves, later developed by Gontijo Flores in dialogue with André Capilé. It proposes a theory and a translation practice inspired by the figure of Exu, an Orisha of indeterminacy, crossroads, and interpretation. In opposition to normative translation models based on equivalence, transparency, and semantic fidelity, translation-exu takes risk, deviation, and misunderstanding as productive principles. To translate, in this regime, is not to stabilize meanings but to deregulate rational expectations, establishing a short circuit between original and translation so that the latter begins to retroactively reconfigure the former. Thus, translation-exu operates as an anticolonial practice since it rejects the hierarchy between languages and the neutrality of the translator, privileging contact, contamination, and contradiction as modes of relationship between discourses. It is about inhabiting the space of misunderstanding, understood in the manner of Viveiros De Castro as a difference of perspective constitutive of relationships, potentializing it, turning translation into a machine of variation and not of identity, closer to contradiction than to the reproduction of meaning.

Ossain is the Orisha of leaves, herbs, and the secret of healing in the Yoruba and Afro-Brazilian cosmology. Guardian of the vegetable axé, its power lies in the knowledge and ritual use of plants. It is he who holds the mystery of leaves and bushes, being invoked whenever it comes to healing, bewitching, or protecting with the charms of nature.

4 Titinhã Lonkê is the ceremonial name of Vovó Sapucaia among the Puri, an Indigenous people of southeastern Brazil. The Sapucaia, a native and majestic tree, is considered as a sacred relative and plant ancestor. Its presence carries memories, knowledge, and affections, being recognized as a living and relational entity, part of the more-than-human community that makes up the Puri world.



reappropriation and reinvention. In the Stengersian vocabulary, *reclaim* evokes an experimental openness to what has been disqualified, silenced, or forgotten by the capturing forces of modernity: magical practices, spiritual bonds, animisms, forms of care, and ways of life that escape the codifications of Western, scientific, and capitalist rationality.

This gesture of *reclaim*, although anchored in archetypal practices such as sorcery and animism, is admittedly pragmatic and speculative. It does not seek to restore a pure origin but to activate forgotten possibilities and reconstitute bonds with the more-than-human⁵. As Jamille Pinheiro Dias points out in her translation note to the work “Reactivating animism” (Stengers, 2017), the choice of the term “reactivate” aims to encompass this non-nostalgic and situational character of the proposal. However, although effective, this translation can be expanded based on a deeper attention to the language effects and symbolic connotations of the described practices.

It is precisely at this point that the proposal of the verb *arvorar* gains relevance since the Stengersian *reclaim* implies not only a reactivation but a rising up, an insurgent and lively visibilization of cosmopolitical practices. Rather than a passive recovery or a repetition of what was, it is a gesture that is updated as a political and aesthetic creation, a gesture that *arvora* a bond, that raises it as a flag, that embodies it as a presence. Stengers bets on the power of words as pragmatic operators. Speaking of sorcery, for her, “is not reducible to a metaphor” (Stengers, 2003, p. 318); it is giving body and potency to a practice. In this sense, *reclaim* is closer to a spell than a formula.

Sorcery, in this context, is no longer seen as illusion or error and is now thought of as *pharmakon*, a remedy that is also poison, that is, a practice of confronting capture that does not seek neutrality but situated agency. Stengersian *reclaim* reactivates magic as the art of efficacy, the art of “making the world” with other agents and forces, be they gods, rivers, algorithms, or fungi. By bringing sorcery to the center of political criticism, Stengers destabilizes the modern modes of hierarchization of knowledge and existence, subverting the “modern chorus” that opposes reason and belief, science and magic, progress and setback.

This reactivation of sorcery coincides in many ways with practices of resistance carried out by Indigenous peoples in Brazil, especially in the so-called “recaptures” of lands, as Sztutman (2018) observes. These recaptures are not only legal or territorial but also imply the reactivation of agencies with the enchanted, with the dead, with the ancestors. They are forms of *reclaim* that involve singing, dreaming, dancing, shamanism, and cosmopolitics. As in the sorceries of Starhawk, it is about reconnecting practices of existence and knowledge in a gesture of confrontation with epistemic and ecological barbarism.

5 The concept of more-than-human, formulated by David Abram, designates the living community that includes humans but exceeds them, encompassing animals, plants, landscapes, and land forces. The author proposes overcoming the opposition between culture and nature, stating that humanity constitutes only a subset of a broader sensitive ecology in which perception connects body and environment and intelligence is not exclusive to the human species. The term has been widely mobilized in contemporary debates on ecology and environmental ethics (Abram, 1996; 2010).



