



DOI
10.11606/issn.2525-3123.
gis.2022.181092

ASHE, WHAT IS THIS?

DOSSIÊ RELIGIONS: THEIR IMAGES,
PERFORMANCES AND RITUALS

ANA CLARA SOUSA DAMÁSIO DOS SANTOS

Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, DF, Brazil, 70910-000 - dan@unb.br


ORCID
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7426-7486>

IMAGINING THE UNIMAGINABLE

I was at Ilê Axé Idá Wura waiting for the bath my mother was going to give me. Kneeling, naked, I stared directly at the floor. Never into her eyes. Then, my mother told me to wait there for a little bit, as I was, and left. While she was gone, I lifted my head and looked at the wall. There, I saw some saint's clothes that were hanging. These were probably from some saint-sister of mine who had bathed before. Clothes like mine, white, frilly, round and sweaty from the day's work. I looked at my bead strings hanging beside my clothes, looked at the lamp above them, and automatically imagined a drawing. I imagined my making, imagined what my gaze couldn't see when closed. It wasn't just imagining, it was also living in a world populated beyond people and things, it was living in a world populated by Orishas.

This imagined drawing guided me to a path trailed by someone who was an anthropologist, but who at that moment was just a saint's daughter. I couldn't feel at ease to photograph my saint's house, nor to picture that intimate, ritual and familial moment. However, I felt comfortable to draw. Drawing has such things. That image didn't leave my head, it accompanied me wherever I went. So I decided to materialize it. It was at this point that other drawings emerged along with some *ítàn(s)*¹ I was reading. These *ítàn(s)* who helped me to draw-live were present in the book organized by Reginaldo Prandi (2003) entitled "Mythology of the Orishas".

1. *ítàn (s)* is the Yoruba term used for the collection of all Yoruba myths, songs, stories, and other cultural components.



The drawings I drew accompanied me further than the way an anthropologist tells and narrates a lived experience (Benjamin 1994), linking what I read in a book with the *itàn(s)* I heard from my elders (Damasio and Ahualli 2018) and the possibility of putting the (for some people) unimaginable on the paper. In this sense, this drawn-essay is an invitation to imagine not only Orishas, but to envision whatever they can say and communicate. Being Eshu the one who always opens everything, eating first, being the messenger, the owner of movement and communication, he is the one who will open this drawn-essay. Imagining the unimaginable is a possibility to account for other subjective facets that are not only momentary, but also ancestral. They are possibilities of postponing the end of our world, of imagining what this world can be like (Krenak 2019).

The drawing presents itself as the possibility of a spelling, an invitation to know the lived world, walk and also understand that, in the words of Michael Taussig (Parreiras 2020, 3), “Anthropology is in a good place, I believe, between the intimate and philosophical, and that’s what I like”. It dwells in the space of what is lived, dreamed, felt, experienced, expected and, in so many ways, materialized (as in this drawn-essay).

TRANSLATION

Leandro Marques
Durazzo.

ABSTRACT

“Axé, é o que é” [ashe is what it is] is an essay that seeks to present imagined, lived, felt, mourned and experienced worlds through drawing. The latter presents itself as a space for dialogue with material and immaterial beings, with that which escapes the eyes, the colors and some rationalities.

KEYWORDS

Anthropology;
Drawing; Axé;
Ashe; Candomblé.

