

## Errata

p. 105, 18 th line reads as follows: of animal and plant worship in Guaraní mythology. Since then I have

p. 111, 15 th line: but basing his conclusions on his own fieldwork and that of other investigators

## ANIMAL AND PLANT CULTS IN GUARANÍ LORE

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The present paper was prepared at the request of Dr. J. R. Gorham, Division of Medical Entomology, Institute of International Medicine, University of Maryland, U.S.A., for a proposed book on the Ecology of Paraguay. The book has not appeared owing to two specialists not having complied with their promise of preparing chapters on specific subjects. But as some of the data contained herein — connected with a little-known aspect of Guaraní culture, plant cult — is not readily available to some scholars, I have decided to publish the paper. I am taking this step in pursuance of the campaign begun more than a decade ago by Professor Egon Schaden and myself in an effort to draw attention to the urgent need for methodical research among Guaraní-speaking remnants. Up to date we have been successful insofar as the French Government has, thanks to the interest displayed by Messrs. Robert Heine-Geldern, Alfred Métraux and Claude Lévi-Strauss, sent the Clastres-Sebag Mission to Paraguay to study Guayakí culture, the first exhaustive study of a Guaraní group to be undertaken in Paraguay. It is to be hoped that this is but the first of a series of such studies to be undertaken before it is too late.

In *El culto al árbol y a los animales sagrados en la mitología y las tradiciones guaraníes* (1950) I drew attention to what are evidently traces of *animal* and *plant*, it was a question of what material to select in order to obtain further information on the subject from among four Guaraní-speaking nations: Mbyá, Chiripá, Pãi-Cayuá and Guayakí<sup>1</sup>) — the scattered remnants of which survive in the eastern part of Paraguay. So when I was asked to prepare a paper giving an idea of the Guaraní concept of *animal* and *plant*, it was a question of what material to select in order to give, in a short paper, a tolerably correct idea of just what animals and plants represent in the *Weltanschauung* of our Indians.

After writing *El culto al árbol* I have read some of Dr. Otto Zerries' most interesting and fascinating work on animals and plants in South American mythology, and exchanged some letters with him on the subject. The work of this eminent specialist, together with that of Haekel (1954), suffice to show how little is really known of Guaraní spiritual culture, in spite of the "cubic meters of literature" already published on the subject.

It will, I think, be admitted that to do justice to the subject, a fair-sized book would be necessary; at the same time, access to bibliography is, one might say, inexistent here; omissions will therefore, I trust, be pardoned.

*The Animals*

*The jaguar.* With exception of "civilized" man, the jaguar is the Guayakí's most feared enemy. Countless taboos reflect the fear which this great cat inspires. A few of these follow (see Cadogan, 1960):

Do not eat monkey meat while lying down:  
the jaguar will rip your belly.

Whoever does not share his venison with his  
fellows will be mauled by the jaguar.

Young men should not eat eyes of young  
carpinchos: they will not see the jaguar.

The ceremony called *kymata tyrō* (= purification with *kymatá*) also reflects the fear in which the jaguar is held. *Kymatá* is a liana, probably the *timbó* used by other tribes to poison fish. Upon the termination of the seclusion and fast connected with the onset of menarche, a girl is ceremonially purified (= *tyrō*) by rubbing her with an infusion of *kymatá* bark in water (Cadogan, 1960):

We purify with *kymatá* to keep *bayjá* away;  
the jaguar loses itself, it goes away.

When the Guayakí has *bayjá*, all the jaguars  
come; the *bayjá* accompanying the Guayakí's  
body are the many jaguars, therefore we purify  
with *kymatá*.

It is therefore not surprising that a celestial jaguar should occupy a prominent place in their mythology (Métraux and Baldus, 1946; Cadogan, 1960):

The jaguar mauled the sun,  
it devoured him, it gnawed his bones.

The men yelled hoarsely, the women shrieked,  
the growing children cried shrilly.

They made smoke with the wax of *choá* bees  
to chase the jaguar away.

They beat the trees with their bows, they cleaved  
the earth with axes, they sent up to heaven  
the scent of *choá* wax.

The disembodied "heavenly" soul (= *ové, ovwé*) of the jaguar, like the human soul and the souls of some other animals and birds, acquires the power of unleashing the elements upon ascending to *Chingy-tý*, the Guayakí paradise:

Baipú pichuá ro chonó pirirí (pirirí),  
bwytú pambú, kyraý ri verá pirã:

Pichuá (= meteorological phenomena)  
of the jaguar are thunderclaps,  
roaring wind, in the sky red lightning  
(possibly: extensive, outstretched lightning).

It may be added that, in spite of the fear in which the jaguar is held, its flesh is not despised, but rather is freely consumed by the Guayakí. One of my best informants was a woman called Baipú (= jaguar), a name which is proof that Baipú's mother ate some jaguar flesh just before her daughter's birth.

