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Dossier

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## Dossier “Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil. The reframing of cultures and identities”

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# Fighting for lands and reframing the culture

*João Pacheco de Oliveira*

Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social, Museu Nacional,  
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro/RJ, Brasil

Indigenous lands and territories have attracted little attention in studies on the peoples and cultures of the South American lowlands. They are usually presented as credible information, similar to the climate or political regime. A component of the landscape where social life occurs, mentioned by careful ethnographers, but never addressed as a social and political phenomenon to be adopted as the central focus of research.

Justifications for such, often only implicit, can vary widely, suggesting that they are the subject of other disciplines (geography, law, or political science), which supposedly have more appropriate methods and concepts. At other times, the argument for rejection rests on the assumption that lands and territories are involved in questions of an exclusively practical nature, directly connected to the administrative interests and political demands of groups and individuals. The subject thus, covered with passions and contradictory formulations, does not constitute a favourable object for scientific investigation and the advance of anthropology.

The set of works that integrate this Dossier advance in precisely the opposite direction. They affirm indigenous lands and territories as the object of an ethnographic view, striving to establish procedures of method and propose concepts and hypotheses that can serve as a beacon for investigation, contributing to a more dynamic and in-depth understanding. This could not be achieved without a critical effort to rethink the classical tradition of anthropology, recovering its potentialities and seeking to overcome its limits. Moving away from a strict *mimesis* of this tradition, seeking to incorporate experiences in the construction of other anthropologies, drawing in particular on formulations and existing lines of research in the Latin American and Brazilian context.

## Territory as an object of ethnographies

In contrast to the lack of emphasis on this theme in Americanist ethnology of the last few decades, territory has been the object of much attention in the ethnographies conducted by Africanists and Oceanists and has been part of central theoretical discussions and those that the discipline is founded on.

Regarding this aspect, we could begin with the famous essay on the social morphology of Eskimos by Marcel Mauss (1904/5), analysing the interrelations between the forms of occupation of space and the modes of sociability. Although it was based exclusively on written sources and not on fieldwork, it expressed deep concern for the spatial and ecological dimension as an inseparable component of social organisation, something non-existent in French sociology at that time. In defining his refusal of a reductionist determination, which he attributed to anthropogeography (Ratzel, 1882), he reaffirmed his theoretical affiliation to the sociological school, while highlighting the originality of his concerns.

In the decades that followed, English anthropologists explored the subject very carefully, initiating the realisation of specialised ethnographies. In fieldwork conducted by Africanists (Wilson, 1936; Malinowski, 1938; Richards, 1939; Barnes, 1954 and Colson, 1971), the individual disputes over land and the consequences of policies imposed by the colonial administration (labour migration, urbanisation, the formation of reserves). Beyond the African continent, the anthropologist Edmundo Leach (1961) developed an exemplary ethnography of the relationship between economic practices, kinship and local power in Ceylon.

Theoretical and methodological advances should also be recorded. Evans-Pritchard (1974 and 1973) [1949 and 1939] granted great centrality to territory, both in his description of the Nuer, indicating the seasonal displacements in their relationship to a hierarchical structure of lineages, and in the study of the Sanusi, in which he analysed the incorporation of native forms of spatial occupation within colonial structures. This last work in particular paved the way for the historical consideration of broader social phenomena, such as forms of colonisation, wars, and migrations. It is entirely compatible with the author's theoretical postures (Evans-Pritchard, 1962 and 1964), explicitly outlined in his essays, where he distances himself from structural-functionalism and interrelates anthropology and history.

Max Gluckman, in turn, showed the impact of land disputes in Lozi political life (Gluckman, 1943), as well as in judicial disputes between the Barotse (Gluckman, 1955a), indicating a new path for anthropology through situational analysis (Gluckman, 1955b). He also strongly criticised Malinowski's functionalism, which excludes precisely the broadest historical contexts from the universe of inquiry, thus forfeiting their comprehensive potential and limiting such research to describing intercultural exchanges of strictly local scope.

French Africanists have also devoted considerable interest to the subject of territory. An important mark in this regard was the work of Georges Balandier<sup>1</sup>, who had an enormous repercussion and numerous followers, inspiring a revision of the colonial category of *ethnie* and the social processes that it brings with it (Amselle, 1985). Attention to the territorial dimension, fuelled by the use of Marxist categories, was encountered in Claude Meillassoux's (1970) monograph on the Gouro and in Gerard Althabe's (1972) work on the Congo. More recently, Oceanists, such as Alban Bensa (1995; Bensa e Leblic 2000), Michel Naepels (1998), have worked extensively on the uses and native conceptions of territory, investigating the multiple levels of conflict that arise therein.

In the final decades of the century, a number of symposia, books, articles and collections came to debate territory based on ethnographic studies from different regions of the world. In a comparative effort, Eleanor Leacock and Robert Lee (1982) pointed out that even people who live in micro-units ("bands") in Australia, Africa, and America maintained perceptions and practices concerning territory.

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<sup>1</sup> For a current view of Balandier's contribution to anthropology, see Benoît de L'Étoile 2017.

In other collections, Dyck (1985), and Dyck and Waldram (1993), respectively, apply the notion of “fourth world” to different continents and address public policy in Canada. In monographic books and articles, Hugh Brody (1981), Fred Myers (1986), Linda Parker (1989), Edwin Wilmsen (1989), Gerald Sider (1993), Elizabeth Povinelli (1993), and Nancy Munn (1996) dealt with social formation of traditional territories in diverse national contexts, including Canada, Australia, Hawaii, and the United States.

In a collection on indigenous peoples in Latin America, David Maybury-Lewis (1991) discussed nation-states as modern re-editions of the Leviathan, promoting the incorporation of indigenous territories by the mercantile economy and creating restrictive forms of citizenship exercise by autochthonous peoples. Territory was also an important theme in the book organised by Greg Urban and Joel Sherzer (1991). Latin American production has appeared more extensively in collections published in Spanish by Stefano Varese (1996) and by Bosa, Santamaria and Wittersheim (2008).

### **Territory in the foundation of anthropology**

To recover the relevance of territory to the central formulations of anthropology, however, we must return to the classics and the foundational texts at the inception of the discipline itself. In “Ancient Law” (1861), Henry Walter Maine, the first to occupy a chair of Anthropology, while analysing the evolution of political ideas and functions, called attention to two organising principles of social life – kinship by blood (consanguinity) and contiguity of place (territory). He described the passage from one to the other as the most radical revolution that occurred in the field of politics. For the first time in human history, it transpired that people “exercise political rights in common simply because they happened to live within the same topographical limits”. It is important to emphasise that with this formulation, Maine denatured forms of social organisation and questioned why kinship and family are thought of as their universal basis.

A later formulation, elaborated by Lewis Morgan (1877), submitted all forms of government in history to the distinction between “societas” and “civitas”<sup>2</sup>. The first is characteristic of earlier evolutionary phases of humanity, focusing on social organisation as composed of people who are members of kinship groups, whereas “civitas”, characteristic of civilisation, considers political organisation to be founded on territory and property, that is, societal forms besides kinship are well-grounded in the management of scarce resources.

In a collection that became a reference for the research of English anthropologists, as well as for the teaching and research in the discipline, Meyer Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1975 [1940]) divided African political systems currently in operation into three types: simple, small-scale societies, in which kinship is the dominant principle; segmental societies, with lineage systems; and centralised societies, with proto-state formations. The triadic division can appear to correspond to a simple specification of the dual classification proposed by Maine and Morgan; however, the intention of Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1975 [1940]) was to replace an evolutionary approach with a synchronic, comparative view.