3 Arvorar: a rooted verb

The proposal to translate the term *reclaim* from Isabelle Stengers into the Portuguese verb *arvorar* rests on the ability of the latter to agglutinate senses that articulate political agency, bodily presence, and territorial inscription. In its polysemy, *arvorar* mobilizes a semantic and affective load that exceeds mere appropriation or resumption. It is by definition a verb of visibility and verticality but also of germination and rooting. *Arvorar* a flag, for example, is to make it visible in space but also to declare a position in the world in a gesture of enunciation, affirmation, and exposure. On the other hand, *arvorar* oneself in the pronominal form indicates assuming something for oneself, rising as a sign, becoming a symbolic body of a cause or a practice.

Etymologically linked to trees (*arbor*), *arvorar* refers to the idea of organic growth and living expansion, incorporating a non-linear temporality in which past, present, and future intertwine like vines on the same trunk. This vegetal dimension of the verb is especially relevant when we consider the cosmopolitical vocabulary of the Indigenous peoples of Brazil, for whom trees, rivers, animals, and winds are not natural resources or cultural metaphors but agents with whom the world is composed. But it is especially in its rooting potency that the verb connects to a radically relational conception of existence, such as that found in Indigenous perspectivism.

Conceptual precision, however, is required. In Indigenous perspectivism, as formulated by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2002), perspective is not synonymous with subjective “point of view” but rather with the ontological condition of the subject. All beings — humans, animals, spirits, rivers — share the same internal form, a “primordial humanity;” what differentiates them is the body, that is, the *habitus*, the way of being and relating to the world. The body, in this sense, is not a shell but an incarnated perspective since it defines the modes of perception, affection, and agency of each being. The forest is not a scenario but a multiplicity of agents with diverse bodies and their own perspectives.

Arvorar, in this context, is not just a vegetable metaphor for resistance. It is a perspectivist verb since it makes of the vegetable body a form of existence that acts and perceives the world according to its own logic. *Arvorar* oneself is to adopt the perspective of the vegetable, to become a relational subject of rooting, care, healing, shelter, and slowness. It is with this gesture that the Puri⁶ refer to the sacred Sapucaia, Titinhã Lonkê, as a living grandmother, a body-territory that sees, feels, and communicates, acting in the network of relationships that makes up the forest as a lively and interdependent collective.

⁶ The Puri people are one of the original Indigenous peoples in the Southeast region of Brazil, with a historical presence in the states of São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, and Espírito Santo. Although considered extinct for a long time due to forced dispersion, institutional erasure, and colonial violence, the Puri people today affirm their historical and cultural continuity by processes of territorial resumption, linguistic revitalization, and identity affirmation. Its cosmology values the relationship with the enchanted ones of the forest, the spirits of the trees, and rivers as relatives; the Sapucaia, Titinhã Lonkê, is recognized as a sacred tree and plant ancestor.



Arvorar, in this context, can be read as an ontological and cosmopolitical gesture since it is an act of making visible an alliance, of rooting an intention, of composing with a multiplicity of existences. Instead of an abstract verb, it presents itself as a semiotic-territorial operator capable of translating and performing what Stengers proposes with *reclaim*, that is, the reactivation of bonds with what has been banned, erased, or disqualified by Western modernity. As she herself states, it is not a question of “recovering a past” but of “producing agencies” (Stengers, 2017), that is, of creating worlds by experimental, pragmatic, and affective alliances. Thus, arvorar is not a nostalgic verb but a verb of becoming; it does not aim at linear return but at the ritornello, the creation (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995).

Furthermore, there is a performative and political force in arvorar that resonates with the idea of “recipes of resistance,” as formulated by Stengers in her critique of capitalism as sorcery (Stengers; Pignarre, 2005). Arvorar is, in this sense, a spell of language, it does not describe an action, it summons it, makes it happen. Just like the witch who invokes forces by naming them, the one who arvora a flag or a practice makes it inscribe itself in the world, with the power of transformation. It is, therefore, a magical verb, in the Stengerian sense of the term, the effectiveness of which lies less in representation than in its ability to establish possible worlds.

If we also consider Indigenous recapture practices as *reclaim* in act — recapture of land, of songs, of names, of dreams —, it is possible to see in arvorar a translation that respects them in their ontological and aesthetic dimension. As Sztutman (2018) recalls, Indigenous recaptures are not merely political in the legal or state sense of the term but imply the reactivation of worlds since they activate lines of communication with the enchanted ones, restore forbidden names, remake alliances with rivers, forests, and mountains. In these gestures, there is always something that arvora itself, a presence that rises, a song that is heard, a flag that is seen. The recapture, then, can be thought of as a form of arvoration, a gesture in which the Earth becomes visible, memory becomes incarnate, and resistance takes root.

It is in this horizon that arvorar reveals its translational power. It is a verb that summons the world and lets itself be affected by it, that plants and proclaims, that affirms a presence and a bond, that performs, finally, a cosmopolitics. Translating *reclaim* as arvorar is not only finding a lexical equivalent but proposing a way of thinking and acting that is inscribed in the body, in the territory, and in the language. It is to experiment, as Stengers proposes, with the devices that make us capable of resisting without falling into barbarism, composing with Gaia, with the enchanted ones, with the trees, and with the ghosts of history.