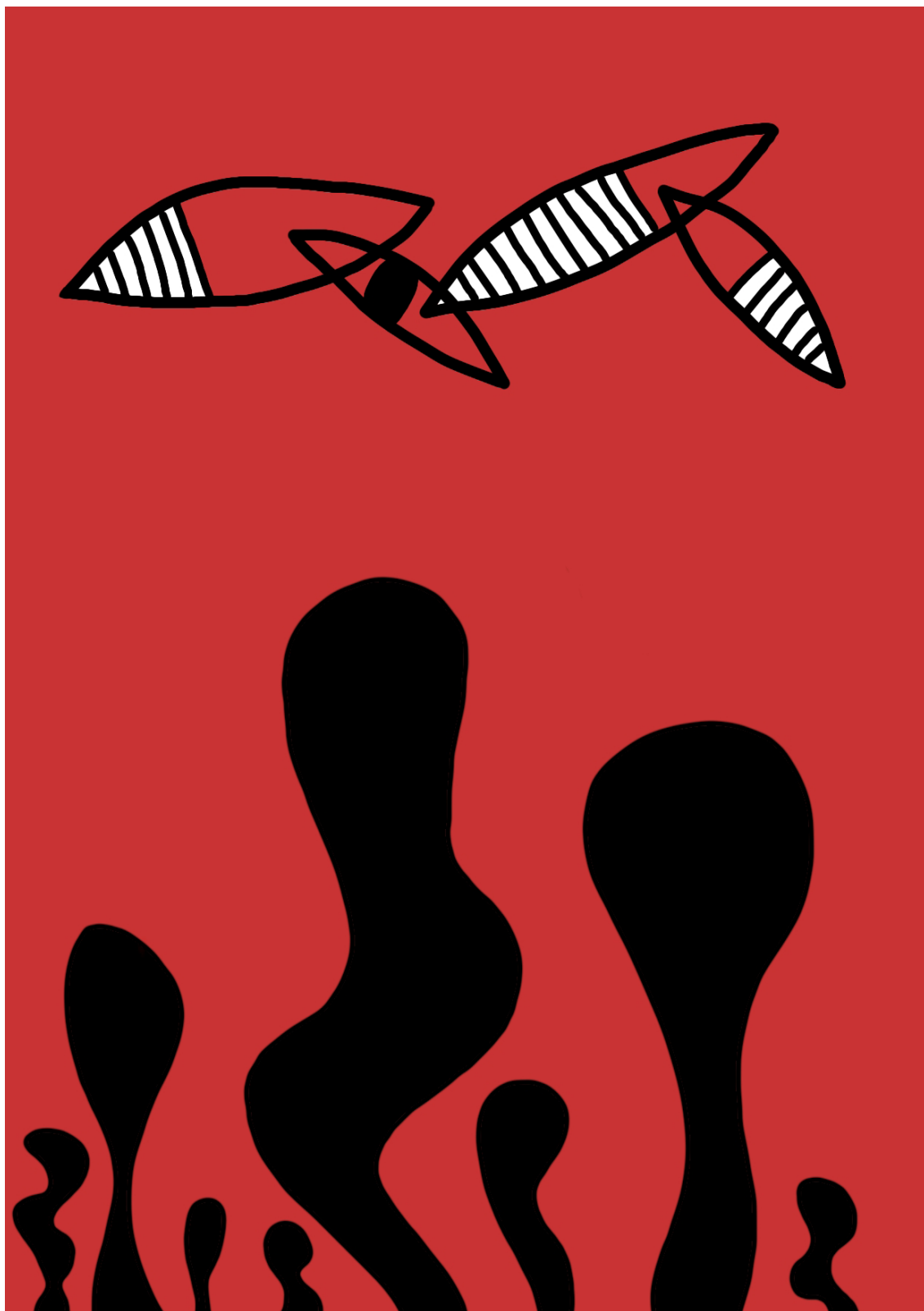


FIGURA 1
A Boca que tudo come. O Olho que tudo vê.