Similarly averse to an evolutionary perspective, Isac Schapera (1967 [1955]) had previously argued that kinship and territory were organising principles that could occur as associated forms. Supported by the notion of “political community”, he emphasised that the social organisation of nomadic hunters could not be explained by consanguineous kinship or alliances alone, rather by the inclusion of migrations, exclusions and conquests.

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2 Broad dissemination of Morgan’s work, and its partial incorporation by the Marxist tradition, occurred through Friedrich Engels, 1884.

A third principle of organisation was mentioned by Schapera – a personal connection with the chief. This principle could assume great importance in small African societies (as he himself observed), as well as in the Pacific and elsewhere (Sahlins, 1963). The continued research on African political systems has also led to greater diversification in the identification of ordering principals and control over territory. John Middleton and David Tait (1964) indicated that in segmented societies different structures (religious, secret societies, age, rituals, etc.) could assume this control.

In recent decades, concern has been expressed not so much with the empirical diversification of control modalities over territory, but with the resumption of basic concepts. The incorporation of a new conception of relationships between power, knowledge and territory has been sought within the anthropological work (Foucault, 1979 and 1982). In this sense, some works, like those of Bhabha (1994), Mignolo (1995), Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1997), Setha Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga (2003) and Dawson, Zanotti and Vaccaro (2014) resume the debate over territory on a more generic, abstract plan. A new effort to revise the colonial bases of the discipline was initiated by Talal Asad (1973), Johannes Fabian (1983), Clifford & Marcus (1986) and Stocking Jr. (1991). It is from this perspective that we seek an approximation with the formation of indigenous territories in Brazil, while also maintaining a dialogue with Latin American anthropology.

### **Territoriality versus territory**

A review by Bohanan (1967) of the place occupied by territory in African political systems shows that in many of these it plays a secondary role, embedded in kinship, in lineage structure, in relationship with the chief or associated with other possible organisational principles. Care must be taken not to naturalise territory, assuming that it is something homogenous and determinant, attributing to it a centrality that is absent in segmental systems.

A certain context exists, however, in which this changes drastically and territory assumes a hegemonic role in relation to other organising principles of social life. This happens when a people lose their condition of relative autonomy and, usually as a function of wars, unfavourable trade exchanges or massive religious conversion, a colonial status is established<sup>3</sup>. Lands and environmental resources that this people previously had access to in plenitude, become integrated into a frontier, that is, a region of economic expansion, in which external agents establish a new form of usufruct and administration.

Parallel to these economic and political processes, the autochthonous population starts to become the object of a process of othering<sup>4</sup>, in which an unknown form of social classification is imposed on them, which deprives them of previous rights and expectations, placing them in a situation of suspicion, criminality or even locating them outside the threshold of humanity.

The strategic dimension for thinking about the incorporation of indigenous populations within a nation-state is, in my view, territorial, and not that of cultural exchanges<sup>5</sup>. From the perspective of a state organisation and the bureaucracy that embodies it, administration is about managing the territory and the population (Elias, 1987), it is about dividing them into smaller and hierarchically related spatial units (Revel & Anastácio, 1989), it is about defining boundaries and demarcating borders (Bourdieu, 1980).

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<sup>3</sup> The category of “colonial situation”, coined by Balandier (1955) for African peoples subjected to European domination in the twentieth century, is often thought of too narrowly in terms of political sovereignty. Populations that are afflicted by colonialism are not always those that have been or are located within another nation, or are thought to be formed by a unity of this nature. In Latin American anthropology, often the qualification of colonialism also applies to forms of colonialism practiced within the political limits of the same nation (Casanova, 1963; 2003; Cardoso de Oliveira, 1978 [1966]).

<sup>4</sup> Here I follow the use of the notion of “otherness” by J. Fabian (2006), which does not constitute a simple synonym for alterity. This notion draws attention to the fact that the condition of otherness is often constructed from the interests, forms of feeling and thinking of a particular social agent, who thereby constructs and institutes an “other”.

<sup>5</sup> Here, it is important to remember Barth (1969), and his critique of approaching research on ethnic groups in strictly cultural terms.

The notion of *territorialisation* presented below aims to describe an intervention of the political sphere that prescriptively associates individuals and groups to well-defined geographical boundaries. It is this act of state power, constitutive of ethnic objects and institutions of arbitration and conflict resolution, which we are proposing to use as a starting point for anthropological research on the indigenous peoples and cultures of Brazil.

Territorialisation refers to broad processes of social reorganisation that, based on the establishment of a connection between social subjects and a spatial segment, imply: 1) the creation of a new social unit and the emergence of a differentiating ethnic identity; 2) the constitution of specialised political norms and instruments; 3) the redefinition of social control over land, environmental resources and labour; 4) the re-elaboration of culture and its relationship with the past<sup>6</sup>.

It should be clarified that in speaking of territorialisation, we are not proposing an approach in terms of “territoriality”, popularised by a line of geographers (Raffestin, 2009) inspired by the French Sociological School. In other uses, territoriality corresponds to a spatial of the customs and practices of a group of individuals possessing internal forms of sociability (Sack, 1986). A group of English anthropologists with research on different continents has analytically explored the notion of landscape (Hirsch & O’Hanlon, 1995), which seeks a more critical view of the relationship between humans and space, including trying to open up to analysis in terms of reflexivity.

Working with the notion of territory and territorialisation requires more than analytically exploring the socio-spatial dimension. First, the boundaries of this place need to be clearly defined; second, they somehow need to be recognised by those who live there; third, they establish a distinction between those who consider themselves their rightful owners and those outside that space. In other words, speaking about territory implies the work of delimitation of political communities, the presupposition of a collective identity, the establishment of rights.

## **Indigenous territories in Brazil**

An anthropologist in Brazil conducting field research and relying on ethnography regarding the organisation and cosmology of an indigenous people, while also resorting to information on and analysis of their history, could project what constitutes their territoriality. This is the case, for example, in preliminary (anthropological and environmental) studies that aim to inform the administrative process for the creation of indigenous lands in Brazil<sup>7</sup>. Although the term lands is the same used for the private form of land appropriation, the legal definition leaves no doubt that they are lands appropriated by a collective (“an indigenous community”), under permanent ownership and exclusive, and which cannot be transferred (bought or sold) to another party.

Before finalising their report, attaching a map of delimitation, the anthropologist should submit the proposal for community assessment, incorporating their corrections and drawing up a map resulting from “consensus with the community” and that, in fact, reflects their current political will. This report, as well as the accompanying delimitation plan, will be read and reviewed by technicians and leaders of the indigenist agency and a summary of the final version will be published in the official archives. The administrative process will follow successively through several governmental instances, through new readings and

<sup>6</sup> Pacheco de Oliveira, 2016 (p. 203).

<sup>7</sup> This process is described in detail, together with its social consequences, in collections such as Pacheco de Oliveira, 1998; 2005; and Souza Lima and Barreto Filho, 2005.

re-delimitation proposals (usually implying deletions and changes). Only at the end of all this, and if accepted by the appropriate authorities (ministers and President of the Republic) can an indigenous land be decreed, and later demarcated and regularised as part of the network lands that form the national territory.

A proposal for delimitation that is still in the fieldwork stage is often confronted with assessments and political projects of the indigenous people today, as well as with threats from people and groups that feel prejudiced by it. Later on, the indigenous people will also play a leading role, pressuring the indigenist agency to continue the administrative procedure and seeking allies in public opinion and in government sectors. In later phases, this proposal will inevitably be confronted with private interests and governmental plans, which are derived from numerous other form of thinking concerning territoriality within the political and economic space of the Brazilian nation.