4 Cosmopolitics, sorcery, and the intrusion of the Earth

The proposal to translate *reclaim* as arvorar is rooted in a conceptual terrain populated by forces, entities, and worlds that do not allow themselves to be separated. The cosmopolitics



of Isabelle Stengers, who rejects politics as an arena of human arguments and thinks of it as a composition situated with the multiple agents that inhabit and disturb the world, finds resonance in Bruno Latours' propositions about Gaia, in Donna Haraway's multispecies alliances, and, in a deep and embodied way, in the knowledge of Indigenous and Afrodiasporic thinkers such as Davi Kopenawa, Ailton Krenak, and Nêgo Bispo.

Gaia, as the name Stengers and Latour choose for the Living Earth, is neither a controlling goddess nor a balanced totality. Gaia acts, responds, punishes, and demands. For Stengers (2009), it is the intrusion of the outside into the inside, of the Earth as a subject irreducible to the idea of "environment". To resist it with technique and abstraction is insufficient, one must listen to it and compose with its unpredictability. *Arvorar* is to align oneself with this living force not to domesticate it but to become part of its field of enunciation, making visible the presence of forgotten bonds with forests, rivers, spirits, and enchanted ones.

This active listening of Gaia finds parallel in the thought of David Kopenawa, who, in "A queda do céu," describes the Earth as a living being that breathes, thinks, and suffers before the advance of the whites and their "metal merchandise" (Kopenawa; Albert, 2010). Yanomami shamans keep this organism alive through their chant-words, the *xapiripë*, which connect sky, forest, and spirit in a web of continuous presence. For Kopenawa, without these words, the Earth gets sick. *Arvorar*, in this perspective, is more than just raising, it is sustaining a world through speech, ritual, and listening. The verb takes root in singing and rises with the body of shamans who hold the sky with their words. In their practice of listening, shamans not only heal human bodies but rebalance worlds. In this conception, the Earth is neither a resource to be exploited nor an object to be protected, but a being with agency, dignity, and voice — a view that resonates with contemporary propositions of the rights of nature.

Authors such as Karen Bradshaw (2020) legally defend the recognition of nature as a subject of law, arguing that forests, rivers, and animals should be legally represented as moral members of an ecological community. This vision, by displacing the centrality from the human, approaches Indigenous and *Quilombola* cosmopolitics, which recognize the Earth as a relational, sensitive, and sacred entity. Ailton Krenak also describes the Earth as a body in which "there is no outside." In his words, "humanity separated from nature is a dangerous fiction" (Krenak, 2019, p. 33), and rivers, stones, and animals are relatives with whom one lives and learns. Instead of "saving the planet," Krenak invites us to suspend the sky, to dream again, to recover the delicacy of belonging. *Arvorar*, in this sense, is also a gesture of belonging since it is the body that surrenders itself to the network of life, that allows itself to be crossed by the forest, that reactivates its capacity for affection and composition.

This notion of the Earth as a living organism can be deepened by the distinction that Gilles Deleuze makes between land and territory. Land is a flow, a plane of immanence; the territory is the space rhythmized by marks, signs, and gestures that organize vital relationships (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995). The song of the bird, the tracing of the root, the dance of the shaman, all these are forms of



territorialization not as a rigid delimitation but as an affective and vibrational inscription. Arvorar here becomes a form of living territorialization by composing meaning with others who inhabit the forest and its surroundings.

Quilombola thinker Nêgo Bispo, now enchanted one, proposes the concept of confluence in opposition to that of coexistence. Coexistence, he says, is only tolerance; confluence is a living mixture, mutual affectation, a river that does not return to being the same after finding another (Bispo, 2021). This cosmoperception requires other temporalities, other languages, and other forms of justice. The cosmopolitics of Isabelle Stengers (2009), when approaching confluence, becomes more than composition with non-humans, it becomes a crossroads of bodies-territories in transformation.

In the knowledge of Kopenawa, Krenak, and Nêgo Bispo, sorcery is not only an art of resistance, it is a form of the world. A politics that is made through enchantment, relationship, and care. Arvorar, then, becomes a verb of crossing and responsibility; it is a tree that is planted for the children of the mountains, it is a chorus that is sung for the ancestors of Black Warth, it is a flag that is raised not against but with those who still breathe among us, even if already buried, even if invisible.