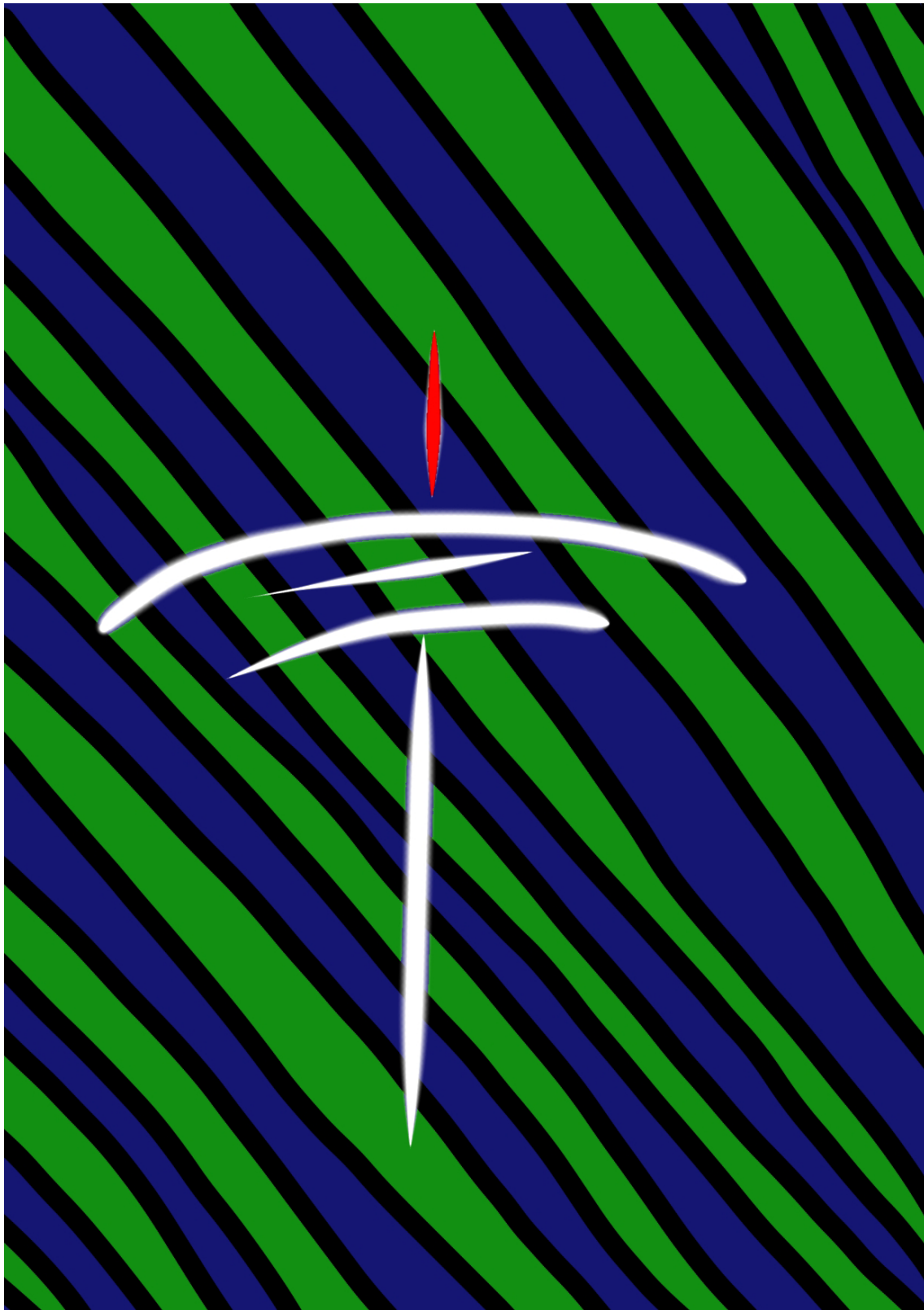


FIGURA 2
O Caçador de
uma flecha só.

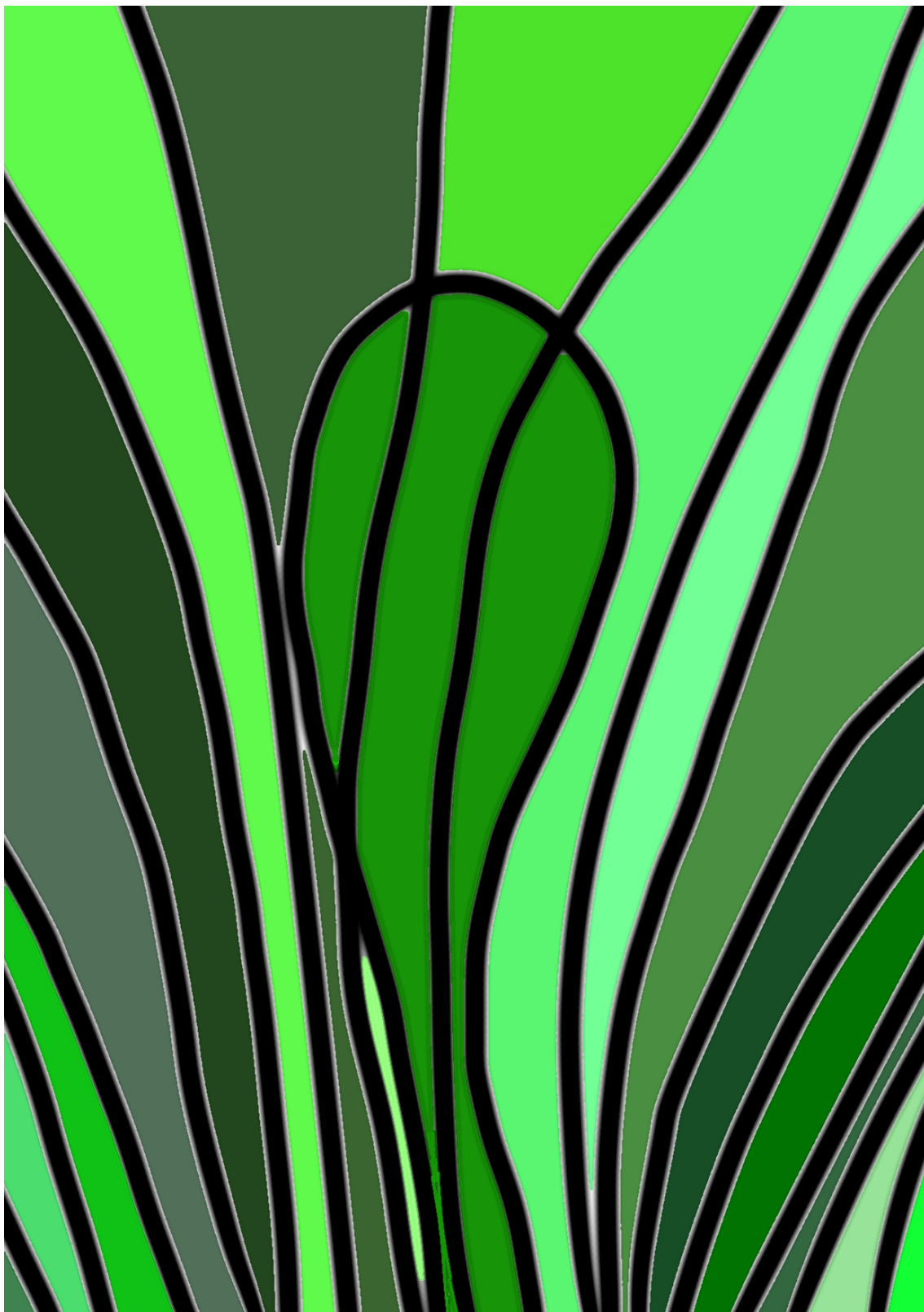


FIGURA 3
O Dono das
Folhas.