Indigenous lands, even when demarcated and recognised by the State, remain the dominion of the Union; the original peoples and communities have no effective right of property, rather their right is that of tenure and usufruct. Although the 1988 Constitution recognised indigenous peoples' right to free association and representation and did not return to the institution of tutelage<sup>8</sup> in the sphere of their civil rights, the territories they inhabit remain under the responsibility and power of the State. The institutional horizon provided by the State for indigenous peoples is that of a peasantry whose existence is under a tutelary regime<sup>9</sup>.

The entire administrative process is supported by a chapter of the Federal Constitution (1988) and by legislation and bureaucratic routines that are rigorously described and defined, so that the creation of an indigenous land implies legal and juridical recognition. However, there is a huge gap between a right broadly established by the state and its materialisation in diverse political contexts, in which successive governments do not show equal concern with law enforcement, and are affected very differently by the protests and claims of third parties (including powerful business groups) who feel disadvantaged by the creation of indigenous lands.

## Processes of territorialisation

It is precisely on the confluence of all these demands and pressures developed at multiple scales that the investigations gathered here unfold, under the title of processes of territorialisation. It is a question of directing ethnographic work and the exercise of anthropological analysis in order to understand, simultaneously and in association, how the definition of a place of existence and reproduction of specific indigenous communities and the formation of collective subjects takes place. This means anchoring anthropological analysis in the social and political units that constitute the peoples, as they present themselves in present-day Brazil<sup>10</sup>.

The territoriality attributed to an autochthonous collectivity varies depending on the specialist used and the agency that defines it, reflecting the specific historical moment in which the expertise is conducted, the political conjuncture of governments, and the degree of rigidity of legal and administrative procedures<sup>11</sup>. It is always situational and dependent on the social and political conditions in which these rights are materialised.

8 In Brazilian anthropology, there is a line of research that considers the institution of tutelage as a fact central to understanding the forms of organisation and socio-cultural dynamics of indigenous societies (see Pacheco de Oliveira, 1988, 1999; Pacheco de Oliveira & Moreira Santos, 2003; Souza Lima, 1992 e 1995).

9 On the characterization of Indians as a form of peasantry, see Cardoso de Oliveira, 1978, and regarding the notion of tutelary regime, see Pacheco de Oliveira, 1988; 1999; 2016.

10 In my opinion, this proposal converges with concerns manifested by Ramos (1995).

11 On anthropological expertise, see Pacheco de Oliveira, 1994; Pacheco de Oliveira, J; Mura, F; and Silva, A.B. (eds); Associação Brasileira de Antropologia (ABA), 2015.

In speaking of territorialisation, we are referring not to the specific, circumstantial and often antagonistic territorialities, but to complex political processes, occurring at various scales and propelled by actors driven by distinct and even contradictory interests and ideologies. In reality, we are pointing in a direction analogous to that indicated by Dawson, Zanotti and Vaccaro (2014), whose recent collection treats territoriality as a process of negotiation, bringing together case studies from different continents.

Territorialisation voices the reasons of the State, but the interests of private groups and the voracity of capitalist expansion throughout the world are also clearly expressed in the same; on the flip side of the coin, indigenous conceptions of time, person and the nature of the world, the construction of new sagas and utopias emerge. The theory that political order emanates from an absolute and sovereign power (Hobbes, 2014 [1651]) leads to the supposition that the recognition of the territory can only occur at a higher instance, the State, which acts as an arbiter with respect to the rights of groups. The position adopted here is different, since in several of the articles in this Dossier, it is the mobilised indigenous communities that delimit and enforce respect for their territories.

It is this conflicted political field<sup>12</sup>, distended in time and integrating the recent history of Brazil and its global connections, which we are denominating territorialisation. In its dialectic, every process of territorialisation implies conflict and overlapping territories (Said, 1999), in diasporic movements (Brah, 1996; Clifford, 1997), as well as in deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1976). An ethnographic and analytical work of the greatest signification can be conducted on this<sup>13</sup>.

This notion dialogues and incorporates critical orientations of current anthropological theory, absorbing concerns with ethnography of the exercise of power (Marcus, 1998), with analysis of variation as central for cultural actualisation (Barth, 1993), with the creativity of social subjects (especially of the dominated) (Scott, 1990; Comaroff, 2006).

Contrary to what is usually supposed, the hypothesis that we develop in this Dossier is that the struggle of an indigenous people or community for the acquisition and recognition of a territory that it conceives as its own constitutes the key point for the apprehension of the meaning of the transformations in that they are involved. This profoundly affects their customs, the current manifestations of their knowledge and their expressions of identity, which cannot be ignored by an anthropological investigation.

## Forms of territorialisation

The forms of territorialisation by which a nation is constituted, seizing the territories of indigenous populations, exploiting them through slavery and forced labour, can also be an important indicator for understanding the uniqueness of a country.

Without a general comprehension of the different forms of territorialisation of the autochthonous population in Brazil, it is not possible to think of indigenous peoples as effective social actors, either as constructors of their own culture, form of social organisation and future projects that are actualised on a local scale and in their daily life, or as the protagonists of struggles for territory and citizenship on a national and transnational scale.

<sup>12</sup> For the notion of political field, see Swartz, 1968; Turner, 1974; and Bourdieu, 1974.

<sup>13</sup> Processes of deterritorialisation have been the object of systematic study by Brazilian geographers (Haesbart, 2002; Souza, 2009). The overlapping of territories, in turn, calls attention to classificatory disputes (see Almeida, 1994, for an interesting study on the Amazon).

## Commercial areas and confinement areas

The territory now known as Brazil was officially declared “discovered” in 1500 by a fleet of twelve Portuguese ships that were on their way to the Indies and only stayed here for a few days for the purpose of resupplying provisions and drinking water. There was no news of antagonism between the Europeans and the natives in this first meeting. The letter from the scribe Pero Vaz de Caminha to the king of Portugal communicating the “*achamento*” [lit. finding] (the term used at the time) of that land praised the abundance of food, raw materials and springs, and described its fantastic inhabitants in very favourable terms, as beautiful, strong and healthy<sup>14</sup>.

For almost five decades European ships – not only Portuguese but also French and Spanish – explored the coasts of the country, arriving at a precise cartography of the coast. They did not find precious metals. They maintained barter relationships with the Indians, exchanging timber, birds and animal skins, for merchandise of little value. The Europeans did not establish towns nor install military installations, creating only commercial warehouses and small hamlets. This was the first form of territorialisation of the Indians.

Population displacements, the productive system, and the autonomous political structure of the Indians suffered only limited impacts. The Portuguese and French participated as external allies of disputes among the natives, promoting preferential alliances with some of those “nations” (as was the term used at the time) and confronting the subjects and Indian allies of other kingdoms.

With the founding of the city of Salvador, in 1549, the capital of the Portuguese colonial empire in South America, relations between the natives and the Portuguese changed substantially. Military operations were developed against the Tupinambá villages of the Bahian concave<sup>15</sup>, the families were moved to areas under the control of religious orders<sup>16</sup>, the old indigenous territories were occupied by mills and plantations that spread out from the urban nucleus.

When colonisation began, the labour force was based solely on compulsory work by the Indians who lived in missions or were imprisoned during combat, who were transformed into temporary slaves. Later, following the massive importation of African slaves into sugarcane plantations – an activity that made huge profits for rich merchants and also generated dividends for the Crown – the Indians began to be directed towards less valued economic circuits (food production) or for unpaid work (public works, extractive expeditions, militias).

This second form of territorialisation, which was self-legitimizing on a religious level, as a crusade for the catechisation of the former inhabitants of the colony, evidently sustained the presupposition of denying the political, economic and cultural autonomy of autochthonous populations. These began to live on lands that did not belong to them, which was under the control of religious orders (mission lands). Outsides of these, if they were on land donated to settlers<sup>17</sup>, they had no rights to the land nor to any production generated thereon.