Beliefs similar to those of the present-day Guayakí regarding the jaguar as the cause of eclipses were widespread among the different Guaraní-speaking tribes at the time of the Conquest. The *Vocabulário na língua brasílica* (Ayrosa, 1938), compiled during the first decades of the seventeenth century, states under the heading *Eclipse da lua*, "Regarding an eclipse of the moon, they say that it is eaten by some wild beast. Others, such as the Tupinambá, say a tiger. The Tupí say it is a serpent". According to Montoya's classical *Tesoro de la Lengua Guaraní*, compiled about the same time, an eclipse of the moon is *yaci hoú yaguá*: moon ate dog (= the dog ate the moon). This is the literal translation in modern Guaraní; the word *yaguá* (= dog) however, originally meant jaguar, as it does up to the present in some mythical contexts. So it may be assumed that all the Guaraní tribes whose different dialects were studied by Montoya as a basis for his *Tesoro* considered eclipses to be caused by a celestial jaguar. Is it a coincidence that the ancient Peruvians also believed that a celestial jaguar or tiger caused eclipses (Zerries, 1959)?

A figure comparable to the celestial jaguar of the Guayakí is not mentioned in the Mbyá mythical texts. I have not questioned the Chiripá or Pãi-Cayuá on the matter. The same mythical monster still exists, however, in the beliefs of other Guaraní remnants, as is pointed out by Nimuendajú (1944) quoting Nordenkiöld. The belief also exists in the texts of the Apapokuva — a branch of the Chiripá — studied by Nimuendajú (1944). An eternal bat, an eternal jaguar and an eternal boa are the guardians of the heaven of Ñanderuvusú (= the creator).

In the lore of the Mbyá, Chiripá and Pãi-Cayuá Indians the jaguar is an incarnation of the "primitive beings" or "primeval jaguars" that had devoured the mother of the heavenly twins, Sun and Moon. The mother, gravid with the twins, was abandoned by the creator and, being unable to follow his tracks, took the road which led her to the home of the primitive beings or future jaguars. She was devoured there, but it was impossible to

kill the twins. They were reared by the future jaguars whom they held to be their uncles and aunts, and whose mother they took for their grandmother. In the Mbyá myth, a parrot (in other versions, a pheasant) tells the twins that their mother had been killed and eaten by the future jaguars. The twins then destroyed all the future jaguars but one, a pregnant female, that was able to escape. *Kuarayá* (= Sun), enraged at the sight of his enemy escaping unscathed, uttered a curse which changed her into a "noisome being":

Noisome Being, sleep and awake;  
 Being who renders noisome  
 the springs and the banks of the  
 genuine waters (= flowing waters),  
 fall asleep.

Then awake (in the shape of a Noisome Being).

Those versed in tribal lore affirm that, had not *Kuarayá* been so overcome with rage at the sight of his enemy escaping that he uttered the word *avaeté* (= noisome, frightful) the primitive being would have been changed into some harmless beast, and mankind would not have had to contend with such a dangerous enemy as the jaguar (Cadogan, 1959 a, 1959 b).

In the Pãi-Cayuá invocation, which is recited with the object of keeping the jaguar away, the animal is addressed as *che tutý* (= my uncle) and *takeresé marangatú* (the first is the secret or sacred name of the jaguar, the second word means blessed or privileged).

A Mbyá myth reminiscent of the Guayakí purification rite already referred to, *kymatá tyrō* is *i-vai-kué jepota-á* (= he or she who is possessed of the evil one — jaguar). The person so described is said to be unable to resist a craving for raw meat. A complicated ritual is resorted to in which the aid of *Jakairá*, the god of spring and patron of sorcerers, is invoked. If the ceremony proves ineffectual, the possessed person is killed. In the mythical culture of some groups, the transformation of the possessed person is more dramatic. His canine teeth become enormous in size and he metamorphoses into an inhuman form called *jagueté avá* (= jaguar man), a counterpart of the European werewolf and the *luisón* of Paraguayan folklore (Cadogan, 1963).

*The big wild pig.* Called *chachú* in the Guayakí language, *tajasú* in Pãi-Cayuá and Chiripá, and *tajachú* in Mbyá, the big wild pig is another animal occupying a prominent place in Guaraní mythology. In the Mbyá language the female pig is *tajachú* and the male is *karaveré*. In Chiripá the *karaveré* is the big boar that leads the herd. The Guayakí celebrate the capture of a *chachú* with ritual song, the soul of the pig being surrounded in *Chingy-tý* (= heaven) with thunder, lightning and rain, as is the case

with other animals (Colleville and Cadogan, 1963). Mbyá, Chiripá and Pãi consider this pig to be a privileged animal. Both Chiripá and Mbyá honour "Owner of the Pigs" and "True Father of the Pigs" with ritual song and dance. Investigations would surely prove that the Pãi-Cayuá do likewise. This true father of the pigs is for the Mbyá *Karái Ru Eté*, who lives in a land situated beyond the sea. In Guaraní mythology the sea separates the earth from the "promised land". The three Indian groups have a legend in which a young Indian, obliged for some misdemeanour to marry a sow, follows the herd to the abode of the true father of the big wild pigs. (Cadogan, 1959 a, 1959 b).

*The celestial serpents.* The Guayakí believe that the rainbow consists of two enormous serpents, namely, *Membó Ruchú* (= Big Serpent) and *Krijú Braá* (= Black Boa), who:

Descend into the watercourse  
of the carpincho, into the marsh.