Thus, the translation of *reclaim* as arvorar is completed as a gesture of crossroads because sorcery and shamanism, cosmopolitics and confluence, resistance and enchantment are intertwined in it. It is the image of a tree that rises in the clearing opened by lightning, the roots of which touch the knowledge of the quilombo and the branches of which are crossed by the song of the birds that announce the rain. Arvorar is to perform a breach as in Dénètem Touam Bona's proposition of a cosmopoetics of refuge (Bona, 2020) since the author understands refuge not as passive escape but as an insurgent practice of recomposing worlds, a Brown, stealthy gesture that camouflages and recreates existence among the foliage. Inspired by Afro-Atlantic cosmologies, the author proposes the refuge as a space of symbolic and ecological rooting, in which art, dream, ancestry, and rhythm operate as forces capable of reenchanting the world in the face of Capitalocene devastation. Just as Stengers summons listening to Gaia as a force that intrudes and demands composition, Bona proposes an ecology of the senses, activated by mães-de-santo, shamans, witches, and masters of the invisible who dialogue with everything that vibrates (Bona, 2020, p. 10-11). Thus, arvorar becomes a practice of browning, that is, a line of flight that does not escape, but founds, plants flags, invokes spirits, dances words.

As Bona proposes, dark times call for stealthy resistances, capable of evading the all-encompassing capture of control societies. It is not a question of facing Leviathan directly but of dancing through its shadows, opening cracks. Arvorar, in this sense, is a gesture of twisting and breathing, it is a leaf that rises when everything seems to fall. A practice of camouflage, agglutination of forces, (re)creation of worlds, such as quilombos, terreiros, palanques, clay stages.

Therefore, the cosmopolitics evoked here is not only theoretical, it is dramaturgical. It is a politics of incarnated presences, of traces, of rhythms. A sorcery that operates not only against



capital but with the Earth as an active refuge and radical fabulation. Arvorar, in this context, is the verb that translates *reclaim* not because it replaces it but because it reinvents it in the language of the enchanted ones, in the voice of the forests, in the gesture that springs from the ground on stage.

5 Translation as cosmopolitics

Translating *reclaim* as arvorar is not a neutral lexical choice but a cosmopolitical operation that inhabits the space of misunderstanding and contact between worlds. This translation intends not to clarify but to destabilize, not to fix but to proliferate meanings. It is in this horizon that it becomes productive to articulate the Stengersian proposal with the concepts of translation-exu and with the figure of the jaguar-word, as developed by Guilherme Gontijo Flores, André Capilé, and Luiza de Aguiar Borges. These authors propose ways of translating that reject the Enlightenment and Cartesian model of clarity, transparency, and equivalence and that assume language as a field of inconstancy, transgression, and creative indeterminacy.

Translation-exu, inspired by the figure of the Orisha Exu, acts as a deviation and crossroads: it does not communicate univocally but provokes, shuffles, and reconfigures the source text. Its function is not to transfer an original meaning into a new code but to contort the text until it is lost and found again, multiplied. Exu, in this context, is the symbolic operator of a translation practice that bets on ambiguity and displacement as forms of insurgency against colonial models of meaning. As Borges (2023) writes, it is a translation “that throws away” the original, “making it ruin and openness, not archive.”

In the same way, arvorar offers itself as a verb-translation that embodies this productive ambiguity. Instead of setting the political gesture of *reclaim* in a neutral formula such as “reactivate” or “resume,” arvorar inscribes it in an imagetic and cosmological field where resistance is vegetal, ritual, and symbolic. Arvorar a practice is to make it visible and powerful, it is to make it grow in the midst of devastation, it is to plant it as a living flag. Like Alberto Mussa’s jaguar-word, which destabilizes the distinction between theory and fiction, arvorar operates in a border zone, disavowing the official language and connecting itself to the indomitable power of contact languages, enchanted songs, situated knowledge.

In the perspective opened by Exu, the jaguar exposes the way in which the colonial power was historically articulated to the imposition of a single language — Portuguese — as a way of subjecting Indigenous peoples and erasing linguistic and affective multiplicities. The criminalization of the general language, named by the Pombal Directory⁷ as “diabolical,” reveals the refusal to the

7 The Pombal Directory (1757-1758), promulgated by the Marquis of Pombal, instituted a set of laws aimed at integrating Indigenous peoples into colonial society by the replacement of missionary tutelage by civil administration and the transformation of villages into towns. One of its central axes was a linguistic policy that prohibited the use of Indigenous languages and the so-called general language and imposed Portuguese as a compulsory language, understood



indecision and creative chaos that inhabit Indigenous cultural practices. Translating, therefore, is always a political and cosmological gesture that can operate both as an instrument of domestication and as a device of reinvention.

By setting arvorar in motion with *reclaim*, what is at stake is precisely this refusal of clarity as an ideal. Translation is not done to explain the world but to inhabit it with others. As Viveiros de Castro (2004, p. 8) states, to translate is to install oneself in the space of misunderstanding and “inhabit this space not to undo it but to potentialize it”. Translation-exu and jaguar-word share this gesture, that is, rejecting the plan, leaving the linear representation, and allowing language to be a place of presence, contradiction, and alliance.