The images and narratives produced on the Indians in this context were extremely unfavourable, attributing them an otherness that emphasised bellicosity, cruel practices, and the primitiveness of their forms of economy and religion. The indignant accounts of anthropophagy, polygamy, and shamanism

<sup>14</sup> In the brief historical excursion of this item and the next three, I rely on chapters 1 and 2 from Pacheco de Oliveira, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> These were the so-called “just wars”, based on a martial and civilizing tradition that traces back to struggles on the Iberian peninsula between Christians and “Moors”.

<sup>16</sup> These forced departures were called “*descimentos*”.

<sup>17</sup> Parcels of land were donated to colonial settlers by the King of Portugal or his representatives.

served as the source and justification of all colonial violence. The Portuguese government demanded military submission and religious conversion, even at the risk of possible extermination, by attributing to such actions – which they called “pacification” – a humanitarian and redemptive motivation.

The Indians who succeeded in surviving the path laid out were to accept the exercise of missionary tutelage, which progressively transformed them into useful and loyal subjects. The fate and horizon of the Indians for almost three centuries in the colonial period (1549 to 1822) thus contrasted completely with accounts of the previous period.

### **Aestheticisation of the Indian and assimilation**

The most significant difference brought about by Independence was due to the emergence of another regime of alterity. Wars against the Indians were forbidden, the policy of incorporation was to be conducted with gentleness and persuasion, relying not on weapons but on reason and the “redemptive virtue of free trade”. When mobilising against the dominion of the Portuguese, the new elite began to revalue the autochthonous population, which they judged extinct.

The Indians who preceded colonisation were transformed into an aesthetic and moral ideal of whom the new elite was intended to be the natural heirs. The earliest reports on the Indians, forgotten during the colonial period, were rehabilitated, associated with a nationalist and romantic otherness, which was prominent in literature and the arts, especially during the long second reign (1840 to 1889).

In terms of political and economic relationships, the process of national formation (19<sup>th</sup> century) did not favourably affect the way of life of indigenous people within the new country. In the more distant regions, characterised by the weak presence of the market economy, the Indians continued to be considered objects of tutelage by the missionaries, for all practical purposes, while still being characterised as “brave Indians” (“*índios bravos*”, i.e. those not sedentarised) or “*tapuias*” (Christian Indians).

However, in areas of earlier colonisation and denser settlements (northeast), the mission lands were extinguished on the grounds that the residents were now “*mestiços*”, of mixed race and no longer “Indian”. Consequently, these lands were divided and sold to individuals. If the Indians came to be considered legally indistinct from the rest of the population, they actually became second-class citizens. At the local level, they were strongly discriminated against because of their ancestry, they were called “*caboclos*” and had to limit the exercise of their traditions to the domestic context and to clandestine, camouflaged practices. They were reduced to the condition of landless peasants, tenants or partners of large landowners, in what was a third form of territorialisation, which was very common throughout the northeastern region, but also in other areas and municipalities of the country.

### **Confinement and State tutelage**

Positive representations of indigenous peoples are the soil on which republican indigenism was raised, which recovered a rhetoric of the valorisation of autochthonous populations, transforming it into a basis for an official policy of protectionism and tutelage. Within a framework of the formation of State bureaucracies, the attribution of the place of mediator for the indigenous peoples was taken out of the hands of the church and Catholic intellectuals, and transferred to literate sectors of the national army, strongly influenced by the positivism of Auguste Comte. The Indians’ new tutors were the military (like General Rondon and his closest circle of collaborators) and officials of the indigenist agency, the Indian Protection Service (SPI) created in 1910 (Souza Lima, 1991).

Territories that were still under relative control of the Indians represented economically attractive areas for expanding markets and to obtain profits without large investments. At that time, these territories corresponded to much of the central region of Brazil and Amazonia, large areas of the southeast region (Paraná, São Paulo and Santa Catarina), a wide coastal strip in the south of Bahia, among others.

The Indians were soon identified by economic agents as “brave Indians”, who threatened new settlements. In the south, southeast and parts of the west-central region, they were violently pursued by so-called “*bugreiros*”. These were professional killers who conducted extermination campaigns in certain regions, and received payment based on the number of dead Indian ears they showed their contractors (Santos, 1987). Although extermination was not an official policy, it was a daily practice and was tacitly admitted in other parts of the country, notoriously in the Amazon region (Pacheco de Oliveira, 2016, chapter 3).

In contrast to this, the SPI presented yet another alternative to incorporate the Indians – to attract them from the forests, establish relationships of protection and tutelage, pacify and settle them in areas of refuge, where they would supposedly be safe from the incursions of their enemies (Ribeiro, 1970). The sedentarisation of indigenous families and communities under the tutelage of officials of the indigenist agency, in a putative *pax colonial* of a republican and humanitarian nature, represented the fourth form of territorialisation. Very similar to the former mission lands, collective ownership was exercised over the territory, only now under the tutelage of the SPI.

For about half a century, this was the principal orientation of the indigenist agency –remove the Indians from the path of progress, placing them in small areas under the direct protection of a state agency, which, despite its high purposes, devoid of funds, personnel and political support, lived in permanent crisis. In 1967, after the revelations of a parliamentary commission of inquiry, which uncovered evidence of the perversion of its functions (cases of corruption, land sale, mistreatment and torture of Indians)<sup>18</sup>, it was extinguished. The lands and the populations that it administered were transferred to the control of a new indigenist agency, the National Foundation of the Indian (FUNAI), created that same year.

## **The formation of indigenous territories**

In the 1950s, however, inspired by the policy of reserves and natural monuments in the United States and by Mexican indigenism, anthropologists and indigenists of the SPI elaborated a proposal for the formation of an indigenous park at the headwaters of the Xingu River, the centennial habitat of a group of indigenous peoples. In 1961, a decree created the Xingu Indigenous Park, which gradually became a showcase of Brazilian indigenism, preserving the local flora and fauna and allowing indigenous people to live according to their own uses and customs.

In 1969, constitutional amendment number 1, promulgated by the military government, established, in article 198, that the lands inhabited by indigenous people could not be the object of purchase and sale operations, claiming that the titles referencing such lands were unlawful. This article was contemplated as a measure of limited impact, which would ensure the continuity of the Xingu Park, the only experience of its type up until then.

In the 1970s, there was a major developmental expansion in the Amazon, with the construction of axis roads that crossed the country (Belém-Brasília, Transamazon, Perimetral Norte, etc.), hydroelectric plants (Tucuruí), mining (Grande Carajás Programme) and prospector activities (Serra Pelada, among others) (see

<sup>18</sup> See the Figueiredo Report (Correia, 1967) which led to the extinction of the SPI. For more than 50 years, this document was reported as missing, until it was finally found again among FUNAI archives. A recent investigation (Valente, 2017), supported by data revealed by the National Truth Commission (2014), also allowed us to learn of territorial losses and violence suffered by the Indians during the military dictatorship.

Davis, 1977). In some cases, FUNAI was able to anticipate the establishment of a land market in the region, and administratively define certain extensive and ecologically sustainable indigenous lands.

The postulate that indigenous peoples should not be transferred to other areas, but maintained and protected in the places where they inhabited, received more attention in the following decades. Supported by human rights bodies, international agencies and later, by environmental networks, it has become a directive of indigenous policy. This gave rise to a fifth form of territorialisation, in which indigenous lands would no longer be mere places of refuge and sedentarisation, but should meet the socio-cultural needs of each people or community.

The last constitutional text (1988) has advanced a great deal in this direction. The definition of indigenous lands, rather than being based on immemorial possession, often difficult to prove in court because of the lack of specific documentation, began to be based on the exercise of a traditional occupation.