One announces the probable death of an infant, the other warns that a member of the tribe may be mauled by a jaguar (Cadogan, 1962). — The eternal boa, guardian companion of Ñanderuvusú, the Apapokuva creator, was mentioned above. *Embó* (*Hembó*) is the Mbyá name for a large snake which, according to my informants, inhabits the steep banks of streams. *Embo-kwá* (*Hembo-kwá*) = the Serpent's Cavern, is what the Mbyá call a certain heavenly body, probably a nebula, the terms being reminiscent of the Apapokuva boa and the rainbow serpents of the Guayakí (Cadogan, 1959 a, 1962).

*The Tapir's Path.* The tapir, too, has his path in the heavens, namely, the Milky Way, which is called *Tapi'í Rapé* and *Mboreví Rapé* in Guaraní dialects. The idea is certainly not unique to the Guaraní-speaking groups, rather the belief is widespread in South America (Zerries, 1959).

*Earthly monstrous prototypes.* A fundamental belief about animals is that they are all "imperfect images of eternal animals" or, to put it another way, "earthly manifestations of an eternal cosmic being". But in addition to these "eternal animals", there are "monstrous earthly prototypes" of each animal species. Most of these, perhaps all, live alone or in pairs (but do not breed) in the densest forests and remotest mountains. Each kind is called by the species it represents, followed by *jaguá*, a word which originally meant "roaring one" = *javú á*, and was applied to the jaguar, other felines, and some other carnivores, including the dog. The *Eira-jaguá* is one of these monstrous prototypes. The *eirá* is a small mustelid (*Tayra barbara*) which is very fond of honey. But since *eí* or *eí-ra* is the Guaraní name for honey, the monster could be either the "spirit" of the carnivore, or that of the bees or honey. A point in favour of the bees is the Guayakí belief in

*baivwã*, which are more or less dangerous maladies attributed to the "spirit" of different sorts of bees. The Mbyá *Eirá-jaguá* is a monster in human form covered by scales impervious to arrows. Its only vulnerable spot on its body is a small circle on the chest. This monster is the subject of several legends (Cadogan, 1959 a, 1959 b). Proof that this myth of the earthly monstrous prototype is not limited to one or two Guaraní-speaking groups or tribes is provided by Paraguayan folklore in the names *Mbói-jaguá*, a monstrous water serpent, and *Tejú-jaguá*, a dragon or monstrous iguana, literally: iguana dog.

*Animal alter ego.* According to Montoya's linguistic classic already referred to, *tupichúa* means "familiar spirit". The term is translated the same way — *espírito familiar* — in the *Vocabulário na língua brasílica*. The term *pichuá* is used by the Guayakí, who omit the so-called "oscillating prefix" (in this case *tu*) to designate the meteorological phenomena which may be produced by the souls of human beings and animals. In Pãi-Cayuá, however, it is the name of an alter ego which takes the form of an animal, visible only to the shaman, which accompanies a person throughout life, perched on his shoulder. Some *tupichúa* are birds or other animals, some are good, others bad. The appetites of the *tupichúa* govern those of its host. Some ailments, such as sore eyes and toothache, are attributed to the *tupichúa* (Cadogan, 1962, 1962 b). As Dr. Zerries pointed out to me recently (personal communication), there is apparently a connection between the Pãi-Cayuá alter ego and the fact that all Guayakí owe their names to birds, insects or other animals devoured by their mothers just prior to parturition. Probably there is also a relationship between the Pãi-Cayuá belief that *tupichúa* is the cause of some ailments and the fact that the Guayakí attribute most severe illnesses to the spirits of bees, coatí, armadillo.

*The celestial animal prototype.* The only "animal" constellations mentioned in the Mbyá texts, in addition to the Tapir's Path and Serpent's Cavern, are the Ostrich (= *Gwyrá Ñandú* or *Ñandú Gwasú*), and the Pleiades (= *Eichú*) which will be referred to later. However, every animal is the imperfect or earthly image of a "genuine" animal (*ha'eté'í va'é* = he who is the genuine one) which inhabits the outskirts of the creator's paradise (Cadogan, 1959 a):

The first being which soiled the earthly  
abode was the primeval serpent:  
it is only his image  
which now inhabits our earth;  
the genuine primeval serpent lives  
on the outskirts of our father's paradise.

The first being which dug in the earthly  
abode was the armadillo;

the one existing on our earth is not  
the genuine armadillo, but only his image.  
The genuine armadillo lives on the  
outskirts of our father's paradise.

The first being to entone a song  
regarding the appearance of prairies,  
the first to express his joy at their  
appearance was the red partridge.  
The red partridge which sang a song  
about the appearance of prairies is  
now on the outskirts of our father's paradise;  
The one inhabiting the earthly abode  
is merely its image.

Dr. Otto Zerries, unaware of the Mbyá texts which I have quoted, but its earthly manifestations". Thus we have the same concept expressed gators, describes the "master" or "father" of each animal species as follows: "It is an eternal cosmic being, and all the animals of its species are nothing but its earthly manifestations". Thus we have the same concept expressed first in Indian myth and then in the phraseology of the modern anthropologist.

*The privileged birds and the thunder birds.* According to the Mbyá texts, migratory birds at the end of autumn fly to *Gwyrá Ru Eté Ambá*, the abode of the genuine father of birds. These birds are referred to as *Gwyrá Marangatú* (= privileged or blessed birds). The Guayakí counterparts of these privileged birds are the *Kwipirúgi* and *Chonó Kybwyrá* (= birds of thunder or the tempest). They unleash the tempest and hurl lightning at the tallest trees of the forest. Then they return to Chingy-ty

To sleep with Thunder, their father.  
When the Ocotea plant renews its shoots  
at the beginning of spring  
the birds of the tempest return  
to earth to lay their eggs. (Cadogan, 1959 a, 1962).