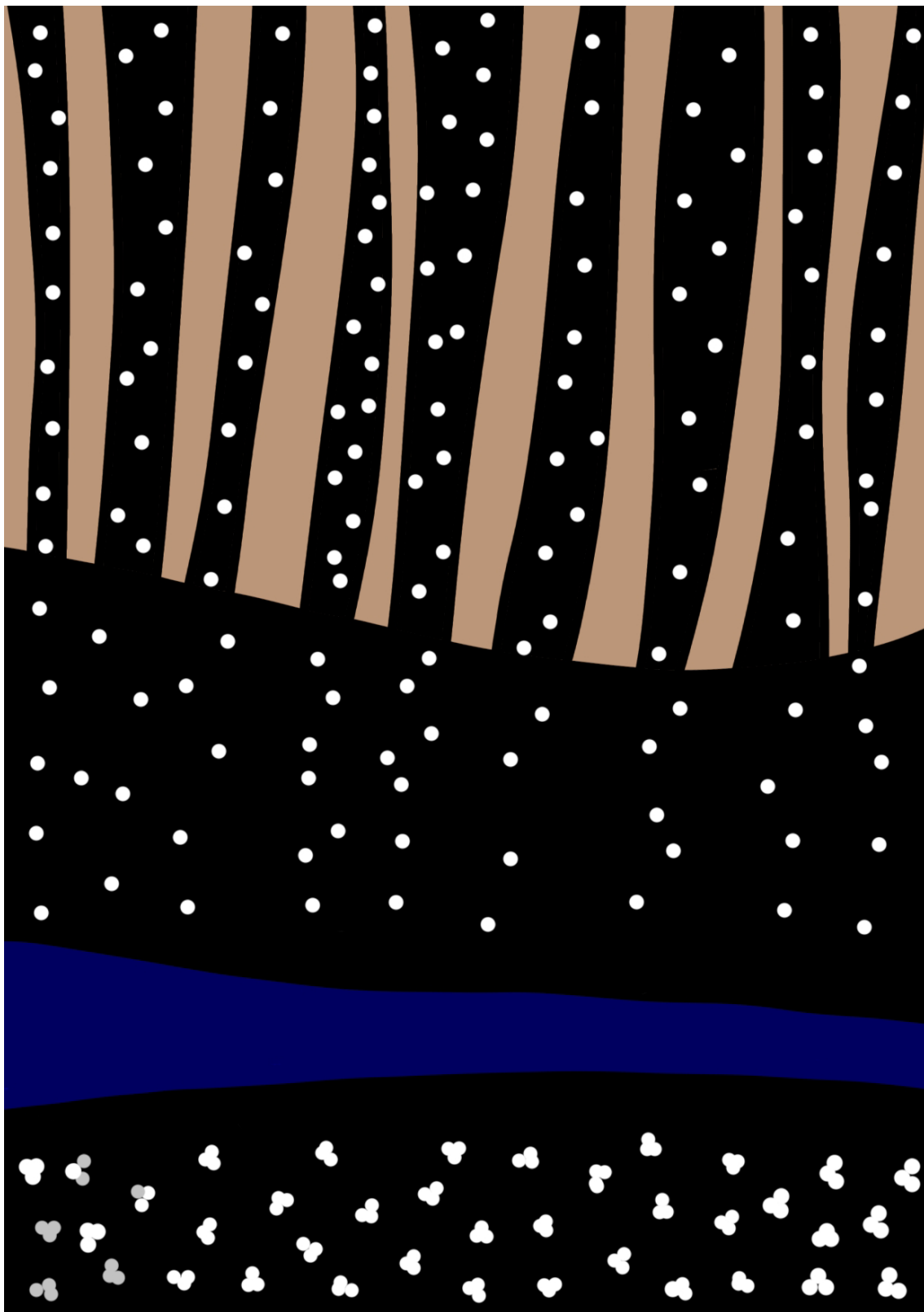


FIGURA 4
Atotô.