A very favourable conjunction of factors – internally, a conjuncture of re-democratisation after 21 years of military rule (1964-1985), and externally, the great importance of environmentalism in setting the agenda of so-called international cooperation and multilateral organisations – ensured that the recognition of indigenous lands advanced considerably in the last few decades of the millennium. During the lifetime of the SPI, regularising lands for the Indians was not a priority and, thus, records on them were rather precarious; but it is possible to estimate that, even including the Xingu Indigenous Park, they did not exceed 3 million hectares.

In 1981, fourteen years after the creation of the FUNAI, a survey commissioned by the foundation mentioned 13.1 million hectares<sup>19</sup>. An independent survey conducted by a team from the National Museum and the Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre (CEDI) (Pacheco de Oliveira, 1987), assembled an inventory of 518 indigenous lands, totalling 74.4 million hectares. This was in 1987, after the military governments and in a context of easier access to the data held by the indigenist agency.

### **The paradox of tutelage<sup>20</sup>: protect and repress**

Although these data appear to indicate a good performance by the indigenist agency in the 1980s and 1990s, closer examination leads to questioning this assessment. First, because there are different stages to the process of creating indigenous lands (no identification, identification in progress, delimited, demarcated, and regularised) and progress in the administrative recognition of these lands usually confers better access and use of these lands to the Indians.

In 1987, only 9.8% of these lands were regularised, while the data related to previous stages were much more expressive (unidentified, 32.2%; identified, 20.6%; and delimited, 33%), showing that in the 1980s, for the most part, the possession of these lands by indigenous peoples was precarious. Today, the official data available on the FUNAI website indicate 564 indigenous lands, totalling 116.8 million hectares, of which 90.1% are classified as regularised, while 112 areas are said to be “under study”, that is, in the preliminary phase of identification, which corresponds to 19.8% of the number of indigenous lands indicated therein.

It is also important to take into account that although the indigenist agency currently possesses organised data on the administrative process of the regularisation of indigenous lands, it has never conducted a single survey on the presence of third parties (invaders) inside indigenous lands. The data on this, presented for the first time in research by the National Museum/CEDI (1987) are frightening.

19 Faria, Gustavo de (ed) – *A verdade sobre o índio brasileiro* [The truth about the Brazilian Indian], Rio de Janeiro, Guavira Editora, 1981, pp. 24-29 apud Pacheco de Oliveira, 1998 – “Redimensionando a questão indígena no Brasil: Uma etnografia das terras indígenas” [Redimensioning the indigenous question in Brazil: an ethnography of indigenous lands], p. 24.

20 An expression used to draw attention to the ambiguous and contradictory nature of tutelage (Pacheco de Oliveira, 1988, pp. 222-225).

There are indications of the existence of clandestine mining in 29.2% of indigenous lands. This proportion increases with respect to hydroelectric plants (39.2%) and roads (50.4%), while requisitions for research or mineral exploration reach 69%. The majority of indigenous lands are simultaneously threatened by several of these enterprises.

The administrative creation of indigenous lands has received tenacious and growing opposition from important business sectors (soybean, beef, and chicken agro-exporters) and government bureaucracy (ministries dealing with economic issues, and the military). This implies strong political pressure on FUNAI, on the Presidency of the Republic and in the mainstream press, such that a bill calling for a constitutional amendment that proposes that the creation of any indigenous land should pass for the approval of the congress (PEC 215) is circulating in the legislature.

The most effective obstacle, however, is the increasing judicialisation – once indigenous land is delimited or demarcated by FUNAI, the economic agents who are considered themselves to be disadvantaged enter litigation in the first sphere of the courts and are often able to suspend the effects of the administrative act. In many cases, local judges, more sensitive to pressure from farmers and business groups, grant injunctions to the alleged former owners, and indigenous communities are evicted from the lands they occupy by police and military operations. The destruction of housing, planting areas and improvements are accompanied by acts of violence and intimidation, resulting in injured and imprisoned indigenous people.

This is the latest reason for the long delays in the recognition of indigenous rights over the lands they inhabit<sup>21</sup>. Until judicial proceedings reach the Federal Supreme Court and are tried and ultimately decided, many years have passed. During this time, the natives live in a situation of precarious possession or simply have no land to live on or plant. The extremes of this situation are shown by numerous large families of the Kaiowá (MS) who, whether they are on land that has been identified by FUNAI or on other lands that have already been delimited and demarcated, they are removed by court order and settle in temporary encampments along roadsides.

### **An ethnography of the retaking of lands**

The Indians, through very distinct experiences, occurring in separate places and at distant moments, began outlining a new strategy – the sixth form of territorialisation – that could minimally ensure their material and cultural survival. These are the “*retomadas*” [lit. taking back; retakings], actions in which indigenous families reoccupy areas where they can carry out their community life, establishing their dwellings, planting smallholdings, and practicing their ritual and religious life. The decision, operationalisation and risks involved in these initiatives are exclusively those of the Indians.

In other political conjunctures, in the late 1970s and 1980s, there were indigenous initiatives involving the eviction of invaders and self-demarcation of their lands. These were individual actions, carried out in isolation, which accompanied an administrative process conducted by FUNAI. Such acts were carried out with the intention of defusing bureaucratic procedures that were paralysed or not taken into account by the indigenist agency, even though they were clearly part of their tutelary mandate.

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<sup>21</sup> It should also be noted that in the last two years, since the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, no indigenous land delimitation decree has been signed and the budget of the indigenist agency has been reduced by more than other public agencies. In 2017, the resources released by the federal government to FUNAI correspond to 45% of that received in 2013. (See Costa, Liana - “Governo federal trava demarcação de terras indígenas há dois anos” [Federal government stops demarcated indigenous lands for two years] – [www.Metrópoles.com](http://www.Metrópoles.com) on April 19, 2018.)

The current “retakings” do not conform to the profile of actions supported, even indirectly, by FUNAI or international cooperation agencies. There is no intention to demobilise the collectives, creating roles of command and routines that bureaucratise the decision-making process, giving it a neutral, impersonal and repetitive appearance. Moreover, the profile of victim, with which human rights entities work is not suited to the protagonism and the militant stance of the participants of the current retakings. Thus these are actions of different order, responding to local dynamics, which count on very limited networks of solidarity (small isolated supporters).

Given the nonexistence of other efficient alternatives, the retakings have turned into the main strategy of indigenous people for recognition of their territorial rights, at present, having been incorporated as a flag of struggle by the indigenous movement. They are in progress or have occurred in situations described in this Dossier, in the South (involving the Kaingang), and in the Central-west (involving the Kaiowá and Terenas), in the Northeast (involving the Tupinambás and Tapebas) and in the Amazon (involving the Ticunas, Macuxis, Barés, Mundurucus from Alto Tapajós and Lower Tapajós people). However, they are in progress or have happened in a similar manner in many other indigenous lands that have not been addressed here.

Although the “retakings” sometimes affirm their legitimacy due to administrative acts of FUNAI (identification or delimitation not respected by the judiciary, or by state or municipal governments), their inspiration does not derive from such acts. In most cases, they were initiated as the reoccupation of lands that the Indians previously inhabited in a continuous, regular and peaceful manner, from where they were expelled by private individuals (who then legalised these possessions and properties in their own names). The retakings assume awareness on the part of the communities that their rights were damaged and that the State, by collusion or omission, was also part of this process. It is important to realise that the engine of the “retakings” is the political will of the people who participate in them and the key document that they have is their status as indigenous individuals.