The following song of the Mbyá probably represents a link between the Guayakí birds of the tempest and the Mbyá privileged birds:

Come, vulture, opposite the *karandá*  
of brilliant foliage. (*Karandá* = *Prosopis* sp.)  
When the true mother Tupã (goddess of the storm)  
kneels, when she kneels  
her body flashes, her body flashes.

When her body flashes, the sons of Tupã  
 move their bodies rhythmically,  
 move their bodies rhythmically.

When they move their bodies rhythmically,  
 the Eternal Suruku'á (*Trigonorus rufus chrysochlorus*)  
 sings his sad melody,  
 sings his sad melody.

When he sings his sad melody, and we,  
 following the road, following the road  
 say "My head aches",

The soul of the tree wounds us,  
 wounds us.

In these verses the wife of Tupã, owner of the waters and goddess of the tempest, is teaching her sons the ritual dance. Lightning flashes from her body and the boys move their bodies rhythmically. A vulture, another bird which in Guayakí lore has the power to unleash the tempest, precedes the approaching storm and takes refuge in the *karandá* tree of brilliant foliage (the fact that it is brilliant reveals that it is located in the heavenly regions). A *suruku'á* sings a sad song, and whoever ventures forth at such a moment risks being wounded by the soul of a tree, several of which are endowed with this malign power.

An interesting link between Apapokuva and Guayakí mythologies is a large scissor-tailed bird called *tapẽ* in Guaraní. According to Nimuendajú, the *yvyra'ijá* (= messengers) of Tupã, the god of the storm, sometimes assume the form of the *tapẽ* and attract the rain-clouds. This *Tapẽ*, called *pirá bwa kakõ* by the Guayakí, is one of the birds of the tempest, and is considered to be the father of fishes (Cadogan, 1962).

One of the Guayakí birds of the tempest which also occupies a prominent place in Guaraní lore is *Krumá*, a hummingbird. In the Mbyá creation myth (Cadogan, 1959 a) this bird appears simultaneously with the creator

In the midst of primeval darkness,  
 fluttering about among the flowers which adorn his headdress and  
 Nourishing him with the product of the skies.

Both the Chiripá and the Pãi-Cayuá have ritual chants dedicated to the hummingbird:



Hummingbird emits lightning flashes,  
lightning flashes!

Has the nectar of your flowers perchance  
befuddled you, Hummingbird?

Hummingbird emits lightning flashes,  
lightning flashes!

In these verses, Hummingbird, bearer of news, partakes of the "nectar of the flowers", the ritual name of the ritual *kawĩ* (= beer). He is surrounded by the lightning flashes which in Guaraní mythology always surround heavenly beings. The verse

"What news have you to impart, Hummingbird?"

signifies the mythical role of the hummingbird as messenger and counsellor to the shaman:

*Ro ñe-mo-ñondeguá voí nte mainó me.*  
It is a fact that we allow ourselves  
to be led (counselled) by Hummingbird,

says the Chiripá *oporaíva* (= singer, medicine man), in agreement with the practice of his Mbyá and Pãi-Cayuá confreres. Thus the Hummingbird is a bearer of messages from the celestial regions:

He proceeds from the outskirts  
of our father's paradise  
to dance among the children  
in the earthly abode.

The messages he brings are all concerned with the welfare of the children of the tribe and must be interpreted by the shaman (Cadogan, 1959 b).

*The parrot of the discreet speech.* In the Mbyá myth it was *Parakáo Ñe'engatú* (= the parrot of the discreet speech) that revealed to the heavenly twins, Sun and Moon, that their mother had been devoured by the Primitive Beings. To prevent Parakáo from revealing the secrets of fate to mankind: *o-mbo-arakuaá* (= impart knowledge of the universe), the older of the twins banished him to the end of the earth and charged him with the custody of the rope or cable by which the human soul must cross the sea which separates earth from heaven (Cadogan, 1959 a). According to the Pãi-Cayuá texts, the parrot is the guardian of the paradise of Ñane Ramói (Samaniego, 1956, Cadogan, 1962 c). The same "holy bird" —

although in this case not specifically called a parrot — is referred to in a hymn in which a shaman describes his ascent to the abode of Pa'í Kwará (= shaman sun), the "owner of the sun" (Schaden, 1964).

*The eternal bees.* In classical Guaraní the Pleiades are called *Eichú*, the name of a small bee. In referring to frost, the Mbyá sometimes say

*Eichú reviraó ho'á.*

The *eichu's* pollen is falling.

Mention is also made of the *eichú* in the following mythical text (Cadogan, 1959 a):

Ñande Ru, our father, angered by the lack of piety in mankind, exclaimed:

I no longer see good thoughts in our sons.

Ñande Chy, our mother, answered:

I still see good thoughts in my children.

Behold, on the outskirts of my abode

I have gathered eternal baskets

for my children to play with

when they return to me.