The proposal defended here is that arvorar works as a spell-verb that embodies in Portuguese the speculative, pragmatic, and ontological force of *reclaim*. We speak pretuguês, puriguês⁸. Like Exu, arvorar communicates in stumbling, hesitation, and crossroads; like the jaguar, it crosses genres, defies borders, and resists capture. To translate, then, is to bewitch language not to dominate it but to allow oneself to be crossed by it and compose other worlds with it.

6 Arvorar time: scene, fiction, and the insurgency of the body

The proposal of arvorar as a conceptual and poetic translation of *reclaim* expands even more when crossed by the formulations of Leda Maria Martins and Jota Mombaça about time, the body, and the scene as a place of critical enunciation. Both authors operate with notions of time that defy linear chronology, opening the past as living matter and the future as a spectrum summoned by the performative gesture. Arvorar, in this terrain, is not only a verb of vegetal resistance but a politics of presence, an incarnate fiction that rises in the body, in rhythm, and in insurgent memory.

Leda Maria Martins proposes, from the experience of Afro-Brazilian peoples, especially in the context of the Congado and the reign of Minas Gerais, the concept of spiral time performances (Martins, 2021). Time, according to her, does not unfold in a line but in spirals of return and re-actualization. Each gesture in the ritual scene — a stride, a chant, a drumbeat — reinscribes the past into the present and projects the future as ancestry in motion. Arvorar, within this understanding,

as an instrument of “civilization” and cultural unification. This imposition operated as a form of domination by language since it aimed to disarticulate the symbolic, political, and cosmological bases of Indigenous peoples, erasing their own modes of communication and collective memory and subordinating them to a luso-colonial identity.

⁸ The term “pretuguês” was coined by Lélia Gonzalez to name the linguistic variation spoken by Black populations in Brazil, which is marked by the influence of African languages on Portuguese. More than a simple “popular variant” or “grammatical error,” pretuguês is, for Gonzalez, a political and aesthetic gesture of resistance, evidence of Black linguistic agency and the living presence of African origins in Brazilian cultural formation. It is a language of survival and re-existence that reinvents Portuguese based on the diasporic experience and the cultural-linguistic crossroads experienced in everyday life. In resonance, the expression “puriguês” has been used by Puri artists and thinkers as a way of naming the linguistic recapture of their original language, considered extinct for centuries by colonial records. Puriguês operates as a device for the poetic, political, and cosmological resurrection of the Puri language, activating the right to speak and write from a body-territory that has never ceased to resist, even if silenced.



is a verb that rotates, that resonates in the rhythm of the drum, that takes root in the dancing body as circular resistance not reducible to Western chronology.

The scene, in this context, is a field of fabulation and re-enchantment. Arvorar a practice — a dance, a song, a stride, a cry — is to produce a time of its own, to found an ephemeral and at the same time rooted territory that takes place at the confluence between the now and the before now. As in the *Quilombola* cosmoperception of Nêgo Bispo, Leda's spiral time finds in arvorar not a description but a way of creating oneself in the world, a statement that walks, that turns, that overflows the margins of the text and summons the body to the center of the language. Jota Mombaça, in turn, writes from fracture and catastrophe and proposes that fiction is a technology of re-existence in the face of collapse. In his work, the racialized, deviant, Black, and Indigenous body is not only wounded by history, it refabulates it, twists it, burns it on the scene. Writing and performance are here tools to “abolish the now,” as the author says, that is, to break with the normative time that organizes the modern colonial world. Arvorar, at this point, becomes a gesture of twisting, a verb that rises in the shake, that bends the dominant grammar, and stages what did not fit on the stage of history.

There is, therefore, a field of resonance between arvorar and the scene practices as politics of time and fiction. If *reclaim* in Stengers is a gesture of sorcery and reactivation, arvorar, in the light of Martins and Mombaça, is also a verb that stages, that bends the arrow of time and summons the impossible as a possibility. It is a translation-exu because it deals with the twist, with the fertile error, with the ambiguity that makes the mistake a method; it is also jaguar-word because it inhabits the undecidability between theory and art, thought and performance, word and world. By arvorating a practice, resistance is fictionalized not because it becomes an illusion but because it is recognized that all true politics requires a work of imagination. The scene, then, is the terrain in which translation becomes incarnate, in which the word becomes body, in which ere fiction does not cover up reality but reveals it in its multiple potency. Arvorar, finally, is a way of making time with the body — a time that turns, that fails, that sings, that escapes — and that, in escaping, opens the way to another world to come.

7 Reforesting thought or arvorar oneself: echoes of a shamanic-macumbistic path

[The leaf vibrates before falling. The drum sound intertwines itself with the birds singing. The body bends and listens.]