They constitute a post-tutelar form of the exercise of the policy by the Indians, implying a different mode of conceiving their relationship with the State. The image of an indigenist agency as protector, a “mum” or “dad” FUNAI, with the intent of establishing affinities with certain traditional practices and characters of cosmology, today seems deeply undermined. Now decisions regarding the management of the territory and the forms of mobilisation are established at the local level, reflecting the conscience and political will of the communities<sup>22</sup>, expressed in very participative assemblies and bearing intense ritual and religious meanings.

The unit of command expressed by the notion of “our government” (Pacheco de Oliveira, 1988), activated by the Ticuna people in the 1940s to distinguish themselves from official government structures, paradoxically maintained the possibility of the incorporation of clientelist meanings common to the tutelary regime<sup>23</sup>. In other situations, however, when the Indians mobilised with regard to a struggle with local powers, they began to conceive of this government in terms that contrasted those of whites, as occurred among the Ticunas themselves in the 1980s (with the General Council of the Ticuna Tribe (CGTT), and more recently, with the Aty-Guassu (of the Kaiowá and Nandevá) or the Ipereğ Ayũ Movement (of the Munduruku).

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<sup>22</sup> It is important to note that the retakings form part of a larger definition of indigenous territories, according to the fifth form of territorialisation described above.

<sup>23</sup> Regarding the situation of indigenous people who live in parks and large territories, where the tutelary regime is applied much more lightly and benevolently, or have been contacted relatively recently, narratives about whites and even autobiographical reports may continue to be formulated in a manner closer to traditional themes and arguments (Albert, 1993 and Albert & Ramos, 2002).

What the exercise of ethnography has revealed is that the “retakings” imply deep movements of cultural revitalisation and social and political reconfiguration for these peoples. They are able to mobilise traditional values, crucial emotions, and new intellectual and political energies with great intensity, proceeding to the construction of more desirable, future scenarios. Their flags and projections represent contemporary creations, resulting from clashes over the definition of their territories and access to rights and in this sense can be seen as “intercultural utopias” (in the sense used by Rappaport, 2005).

By virtue of their own indigenous status they do not exclude culturalist or autonomist assertions, since it “necessarily presupposes a trajectory (which is historical and determined by multiple factors) and an origin (which is an individual, primary experience, but which is also translated into collective knowledges and narratives which it becomes coupled to)” (Pacheco de Oliveira, 2016: 215). It is precisely the elaboration of utopias (religious, moral, political) that allows the contradiction between historical objectives and the feeling of loyalty to origins to be overcome (idem, p. 217).

In this sense, the “retakings” in contemporary Brazil assume a role similar to that of indigenous libertarian ideologies, like that of “buen vivir” (Acosta, 2013), feeding the belief that another world is necessary and possible in daily life. Due to the low population density of indigenous peoples who inhabited the region, the continental dimension of the country, and the multiple forms of incorporation of indigenous people into the national formation, passing from extermination to confinement, from assimilation to tutelage, it would be very difficult for a single indigenous people to transform their own morality and philosophy of life into a factor of unity.

Although retakings are always embedded in elements of culture, language, and specific themes (which in some contexts provide a strategic essentialism), on a national scale they are charged with the energy of an act of decolonisation. As pointed out by Clifford (2013: 15) the application of the term indigenous to very heterogeneous communities “does not presume cultural similarity or essence, but rather refers to comparable experiences of invasion, dispossession, resistance, and survival”.

## **The many histories of indigenous peoples in Brazil**

It is only possible to reflect on a history of the Indians in Brazil if we restrict ourselves to legal classifications, becoming captives of the formal political scene and the self-representations of the elites. Conversely, if we focus on the process of national formation in its territorial dimension, on the economic and political practices that it has evoked, and on seriously considering indigenous people as effective social agents, we see something quite different – a multiplicity of indigenous, regional histories, with very distinct temporalities and spatial circumscriptions. This is not only a result of linguistic and cultural specificities, but of very different forms of territorialisation by which these peoples and communities came to be constructed as collective subjects referenced by the notion of indigenous.

The forms of territorialisation do not correspond strictly to chronological periods, but point to four very general types of policies in relation to the territories that the Indians occupy: alliances and treaties, in cases of autonomy; confinement and tutelage; assimilation; and pluralism, with the establishment of ethnic territories. Even within each of these types, diversity is great, depending on many other factors.

The condition of relative autonomy that marked the initial decades of Brazilian history also characterised the situation of indigenous peoples, such as the Guaicurús, Terenas and Kadiwéus, who lived in a region equally disputed by Portuguese and Spanish, which enabled them to maintain a political and economic unity up to the end of the eighteenth century. Some indigenous peoples currently live in neighbouring countries, in border regions, and the creation of special regulations for these areas in the future, through international diplomacy, should not be ruled out.

Likewise, the exploitation of the Amazon valley, accomplished by means of extractive expeditions that sought the “drugs of the sertão”, mainly affected riverside indigenous peoples, while those that inhabited its tributaries and interfluves remained relatively isolated until the apogee of rubber (1877 to 1912). This was not the case only in the Amazon; in an Atlas of 1868, by Candido Mendes de Almeida, about two-thirds of the lands of São Paulo appeared as “lands of brave Indians” (Mendes de Almeida, 1868), areas occupied by the Kaingang also extended to other states in the southern region. Ecological and economic factors and settlement difficulties have meant that in all regions of the country, certain areas remained under the control of Indians for a long period.

On the other hand, the arbitrary transfer and settlement of Indians in reserved areas deserves to be pondered not only from chronological references. Such modalities of confinement<sup>24</sup> are not specific to republican indigenist politics (what we describe as the fourth form of territorialisation), can also be found in the missionary villages instituted in the colonial period. Although implemented by very different social agents, the tutelary regime to which its residents were submitted maintains important similarities<sup>25</sup>.

Working with a simple classification of agents as religious or administrative can also lead to errors. For while the Jesuits in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries did not allow the placement of settlers within villages, the Capuchins in the nineteenth century did not think of mission lands as strictly reserved for Indians, and encouraged the establishment of non-Indian farmers within these areas. The missions of the nineteenth century did not viscerally oppose the third form of territorialisation, which transformed Indians into dependent peasants through the extinction of old settlements.

On the other hand, the few indigenous lands defined by the SPI were not ecologically sustainable territories, but merely land for dwellings, with the Indians carrying out productive activities as employees in neighbouring farms; all the other places where Indians were settled by the SPI remained without regularisation and were largely appropriated by non-Indians.

In parallel, it should be noted that simply demarcating indigenous territories does not ensure the well-being of their inhabitants, who were often led to lease part of their land to farmers and ranchers in exchange for resources to supplement their subsistence needs or to allow access to basic care services. A similar tactic is announced regarding the possibility of mining activities in indigenous lands.

The lands claimed by the Indians and currently recognised by the Brazilian State do not result from unilinear or homogeneous historical processes, but from antagonistic forms of territorialisation, which were applied in different parts of the national political space and in varied moments of history. The collective subjects constituted today, continue to produce highly distinct forms of social organisation, cultures, identities and relationships with the environment. They cannot be understood solely by establishing interconnections between a culture and an environmental niche, but require a plunge into history, with the identification of conflicts, migrations, and interdependencies.

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To conclude this Introduction to the Dossier on the Formation of Indigenous Territories in Brazil, I provide some brief statistical information for the reader unfamiliar with the indigenous question in Brazil. The reading of the following articles demands complexifying the vision concerning the indigenous people in this country, escaping from a very common simplification of imagining them as quite simple micro-societies that are dependent on nature.

<sup>24</sup> The notion of “ghetto”, formulated by Wirth (1927) is very inspiring for this analysis.

<sup>25</sup> In a way, this explains the privileged place that indigenism attributes to the Jesuits in the past. Although Rondon and his followers were positivists and anti-clerical, they recognised the similarity of their goals to those of the Jesuits, defining their own mission as “lay apostolate”.