Look! Among the tussocks which dot

the meadows surrounding my abode

I have caused *Eichú Marane'ỹ* (= eternal bees) to nest

in order that my children, when they return to me,

may rinse their mouths with honey.

*The flaming wasps.* The *kavendý* (= flaming wasps) guard the eternal palm (= *Pindovy-jú*) on the road to the Chiripá heaven. At the foot of this palm, *Charyi-piré* awaits her grandchildren as they return to the heavenly abode. She has there the nest of *kavy apu'á* (= small bee) which provides honey to refresh her grandchildren on their way to the outskirts of the house of *Ñande Ru Vusú*, the creator (Cadogan, 1959 b).

*The eternal wasp.* *Kavusú Ypý*, the eternal wasp, is important in Guaraní mythology, and is the subject of a ritual dance by the Chiripá. The eternal wasp is called *Kavy-jú* by the Mbyá and *Mberú Kaguá* by the Pãi-Cayuá. It is, like the hummingbird, an ally and counsellor of the medicine-man, bringing messages from the heavenly regions, which only the shaman is able to interpret (Cadogan, 1959 b).

### The Plants

*Plants and the Indian heaven.* For the Guayakí Indian, heaven is a vast grove of *chingý* (*Ruprechtia laxiflora*) (Cadogan, 1962). To the Guaraní studied by Schaden (1954) heaven is an endless orchard in which dwarf trees of all imaginable varieties provide a neverending supply of delicious fruit. And there are cedar trees, too, (*Cedrela fissilis*), which will be mentioned again later. Fruit and honey (usually obtained from hollow trees) abound in the Apapokuva paradise (Nimuendajú, 1944). The Chiripá paradise is *Okavusú*, a place where the eternal potato, the eternal cotton plant and other eternal cultivated plants abound (Cadogan, 1959 b. <sup>2</sup>) Both Pãi-Cayuá and Chiripá myths have the *yrukú* (= *Bixa orellana*) growing along the road to heaven. The mansion of *Ñande Ru Vusú* is usually described as being "situated beyond the eternal shrub". This designation may be related in some way to the anatto tree (*yrukú*, *urukú*, *Bixa orellana*) from which a ritual paint is made.

*The pindó palm.* *Arecastrum romanzoffianum* is, or was, the most important plant in Tupí-guaraní economy. Therefore, it is not surprising that five eternal *pindós* support the Mbyá universe, that the hero of the flood myth would save himself by creating a *pindó* palm in the midst of the waters, and that an eternal *pindó* towers above the fountain where *Pa'i Reté Kuaráy* (= shaman of the sun-like body), the father of the race, was begotten (Cadogan, 1959 a). Nor is it a coincidence that "Long ago, when there was a big flood (Guayakí), men climbed on *pindó* palms and lived on the fruit..." (Métraux and Baldus, 1946).

*The cedar tree.* *Cedrela fissilis*, among other trees, occupies the Guaraní heaven. The Mbyá have a sacred name for the cedar, *Yvyrá Ñamandú* (= tree, creator), but in all the Guaraní dialects the everyday name is *ygarý* (= boat tree). These names recall a day when this tree must have been of great economic importance to the Indians. It may be inferred from the common name that the tree was economically important because it was used to construct boats. The Tupí-Guaraní Indians were formerly renowned as sailors, but nowadays boatmaking is a forgotten art and sailing is mentioned in just one myth, so far as I have heard, namely, the one already noted in which a young Indian follows a herd of swine to the abode of *Karái Ru Eté*. The young man returned from there in an *ygá* (= boat) belonging to an alligator. — From the wood of the *ygarý* the Mbyá carve stools or benches which have an esoteric meaning. All the utensils — connected with the ritual dance of the Chiripá are made of cedar wood.

*Bamboo.* A species of *takwá* (= bamboo) may be said to symbolize womanhood in Guaraní mythology. In the ritual dance the women beat time with a bamboo rod. The Mbyá sacred name for the human female

skeleton is *takua-ryva-'i-kāgā* (= skeleton of her who beat time or lead the dance with the bamboo). In the Pãi-Cayuá epic poem recorded by Samaniego (1956) the ritual bamboo is referred to as *kamañý tĩ* (= white *kamañý*). This word is unused in contemporary Guaraní dialects, but the *Vocabulário na língua brasílica* lists it as a species of cane, "cana que tem nós". *Takwá* is a secret or sacred name applied to women by the Mbyá, Pãi-Cayuá, Chiripá and its branch the Apapokuva (Nimuendajú, 1944). More significant still is the fact that the Pãi-Cayuá have a sacred song attributed to *Takwá Rendy-jú Guasú* (= Big Flaming Eternal Bamboo), whom will be referred to below. In the Chiripá myth, the bamboo was brought from the east by *tajasú*, the big wild pig (Cadogan, 1959 b).

*Maize, tobacco and timbó.* Both Schaden (1954) and Watson (1952) refer to the divine origin of maize. In the Chiripá myth, it was found by *Ñande Ru Vusú* in a bamboo growing in a patch of forest he was clearing for his plantation (Cadogan, 1959 b). Tobacco and the pipe were created by *Jakairá*, the Mbyá god of spring and patron of medicine men, so that people could protect themselves against evil spirits, enemy sorcerers, and disease. Tobacco smoke is referred to in their texts as *tatachiná rekó achý* (*rekó achý* = mortal or earthly; *tatachiná* = the life-giving mist from which the universe and all living things are believed to proceed (Schaden, 1954).