Arvorar is a verb of the body that listens to the ground. A body that is planted on the scene as one who takes root in the forests, as one who offers gesture to the breath of the enchanted ones. This action, when combined in the plane of the performing arts, becomes a bridge between the sensitive and the invisible, between the scene and the ritual. The proposal to reforest thought flourishes in this space between, as articulated by Way Pury (2022), who names a practice of



recomposing the world by the living presence of Indigenous, quilombola, and Afro-Atlantic knowledge in action. It is a theater of enchantment where the body ceases to act to become passage and planting ground. At the center of this proposal is the figure of the actor-shaman not as a fusion of roles but as a zone of confluence. The hyphen between “actor” and “shaman” is not merely linguistic; it is a cut that opens. It is the space where the chants of Puri shamanism and the foundations of Ossain leaves fit, where the Oxóssi arch and the pajé’s maracá intersect. In the body that dances, sings, breathes, and surrenders, the scene takes root in the forest and evokes not only dramaturgies but cosmologies.

Ossain in the Yoruba tradition is the Orisha guardian of leaves, of healing, of the vegetable secret. He knows the names of plants and their hidden powers. His presence is fundamental in every ebó, in every axé. No medicine works without Ossain, the elders say. Oxóssi, for his part, is the silent hunter, master of the forest and the wisdom of food. It is he who inhabits the threshold between forest and village, between recollection and sharing. Both Ossain and Oxóssi operate as actors in a theater of rooting, theater of leaves, traces, roots, and omens.

In this sense, arvorar oneself on the scene is also to open oneself to these foundations, it is turning the stage into a clearing where the leaf speaks, where the gesture invokes the forest. Arvorar is intertwined with praying, with the praying body, with enchanting space. The performance ceases to be a mere aesthetic event to become a cosmopolitical activation, like the orô made for Ossain before harvesting any sacred plant. The performer in this rite-scene is a leaf that sings before being picked.

Arvorar, thus, is a verb of the body-forest. A verb that roots performers in the lineages that cross them, allowing their body to be territory of crossing between Indigenous shamanisms and African wisdoms. On the floor of this scene, the caboclo da mata dances, the pajé sings, and Ossain’s wind blows. Arvorar is no longer a metaphor, it is a rite in the flesh. It is a dramaturgy that sprouts from the leaf and that dreams, as proposed by Jota Mombaça (2021), about abolishing the now, establishing another time — spiral, ancestral, vegetable.

To reforest thought, as Pury writes, is to plant word where there were fence. It is a pedagogy against symbolic and epistemic deforestation. It is a performagic action that renews the world from the edges, from the margin of the stage, from the riverbank, from the trunk of the Sapucaia. The verb arvorar, in this fertile field, becomes an operator of passage between worlds, a healing practice, a gesture that does not represent but activates. A verb that dances as a branch, that keeps secret like a root, and that offers itself to the ground as an offering.

If the actor-shaman is a body at a crossroads, arvorar oneself is a gesture of crossing. Between the Oxóssi drum and the Ossain leaf, between the Puri chant and the Black fable, between the body and the territory, the scene is planted like a forest that dreams.



8 From verb to gesture: arvorar as situated practice

For the verb *arvorar* not to remain only as a conceptual operator but to allow itself to be recognized in situated practices, one must move the argument to the field of contemporary Puri experiences, in which rooting, body-territory, gesture, and memory are articulated as modes of cosmopolitical re-inscription of the Indigenous presence in southeastern Brazil. What I have been naming as Puri re-enchantment is not presented as a cultural metaphor but as a historical and performative process of arvorating, that is, a set of practices in which memory becomes a body, the territory becomes gesture, and the scene becomes place of ontological emergency. In these practices, *arvorar* is no longer just a verb-translation of *reclaim*, becoming a living dynamic of recomposition of the world in which dramaturgy, rite, and performance produce presence, alliances, and continuity.

The Puri people are one of the original peoples of the region today comprised between the states of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and Espírito Santo. Violently hit by the colonial fronts of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Puri were inscribed for long periods in the official narrative of extinction, having their ways of life reduced to ethnographic records, scattered toponyms, and practices classified as “folkloric.” The contemporary movement of Puri resumption — here referred to as re-enchantment — manifests itself by processes of Indigenous self-declaration, reactivation of oral memories, ritual reinvention, and the emergence of artistic practices guided by the notion of body-territory. It is less about restoring a fixed identity of the past than about sprouting in the present bonds that were broken between people, lands, names, and gestures, reinscribing the Puri presence as a living force in the fabric of the world.

An example of *arvorar* in action can be observed in the performance-rite *Arvorar*, held on the occasion of the inauguration of the Puri Garden at the School of Education of UFJF in 2025. Unlike a work conceived from a single creative path, *Arvorar* manifests itself as a meeting of rivers, being a confluence between different artistic, political, and cosmological trajectories, recognized as tributaries of the same gesture of care for the territory. Before constituting itself as a performance, *Arvorar* is formed as a crossroads of practices since the works developed separately by its performers begin to touch each other, contaminate each other, and produce a common scene. In this sense, the performance is not a starting point but the result of a process of collective *arvorar* in which singular experiences are rooted in each other, composing a shared body-territory.