A current map of the distribution of indigenous lands in Brazil is featured, together with the presentation of a table showing demographic data. Here are some brief critical comments that can help you read and contextualise the map. The source for both is the IBGE<sup>26</sup>, since the FUNAI database is limited to indigenous lands, and is very deficient in the other items.

The attached map is based on 506 indigenous lands, totalling 106.7 million hectares, representing around 12.5% of the national territory<sup>27</sup>. The indigenous population in 2010 at the time of the last national census was 896 thousand Indians, corresponding to 0.45% of the national population.

Unlike indigenous lands, concentrated above all in the Amazon, the data on population distribution are surprising and show the presence is extensive and relatively balanced throughout the national territory. By region, the northern region (Amazonia) occupies first place, with 38.2%, but there is also a significant presence in the northeast (25.9%), in the south/southeast region (19.9%) and in the central-western region (16.0%). Indians are also present in 80.5% of the 5,570 Brazilian municipalities.

The impression that the natives constitute a population of a purely rural nature, quite isolated and exclusively attached to their traditions also does not hold. Although the majority of indigenous people live on indigenous lands (57.7%), a large proportion (42.3%) reside in cities. Much of this urban indigenous population (33.4% and 32.35, respectively) is registered in regions where recognition of indigenous lands moves more slowly, such as the northeast and south/southeast.

In indigenous lands, 214 languages are spoken, which is an important sign of the vitality of these cultures. Among people over 5 years of age, 37.4% speak an indigenous language. The importance of the Portuguese language is evident in the fact that in this age group, 76.9% speak it.

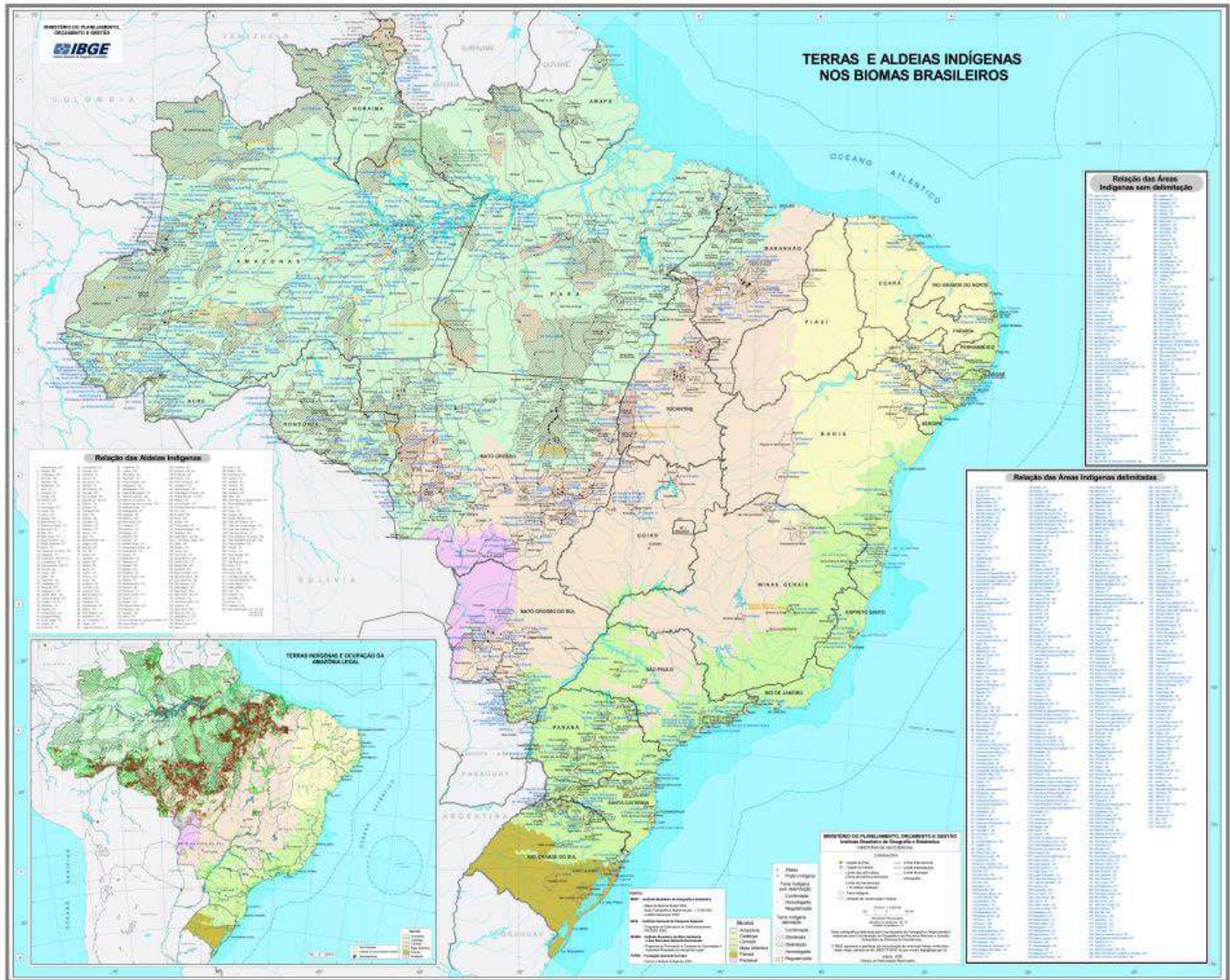
The table below shows the 15 largest indigenous populations (in total, inside and outside indigenous lands), evidencing the presence of strong and numerous indigenous contingents also outside the Amazon (Kaiowá and Terena, MS, Kaingang, SP, PR, SC and RGS, Potiguara, PB, Xucuru and Aticum, PE, Pataxó and Tupinambá, BA, Xavantes, MT, Tenetehara, MA, Xakriabá, MG).

In terms of population ranges, the majority of indigenous people (58.1%) belong to 19 peoples that surpass 10,000 members. The Ticunas alone represent 6.8% of Brazilian Indians and are closely followed by the Kaiowá; other peoples, like the Yanomami, Terena, Kaingang, Munduruku and Rio Negro Indians, also present similar numbers. In the next range, between one thousand and ten thousand people, there are another 79 peoples, who represent 33.1% of the Indians in Brazil. However, diversity is maintained, since 94 peoples consist of between 250 and 1000 members and 113 peoples have less than 250 members.

Translated by Philip Sidney Pacheco Badiz

<sup>26</sup> See [www.indigenas.ibge.gov.br](http://www.indigenas.ibge.gov.br), accessed on March 20, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> During the 2010 census there was effective cooperation between FUNAI and IBGE, including the transfer of cartographic bases. The differences with respect to the number of indigenous lands and their extension are because the IBGE established the existence of a declaratory legal act (decree) as a criterion, and does not include lands still within the identification process by FUNAI.