*Timbó*, a large liana used for poisoning fish, was originally the son of *Kuaráy* (= Sun) the cultural hero. Whenever he wanted fish to eat, he told his son to wash his feet or take a bath in a stream, this being sufficient to provide him with all the fish he needed. The son was changed into a *timbó* by *Charĩa*, a rival of *Kuaráy*. A fight between the two rivals developed in which *Kuaráy* was momentarily overcome, but he eventually won. This battle is re-enacted in the skies whenever an eclipse occurs (Cadogan, 1959 a). Although the idea of plants being the embodiments of human beings is common throughout South America (Métraux, 1948), the story of *timbó* is the only instance of this belief which I have personally found in contemporary Guaraní mythology.

*The origin of plants.* After the world had been destroyed by fire, *Kuaráy* sent the bird *Piritaú* to see what remained of the earth. *Piritaú* found a nightshade plant (*Solanum sp.*) called *ka'á eté'í*, among the roots of which the remains of the earth had begun to expand. *Piritaú* ate the berries of the *Ka'á ete'í*. After passing through his body, the seeds sprouted and produced the *kurundi'y* (*Trema micrantha*). The seed capsules of the *kurundi'y* burst, the seeds fell to the earth and sprouted, producing the *ygarý* (cedar, *Cedrela fissilis*). All sorts of trees and plants emanated from the seeds of the *ygarý*, and the earth in due course became fit again for human beings to inhabit (Cadogan, 1959 b).

In the Pãi-Cayuá creation myth, *Ñane Ramói* caused an infinitesimally small portion of earth (*heỹ mbaguá-va rapichá* = equal to the wheel of a

spindle) to appear and then to expand to become the abode of his future sons (Samaniego, 1956). Upon the expanding earth the *para'y-ry* (= sea-tree) appeared, each branch and twig of which was a different species of tree, shrub or plant. The only tree which appeared independently was the *yvyrá reakwã* (= scented tree) or *yvyrá pajé* (magic tree). The secret or sacred name of this tree is *pira-rý*, and it is the property of *Pa'í Kwará* (= Owner of the Sun). At the time of the Conquest, according to the *Vocabulário na língua brasílica*, the morning star was called *pirá panéma*.

Our knowledge of Guayakí mythology is at present rather fragmentary, but enough has been learned of their beliefs to show that a fruit consumed by a pregnant woman influences the "nature" or "condition" of her child. Although all these Indians have names of animals, both the fruit or vegetable influencing their "nature" and the animal to which they owe their name are called *iy-rangá*, *iy-gi*, *ijá-gi*, terms which mean *trunk* or *column* (Cadogan, 1960 a, 1962). — In Mbyá lore, all trees have souls, some of which are good, others bad. The soul of the evil tree wounds people (Cadogan, 1959 a). Upon entering the forest in search of honey, the Pãi-Cayuá invoke *Yvyra Tĩ Parã Ngatú*, *Yvyrá Marangatú*, terms which might be translated "good white resounding tree, blessed tree", (Cadogan, 1959 c). The Guayakí belief and these latter beliefs are in all probability somehow related.

*The spurge tree.* *Kurupika'y* (*Sapium sp.*) is a tree which poses an interesting problem. The literal meaning of the name is: 'y (= tree), *ka'á* (= plant), *Kurupí* (= a satyr): tree which is the plant of Kurupí. Numerous authors have established the fact that *Kurupí* is a Guaraní satyr (Carvalho Neto, 1961), and ample evidence of his amorous proclivities may be found in Paraguayan folklore. The satyrs of both Mbyá and Pãi-Cayuá mythology, however, have entirely different names, and there can be no connection whatever between them and the *kurupika'y*. The origin of the name and the evidence from Paraguayan folklore provide ample proof that the tree once "belonged" to an erotic spirit or satyr of some Guaraní-speaking group which inhabited Paraguay. For further information on this subject, see Cadogan, 1950 and 1962 b.

*Relationship between the animal and vegetable kingdoms.* Fiebrig-Gertz (1923) refers to "the close relation of conceptions both of vegetable and animal character", adding that "about 25% of all vegetable items are connected with animal names". Bertoni, whose opinion regarding Guaraní botanical nomenclature differs radically from that of Fiebrig-Gertz, considers these "animal" names to be proof of logical, scientific reasoning (Bertoni, 1940, p. 153). Of 400 Guaraní plant names analysed, 104 (about 25%, as stated by Fiebrig-Gertz) are closely related to animals. Three are used indistinctly as names of animals and of plants; 61 are plants "belonging" to certain animals; while 40 are a tool, an ear, the genital organs, etc., of

different animals. — According to a legend extant in Paraguayan folklore, upon the creator or cultural hero ascending to heaven, he assigned to each animal — mammals, reptiles, birds and insects — a determined plant. Some of these “animals’ plants” are either medicinal or valued as charms. (Cadogan, 1955). While among the Guayakí, my informants referred to *jeiví*, a tree, *Patagonula sp.*, using the same name when referring to a whistling bird:

*Jeiví oky bu-ro myryngá tapi ty:*

Patagonula shoots when bees honey customary: when the Patagonula buds or shoots, hives fill with honey.