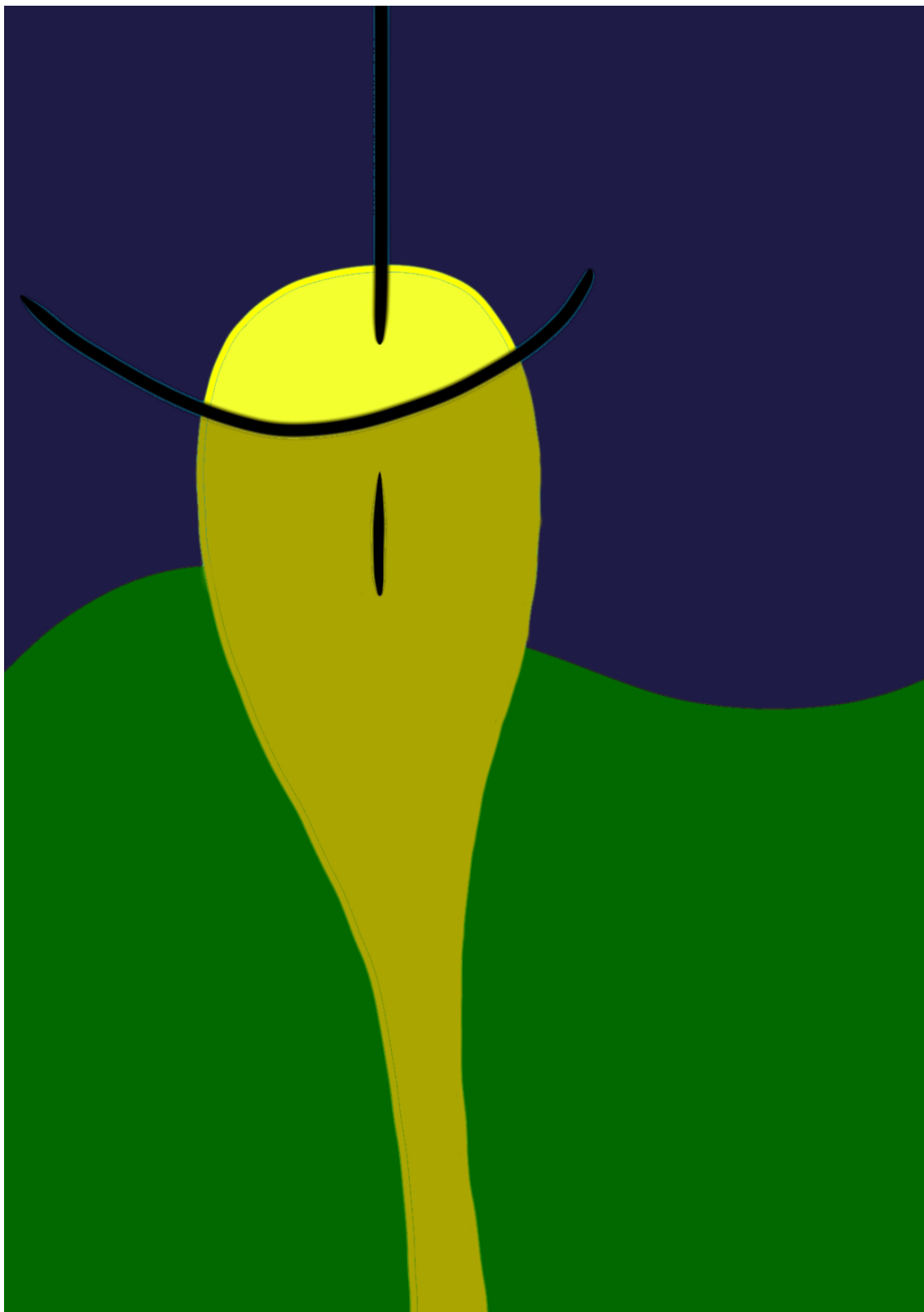


FIGURA 5
Herdeiro da caça e
da água.