The first watercourse that feeds *Arvorar* is born from the dramaturgy developed by Felipe Moratori Puri at the head of the Sala de Giz company, especially in the shows *Terra sem Acalanto* (2018) and *Rede Bruta* (2023). In both non-human or liminal characters emerge — the old Puri Master of the Nests and the fish Acácio —, operating as ontological devices: figures through which language, memory, and territory are rearticulated in contexts of catastrophe.

Terra sem Acalanto takes place in a fictional area in inner Minas Gerais, fabled as a scene of devastation after a burial by mud, in which the narrative follows a gravedigger who finds survivors



of a small submerged community, questioning themes such as faith, justice, and the possibility of recomposing life after ruin. In this suspended space between life and death, the Master of the Nests emerges: a figure crossed by the Puri language and by a ritualized corporality built from Indigenous, African, and Afro-Brazilian references under the direction of Tatiana Henrique. His speech not only communicates but establishes a regime of existence in which the burial ceases to be an absolute end to become a condition of continuity, making the Puri language simultaneously intrusion — by interrupting the linearity of the hegemonic discourse — and root — by embedding in the body of the scene an invisibilized territoriality.

In *Rede Bruta*, the field of fabulation moves to the interior of an urban apartment, where Albertine, a cook averse to social networks, sees her neighbors become famous by the “Otto show,” a channel that stimulates the exposure of intimacy in exchange for visibility and money until, in a fantastic way, she gives birth to a fish whose childbirth goes viral and introduces an ontological rupture because the being, called Acácio, reveals himself intelligent and by an ancient language announces the end of the world; his word does not inform but prophesies, does not translate but enchants and destabilizes, inscribing in the urban scene — just like the Master of the Nests — not a folkloric past but another time in which fish, woman, language, and catastrophe intertwine with each other.

This dramaturgical operation gains density when situated in the biography of Moratori, whose maternal family inhabits the so-called Grota dos Puri, in the Linhares neighborhood, in Juiz de Fora, a region marked by numerous water sources. In this context, the Puri language that emerges in his texts can be understood as a language-territory, that is, a word crossed by springs, by family histories, and by an urban space that preserves under the asphalt the memory of an Indigenous land. His characters operate, thus, as gestures of linguistic territorialization since speaking Puri on stage is to produce territory, reinscribing in the urban space an Indigenous presence historically declared non-existent.

The second watercourse of the performance-rite *Arvorar* is born from the cold waters of the Cosmococa of Hélio Oiticica, in Inhotim, place where the performer who today is called Vermelho got his name. His trajectory is based on a rite of passage performed after crossing the installation *Desvio para o Vermelho* by Cildo Meireles and submerging into Cosmococa. Between the chromatic saturation and the sensory suspension of the immersion, it constitutes a gesture of identity transfiguration since becoming Vermelho (Red) is not adopting a pseudonym but arvorar as a sign-body, inscribing in the name itself a material relationship with color, water, and artwork.

This gesture culminates in the ritual action performed in 2015, when Vermelho performs his “desvia sacra,” that is, 90 rounds nine times around the work *Elevazione* by Giuseppe Penone until physical exhaustion. The tree-sculpture becomes the cosmopolitan axis of action not as a surrounded object but as an expanded body around which vegetation, sculpture, and performer become indiscernible. The rite dialogues with the Tree of Oblivion, a memorial of the Slave Route in Ouidah, Benin, where the turns operated as a symbolic erasure technique. In Vermelho, this



movement is reversed since the rotation ceases to produce oblivion and begins to establish a tree of remembrance. The gesture that once served colonial submission is reappropriated as a technology of re-registration of the body in the interrupted history of the diaspora. In the light of *Arvorar*, this work can be read as a radical form of symbolic territorialization: putting roots in one's own body and making ritual exhaustion an opening to other temporalities.

The third watercourse corresponds to my own path as a performer and researcher, initiated with the Borum Krenak people, inhabitants of the left bank of Doce River (Watu). Initially guided by an ethnocenological approach to rites and Maret spirits, this research was crossed by the rupture of the Vale dam in 2015, which directly hit the Watu and led to the suspension of great collective rituals. On the last day of my second stay in Krenak territory, when I asked matriarch Laurita Feliz Krenak about cosmology, I received the answer: "if you want to know something, walk. Go ask the forest."

This advice founds the cartographic method of wanderings. Instead of interrogating human interlocutors as a priority, I start walking through the territory, establishing relationships with plants, mountains, stones, and watercourses. From the walks, songs and dances arise, which at dusk are returned to the Watu, whom the Krenak call mother, father, and grandfather. The performative gesture ceases to seek knowledge as extraction and begins to configure itself as a practice of relationship: walking, singing, dancing, and returning to the river what was lived with the Earth.