*Jeiví puká gatú go-ro chéygi wẽ u:*

“Jeiví” cries agreeably then brothers come out: the “jeiví’s” cry is a sign that the visiting season has begun.

The same is the case with *krumá*, name of the *Vitex cymosa*, also the name of a kind of hummingbird; while *wachá-wachĩ*, deer’s thorn; *chachú kybetá*, pig’s labret, and similar names, would indicate that the close relationship between the concepts of *animal* and *plant* is a characteristic of the language as a whole.

#### *Animal and plant worship*

*Animals and gods.* Several years ago I ventured the opinion, based on information obtained exclusively from Mbyá sources, that the name of *Ñamandú*, the Mbyá creator, was probably derived from *ñe’ã* (= to strive after, to pray) and *andú* (= to perceive). Information obtained later obliged me to modify this opinion, offering as the etymology of the word *ñaguá* (= jaguar); *ũ* (= black) with *nd* interposed for euphony (Cadogan, 1959 c). Müller (1934) suggests that the word may be derived from *ñandú* (= spider) or *ñandu gwasú* (= ostrich). The name of the Mbyá mother of gods, *Jachuká Chy Eté*, and the name of the Pãi-Cayuá life-giving element, *Jasuká*, are probably of animal origin. The same may be said for the Mbyá god *Karái Ru Eté* and the Pãi-Cayuá god *Karavié Gwasú*.

In other words, the names of four of the principal Guaraní gods are derived from the names of animals. This conclusion is based on analysis of fieldwork by Nimuendajú (1944), Müller (1934), Schaden (1954), Samaniego (1956), and the present writer, my contribution being mainly the interpretation of the word *jachuká*, *jasuká*. According to my Indian informants, *jachuká* is the Mbyá sacred name of a woman’s headdress which formerly was used in the ritual dance. My deduction that the word is derived from *ta-jachú* (= the big wild pig) agrees with that of Müller. It now appears, however, that this “headdress” is actually the wide part of

a tumpline which is placed on the forehead of the woman carrying an *ajaká*, the typical Mbyá basket. Therefore, the true name of *che remi mbo-jachuká-va*, the sacred name of womanhood, must be "they whom I have provided with baskets". (Cadogan, 1962 d).

Although much painstaking field work needs to be done, the information thus far presented in this article suffices to show that what might be called an "animal cult" must formerly have been widespread, and to a certain extent still persists, among Guaraní-speaking nations. Therefore, it would not be in the least surprising if the names of some of the principal Guaraní gods were linguistically related to the most feared animal, the jaguar, and one of the most useful, the big wild pig. We should note that all Guayakí personal names are the names of animals; that the Guaraní studied by Nimuendajú have two souls, one of divine origin, one of animal origin; and "the Ka'ygwã whose second soul is that of a jaguar, is not merely comparable with jaguars: he is a jaguar in human form" (Nimuendajú, 1944, p. 19). About a quarter of some 1200 personal names of Guaraní Indians listed in the parochial registers of the Paraguayan missions which have been examined, are the names of animals. Animal names are still used, to a limited extent, as sacred personal names by the Chiripá Indians (compare Métraux and Baldus, 1946; Cadogan, 1959 b, 1959 c).

There is an intimate connection between this matter of animal cults and a statement by Watson (1952) which refers to Guaraní seats: "Small, low wooden benches, carved from a single block of wood, sometimes, if not always, in the shape of animals". The name of these seats is *apyká* (*apy*, *gwapy* = to sit; *a*, *ha*, *ka* = the instrument with which to do something); and *apyká*, in the religious vocabulary of both the Mbyá and Pãi-Cayuá, is the symbol of incarnation. *Mbo-apyká* (= to provide with a seat or cause the soul to incarnate) means in effect that the creator provides the soul with a seat on earth. *Ñe-mbo-apyká* = to incarnate, to embody, to provide oneself with a seat on earth (Cadogan, 1959 a).

In summary then we may state the following points of evidence: a. The names of some of the principal Guaraní gods are probably of animal origin. b. When the soul of a Guaraní Indian is sent to earth, he is said to take a seat which is generally, if not always, in the shape of an animal. c. All Guayakí names are the names of animals. d. Twentyfive percent of the Guaraní converts whose surnames have been studied chose the names of animals. e. The Chiripá still use, to a limited extent, the names of animals as sacred personal names.

*Big Flaming Eternal Bamboo.* What has been said regarding plants in Guayakí and Guaraní mythology could be accepted as evidence of a sort of tree cult. I shall conclude this paper with a quotation from a document which, while showing the importance attributed by the Guaraní to the plant world, is at the same time proof of tree worship.