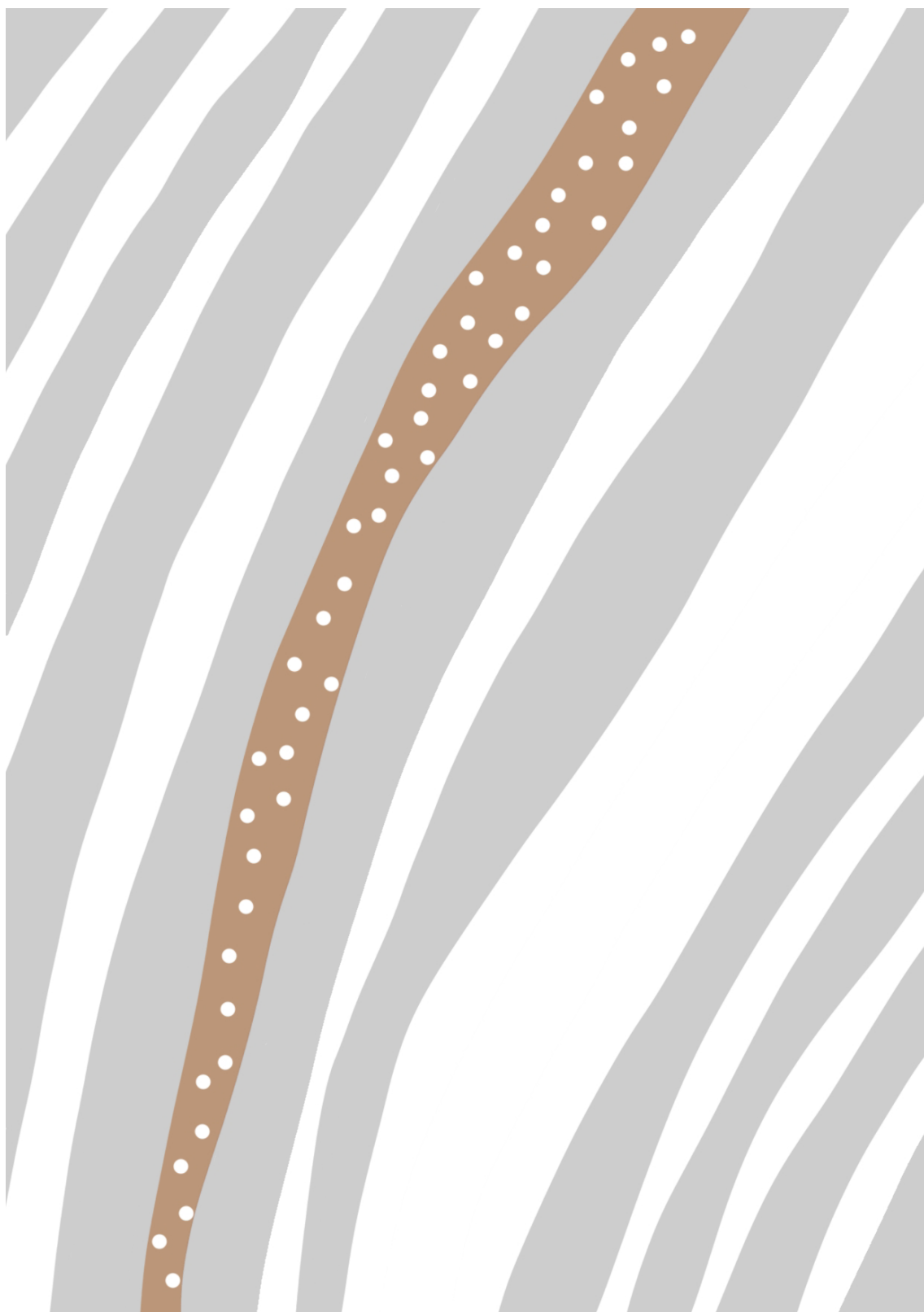


FIGURA 6
O Pai de todos.