In this context, Laurita narrates a dream in which the Watu, as the mud advances, begins to run backwards, leading its soul to the stony bottom where the mud does not infiltrate, stating that there it will remain collected until it can flow again as a living river. It is from this dream that the performance-rite *Dar sonhos de beber ao rio* is created, conceived as a gesture of care directed at Watu. The performance consists of offering the river in song and movement the dreams gathered in the wanderings, establishing a minimal scene of relationship between human body and river body. In this work, *arvorar* manifests itself as a practice of relational rooting: to make a gesture sprout where everything seems interrupted; to sustain in rhythm and in the word the possibility of a future for a body-territory declared dead. The performer does not talk about the river but exists with it; the scene does not denounce but cares.

It is at the confluence of these three paths that the performance-rite *Arvorar* is constituted. Held on the occasion of the foundation of the Puri Garden at UFJF, the action was organized in three movements. In the first, Felipe Moratori Puri presented a container with water from the Puri Grotto, spoke of the Indigenous presence in Juiz de Fora, performed the voice of an old fish from his dramaturgy, and invited participants to donate their best memories of water to that body of water. In the second one, Vermelho narrated a dream in which he dialogued with his grandmother cabocla Puri and recalled that she recognized herself as Black-Puri, inviting the audience to do nine laps around the bed of earth where the tree will be planted, remembering their grandmothers and who they are or were. In the third one, Way Pury spoke of the kinship relationship that the



Puri have with the Sapucaia — the Lonkê or Titinhã Lonkê, the original grandmother — via Puri ancestral narratives and chants in the original language and asked participants to give the seedling memories of trees, not of any tree but of the one that fed their family, was a child's perch, or shaded meetings in the backyard of the house.

When the Sapucaia was planted, the earth was placed on its roots and water was poured to feed it. In this gesture, the participants donated memories to the water, the earth, and the tree, creating bonds that go beyond the technical act of planting and establishing an alliance between human bodies and the plant body. The tree begins to grow territorialized by these memories, distributed now in the long time of its rooting and related to the memories of those who planted it.

Thus, *arvorar* is not presented as an ecological metaphor or as an isolated symbolic ritual but as a cosmopolitical operation to recompose bonds between memory, territory, and Indigenous presence. By articulating language, turning, and walking, the performance-rite makes the planting of the Sapucaia a gesture of historical re-inscription: a tree that not only grows on the soil of the university but is rooted in narratives, dreams, and alliances, making the Puri Garden a place where the Indigenous presence ceases to be past and affirms itself as a living continuity.

9 Conclusion: arvorating worlds at the crossroads

Translating *reclaim* as *arvorar* is to plant words as stakes in the humid floor of the Atlantic Forest, where moss climbs the stones and vines entangle themselves on the highest branches as if they were also snakes, rivers, or prayers. It is not a dictionary translation but a lateral, shamanic, and mestizo listening made between the chants of the inhambu and the murmurs of the waters of a river that recalls forgotten names. *Arvorar*, here, is not only verb, it is gesture, it is ritual, it is enchantment. It is a way of enunciating the world with roots on the feet and leaves on the shoulders.

Throughout this article, we followed the movement of *reclaim* like a Stengersian spell, not a nostalgic return to the past but the reactivation of interrupted practices, unauthorized knowledge, alliances between humans and more-than-humans. We have seen that *arvorar* — a word born from the body of the tree and the act of raising a flag — has a ritual and political power that brings it closer to the gesture of sorcery, Indigenous and quilombola resumption, and ancestral singing. Like Exu at the crossroads, *arvorar* is a verb that communicates in the folds, that challenges the straight path and imposes attentive listening to the outlaw.

If the Atlantic Forest is a forest in a continuous process of disappearance and resistance, it is also a living metaphor for a thought that refuses to be monoculture. It is among its wet leaves, its fleeing animals, its shrouded trails, and its ancestral ghosts that *arvorar* finds its abode. As the contact languages pursued by the Pombal Directory, as the myths devoured and reinvented by



jaguar-words, as the fertile misconceptions of translation-exu, arvorar does not want to establish meaning but to populate language with possible worlds.

When arvorating a concept, one raises not a static signal but a vegetable antenna that tunes in to chants, protests, rituals, and dreams. A gesture that, as Haraway proposes, makes relatives where there were borders; that, as Latour suggests, listens to Gaia where there was object; that, with Stengers, evokes the spell where there was science. Translating *reclaim* as arvorar is, thus, to compose with the creative chaos of the forest, to let language sprout among the vines and politics flourish among the stones, where forgotten alliances still stubbornly germinate.

In times of fences and fires, it may be necessary to do more than resist, it may be necessary to arvorar oneself as a tree-bridge, as a word-being, as translation-spirit. For only those who arvorar with the forest can talk to her. And only those who listen to their multiple names will know that arvorar is not translating to understand, it is translating to remain alive among the living.



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