In 1956 General Marcial Samaniego requested my help in the translation of an epic poem he had obtained from the Pãï-Cayuá Indians. Since at that time I was not conversant with the Pãï-Cayuá dialect, I enlisted the aid of four leaders of that tribe (Juan Bautista Ibarra, José Arce, Agapito López, Pablo Alfonso). Also, I had to analyse a mass of linguistical data before a tolerable translation of the poem could be achieved. Among this data I discovered *Takwá Rendy-jú Ñengareté* (= the sacred chant of Big Flaming Eternal Bamboo) which originated as follows:

*Ñane Ramói Jusú Papá*, the creator, accusing his wife of adultery, resolved to abandon her and return to heaven. But leaving he sent a storm to either frighten or destroy his wife, called *Ñande Jarí Jusú* (= our big grandmother), or *Ñande Sy Eté* (= our genuine mother), her sacred name being *Takwá Rendy-jú Gwasú* (= flaming eternal bamboo). To placate her husband, she sang the following *ñengareté* (= sacred song or chant):

Perfect must my genuine mother have been  
 (in bygone ages)  
 as she flourished her bamboo,  
 as she flourished her bamboo  
 for the first time.  
 As she danced with her bamboo  
 (in bygone ages),  
 as she danced with her bamboo  
 for the first time.  
 As she raised her bamboo,  
 as she raised her bamboo  
 with her hand for the first time.  
 "To big Karavié, first,  
 obediently entone long ritual chants.  
 "To big shaman Ñamói, first,  
 obediently entone long ritual chants.  
 "To Ararý Vusú, first,  
 obediently entone long ritual chants.  
 "To Tanimbú Gwasú, first,  
 obediently entone long ritual chants.  
 "To Japarié Gwasú, first,  
 obediently entone long ritual chants . . ." 3).

For further details I must, for brevity's sake, refer my readers to the original, with translation into Spanish, published in "Revista de Antropologia", X, 1962. For the matter under consideration, it will suffice to state that, according to my informant Pablo Alfonso, *Ararý Vusú*, together with his helper or lieutenant *Tanimbú Gwasú*,



cares for little plants, he cares  
for plants in their totality,  
throughout the whole extent of the earth.

*Ararý* means "skytrees", and is the Guaraní name of *Calophyllum brasiliense* which grows on Jasý Retã Island near Carmen del Paraná and in the mountains of Amambái, this latter region being in the vicinity of the Pãi-Cayuá habitat. *Tanimbú* (ashes), is *Terminal* sp., and *Tanimbú yva* (= ashes tree) is *Machaerium acleatum* (Michalowski, 1960).

The ritual chant of Takwá Rendý-jú Gwasú, Big Flaming Eternal Bamboo, dictated to me by my Pãi-Cayuá friends, shows that a *sui generis* tree worship still exists among the sophisticated Guaraní remnants inhabiting eastern Paraguay, and makes patently clear that the mythology, language and folklore of the Guaraní Indians have not as yet received the attention they deserve from men of science<sup>4</sup>).

#### NOTES

1) Schaden, in both his works quoted, has referred to the differences between Mbyá, Chiripá and Pãi-Cayuá cultures. As regards the Guayakí, enough has been published to show that their culture is the most archaic of the great Tupí-guaraní family.

2) A possibly significant detail omitted from my "Cómo interpretan los Chiripá la danza ritual", though having mislaid some notes, was the fact that the potatoes growing in Okavusú were said to produce tubers above ground.

3) The original also contains the following verse:

Tupã ñaguã ma pore'ý ramo guaré  
ta-pe-ro-sy katupyrý:

which I translated as follows:

About the Tupã Ñaguã, when they did not yet exist,  
obediently entone long ritual chants.

Further fieldwork has shown that the true meaning is:

About the time the tupã (souls) had nothing to talk about,  
obediently entone long ritual chants.

This is corroborated by Montoya; see "e" = to say; che ñagua ma ndarecói = I have nothing to say, I have nothing to talk about.

It should be added that this chant refers to the time when the earth had not yet appeared, before it was covered by forests, "before souls had anything to talk about", etc.

4) As stated, the purpose of this paper is to present some data regarding animal worship and a vegetable cult in Guaraní religion and not, as might possibly be inferred, in support of the thesis that these concepts predominate in their Weltanschauung. The following — very elementary — chart will possibly be of interest in this respect:

*Gods of probable animal origin:*

Ñamandú Ru Eté	Mbyá creator
Karái Ru Eté	Mbyá fire god
Jachuká Chy Eté	Mbyá sun goddess
Jasuká	Pãi "origin of the universe"
Karavié Gwasú	Pãi guardian of Jasuká

*Gods of evident vegetable origin:*

Ararý Vusú	} Pãi guardians of plants
Tanimbú Gwasú	

*"Personal" gods:*

Ñane Ramói Jusú Papá	Pãi creator: (t)amói = grandfather
Amõy, Améi	Sirionó principal god
Jamó Pylvé	Guayakí mythical hero
Ñande Ru Vusú	Chiripá creator = our great father
Ñande Ru Tenondé	Mbyá first god = our first father
Ñande Jarí	Pãi wife of creator = our grandmother, synonym: Flaming Bamboo.

*"Meteorological" gods:*

Amã. Sirionó god of waters and tempests. Amá = rain, in Sirionó and other dialects.  
Chonó. Thunder, central figure of Guayakí mythology.

Hiu. Sometimes used by Pãi to designate the creator; connected with iu/siu = thunder in Sirionó dialect.

Hyapú Gwasú va'é. Chiripá creator and prominent Pãi god; full title: Ñande Ru Vusú ñande rovái re Hyapú Gwasú va'é = our great father who thunders loudly in the east.

Kwaráy. Sun, the major of the twins, worshiped by Pãi, Chiripá and Mbyá under titles of Pa'í Kwará, Pa'í Reté Kwaráy and Kwaray.

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