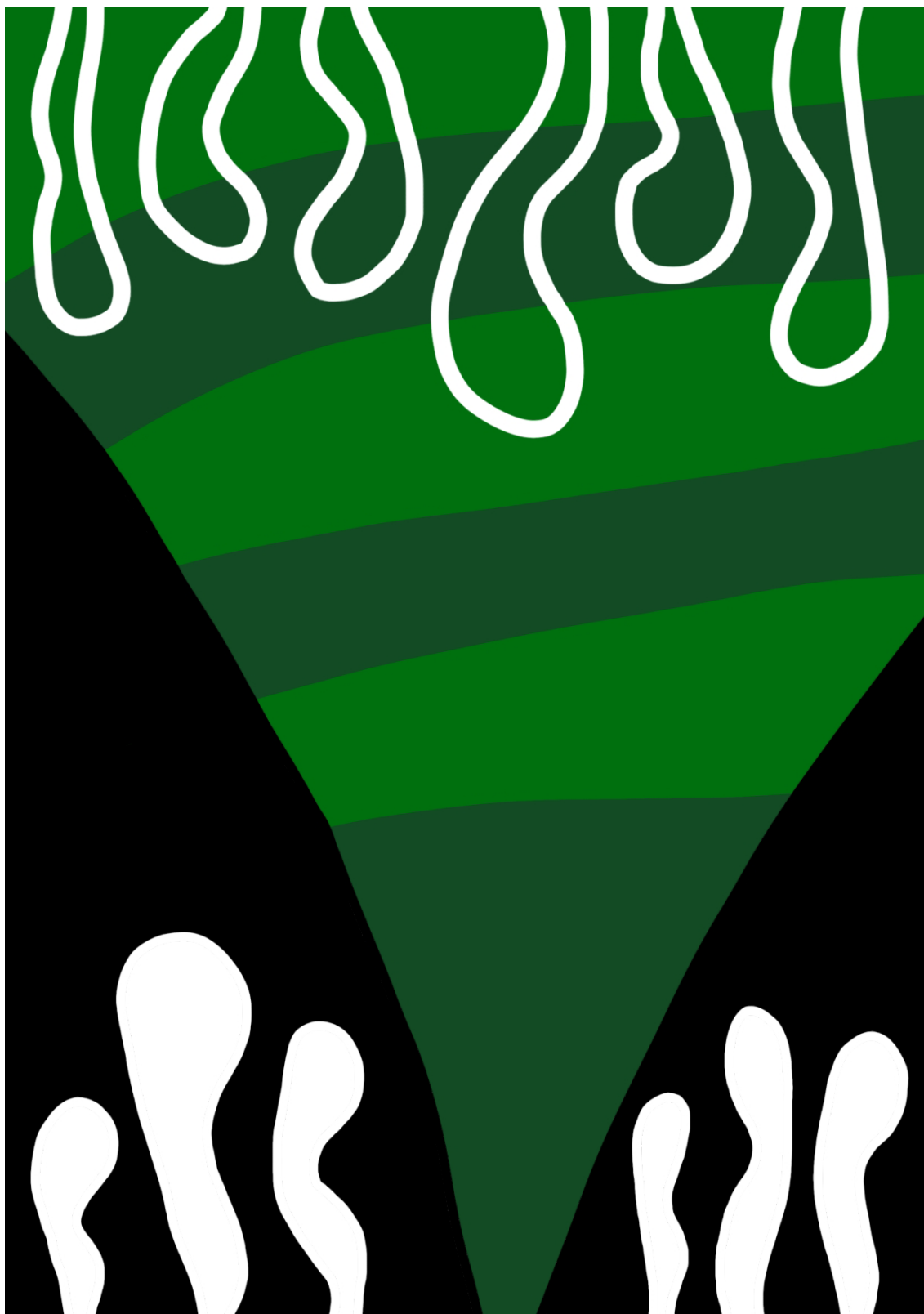


FIGURA 7
A noite de Iroco.

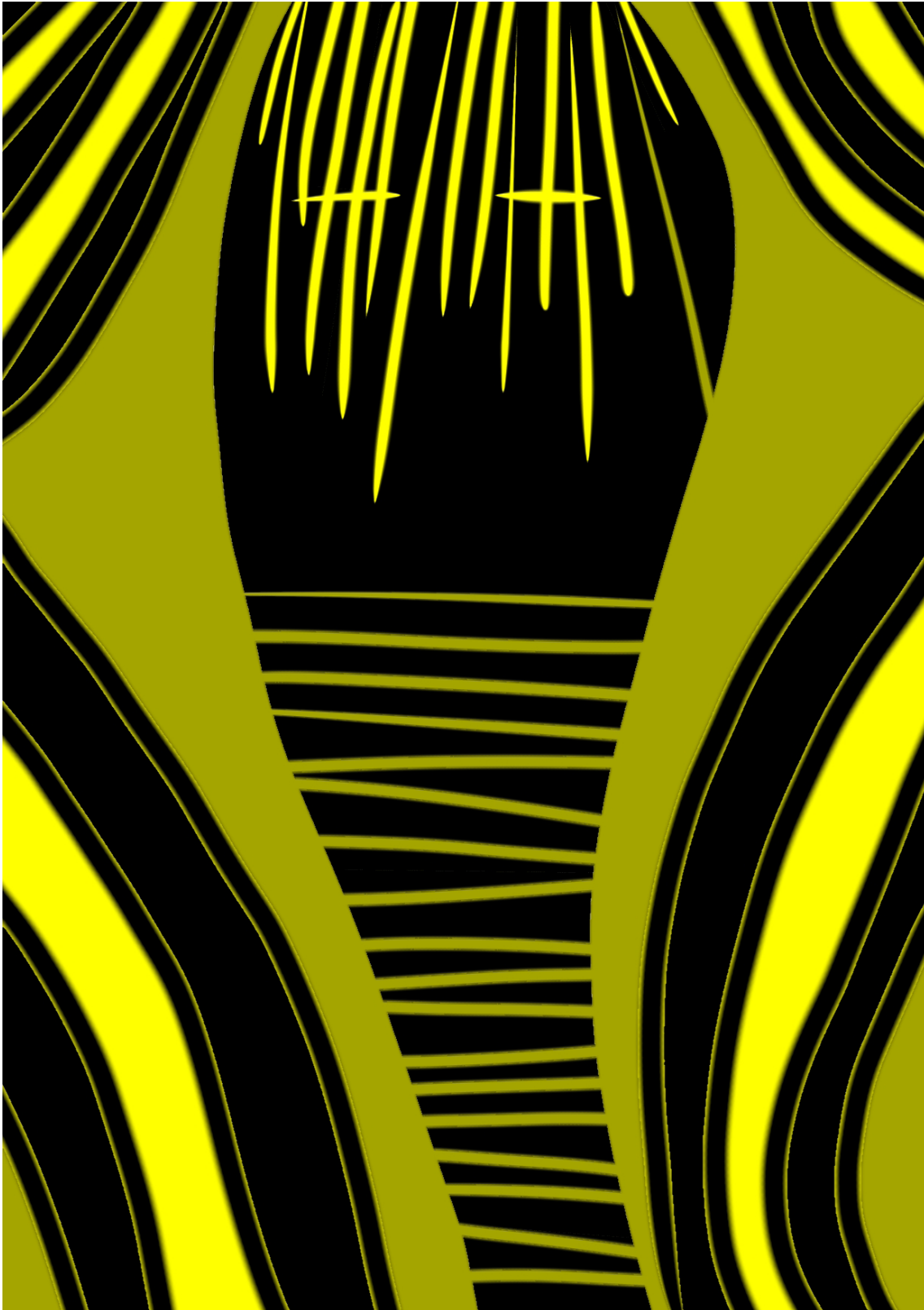


FIGURA 8
Ialodê.



FIGURA 9
Canto pra
Ogum.

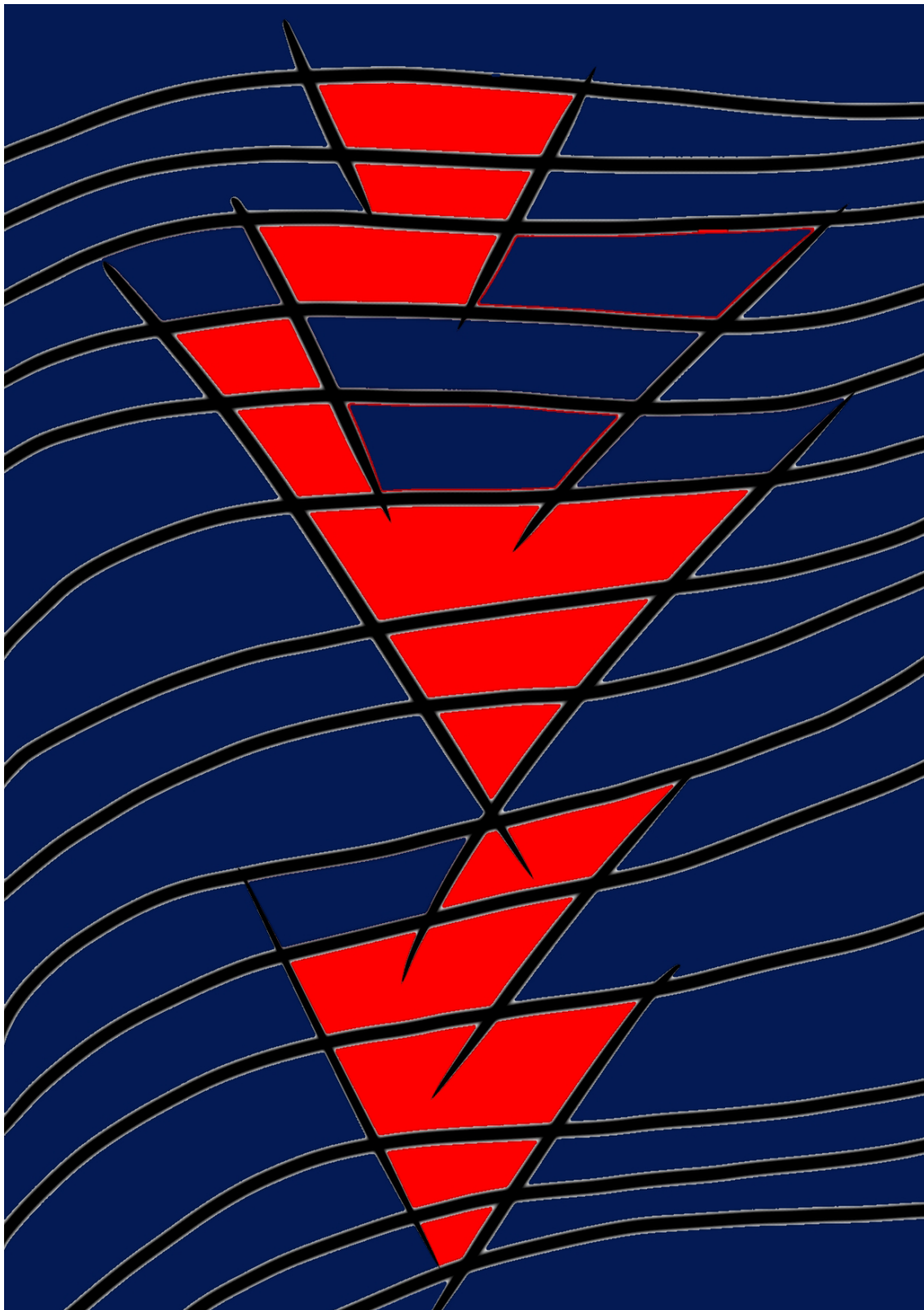



FIGURA 10
Dona do céu.



ANA CLARA SOUSA DAMÁSIO dos Santos is PhD Student in Social Anthropology at the Universidade de Brasília (UnB, 2021). Bachelor in Social Sciences with specialization in Anthropology also at UnB. She holds a master's degree in Anthropology from the Universidade Federal de Goiás (UFG). She is part of the research group MOBILE – Laboratory for the Ethnography of Circulation and Dynamics Migration (DAN, UnB) and Ser-Tão – Center for Teaching, Extension and Research in Gender and Sexuality (FCS, UFG). Email: anaclara-sousadamasio@gmail.com

Use license. This article is licensed under the Creative Commons License CC-BY. With this license you can share, adapt, create for any purpose, as long as you assign the authorship of the work.

Submitted: 01/29/2021

Accepted: 09/14/2021