Source: [http://geofpt.ibge.gov.br/cartas\\_e\\_mapas/mapas\\_do\\_brasil/sociedade\\_e\\_economia/mapas\\_murais/terras\\_aldeias\\_indigenas\\_2008.pdf](http://geofpt.ibge.gov.br/cartas_e_mapas/mapas_do_brasil/sociedade_e_economia/mapas_murais/terras_aldeias_indigenas_2008.pdf)

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### João Pacheco de Oliveira

Full Professor on Anthropology at the Museu Nacional/UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). He is the author or editor of 14 books and the author of 121 articles and chapters on Brazilian Indians. He did prolonged fieldwork with Ticuna Indians of Amazonia, his doctoral thesis was published in 1988. His last book, called "The Birth of Brazil and other essays", received the ANPOCS award for best scientific work of the year (2017). He was former president of the Brazilian Association of Anthropology/ABA. He is presently developing research on Nation-Building, Anthropology of Colonialism as well as museums and ethnographic collections. At the Museu Nacional he is the curator of the ethnological collections. Along with indigenous leaders he founded Maguta: Center for Documentation and Research of Alto Solimões, headquartered in the small town of Benjamin Constant (Amazonas), that gave rise to Maguta Museum, the first indigenous museum in Brazil. Site: [www.jpoantropologia.com.br](http://www.jpoantropologia.com.br); Email: [jpo.antropologia@mn.ufrj.br](mailto:jpo.antropologia@mn.ufrj.br)

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# The return of relatives: processes of mobilisation and village construction among the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro, southern Bahia, Brazil

*Daniela Fernandes Alarcon*

Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social, Museu Nacional,  
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro/RJ, Brasil

## **Abstract**

The article examines *land reclamations*, actions of territorial recovery engaged in by the Tupinambá of the village of Serra do Padeiro, in southern Bahia, Brazil. It focuses on the *return of relatives* – i.e. the return of expropriated Indians as part of the reclamation process –, and seeks to examine the construction of the collective political subject that has engendered the reclamations, as it is engendered by them. The text presents a brief history of the process of territorialisation, indicating how the reclamations have become the group's main form of political action. I argue that the process of land recovery is based on kinship, and is capable of activating latent ties or lead to the weakening or rupture of ties between relatives in opposing positions. I also propose that the reclamation process has extended the meaning of *relative*, providing nuance to the emphasis on *blood* and moving towards a definition of relative as *those with whom you fight together*.

**Keywords:** indigenous peoples; Tupinambá; land reclamations; mobilisation.

# O retorno dos parentes:

processos de mobilização e construção da aldeia entre os Tupinambá da Serra do Padeiro, sul da Bahia, Brasil

## Resumo

O artigo debruça-se sobre as *retomadas de terras*, ações de recuperação territorial realizadas pelos Tupinambá da aldeia Serra do Padeiro, sul da Bahia, Brasil. Focaliza o *retorno dos parentes* – isto é, o retorno, no marco do processo de retomada, de indígenas expropriados. Busca-se examinar a construção do sujeito político coletivo que vem engendrando as retomadas, ao tempo em que é por elas engendrado. O texto apresenta um breve histórico do processo de territorialização, indicando como as retomadas vieram a constituir a principal forma de ação política do grupo. Argumenta-se que o processo de retomada assenta-se no parentesco, sendo capaz de ativar vínculos latentes ou levar ao enfraquecimento ou ao rompimento de laços entre parentes em posições opostas. Propõe-se, ainda, que o processo de retomada teria alargado o significado de *parente*, matizando a ênfase no *sangue* e avançando para a definição de *parente como aquele com quem se luta junto*.

**Palavras-chave:** povos indígenas; Tupinambá; retomadas de terras; mobilização.

# The return of relatives: processes of mobilisation and village construction among the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro, southern Bahia, Brazil

Daniela Fernandes Alarcon

Since 2004, the Tupinambá of the village of Serra do Padeiro, situated in Tupinambá de Olivença Indigenous Territory (located in the southern part of the State of Bahia, in the Brazilian Northeast), have been engaged in *land reclamations*. The reclamations can be defined succinctly as actions by this people to recover areas traditionally occupied by them that were in the possession of non-Indians<sup>1</sup>. Swallowed up by the advance of the frontier in southern Bahia, particularly from the end of the nineteenth century, these lands extend back to the ancestors that appear in the origin of the familial lineages that currently make up the village. These are lands with history. They are also lands with *owners*: they belong to the *encantados*, nonhuman entities central to the Tupinambá cosmology. As I conclude this text, the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro possess 89 former *farms*, now reclaimed, in addition to the *smallholdings* they have managed to maintain over time, despite expropriation<sup>2</sup>. Although they have significantly expanded the size of the area they occupy, it remains discontinuous, since areas in the possession of non-Indians persist within their territory.

As several authors have highlighted, over the last few decades, peasant movements have established “a certain ‘style’ of mobilisation and manifestation, crystallising a well-defined repertoire of collective action with public visibility, recurrently activated” (Comerford 1999: 125). In the Brazilian Northeast, the generalisation of land reclamation as a form of political action has turned it into the virtual epitome of indigenous mobilisation. However, although the reclamations are widespread and well known, studies on them are curiously scarce<sup>3</sup>. Considering their centrality to the social organisation of the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro – the reclamations can be understood as constitutive of the village in its contemporary formation –, to me it seems essential to examine them closely, describing and analysing their antecedents, recurrent characteristics and their repercussions on the framework of relationships in which the indigenous people are inscribed.

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1 As Alfredo Wagner Berno de Almeida emphasises, the advance of the capitalist frontier is incapable of undermining “specific territorialities”, based on different modes of appropriation and common land use, which present “more definitive or contingent delimitations depending on the correlation of force in each social situation of antagonism” (Almeida 2008: 51).

2 In a survey completed in July 2016, I managed to identify 89 reclaimed farms in the village of Serra do Padeiro. By comparing data from distinct sources, mainly provided by the Indians and obtained in possessory actions, I gathered information regarding the areas (name of the farm, georeferenced location, area in hectares, alleged owner, date of reclamation action, current residents, and legal situation, among others). At the time, through a non-exhaustive survey, I was able to obtain more or less detailed information about 40 smallholdings in possession of the Serra do Padeiro Indians (name of the smallholding, georeferenced location, area in hectares, family lineage to which the area refers, situation of land ownership, history of possible attempts of expropriation and current residents, among others). The meanings of *farm* and *smallholding* invoked in this text require further explanation. *Farm* does not simply designate an area of land, but rather a historically constituted entity, within a framework of asymmetric relationships of power; in some ways, it is the materialisation of the process of penetration by non-Indians in indigenous territory. *Smallholding*, in turn, can be understood according to the meanings proposed by Woortmann (1994) (“kinship territory”, land that is inherited) and Woortmann (1988) (“territory of reciprocity”). In general, they are smallholdings maintained by the Indians over numerous generations, constituting the territorial substratum of nuclear or extended families.

3 See Tófoli (2010), who focused on the Tapeba case, in Ceará, also in the Brazilian Northeast; Benites (2014), who investigated reclamations among the Guarani and Kaiowa, in Mato Grosso do Sul, in the Midwest; and Faria (2016), who investigated reclamations engaged in by the Guarani Mbyá of São Paulo, in the Southeast. And, as indicated, Alarcon (2013), on the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro. See also Pacheco de Oliveira *et al.* (2015).

When referring to the process of territorial recovery, the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro often use the category *return of the land* (Alarcon 2013). As you can see, it is the land that returns – as the Indians liberate portions that had been trapped in farms, the integrity of the mutilated territory is restored. This return unfolds in circumscribed but connected returns: the *return of the encantados*, also impacted by the despoliation; the *return of the animals*; and the *return of relatives*. Mobilising dispersed relatives to *engage in the struggle* and creating everyday forms of *living together*, the Tupinambá have been defining a collective project for *village construction*, in which land is not depicted as a tradable property, but as a precondition for *living well*.

In this context, rather than the mere recovery of areas of land, a broad process of *memory recovery* is triggered, since reclamation actions *make the land speak*, that is, these actions put into circulation stories related to those specific portions of the territory and to the ancestors who lived there, projecting these words into the future. As indicated by Pollak (1989), it is a movement through which *underground memories* emerge, producing a latent threat to the framework operated by the dominators. Even the proposition of possessory actions with the intention of halting or reversing the reclamation process, while enacting violence against the Indians, has the unintentional effect of publicising the multiple forms of violence that underlie the constitution of private property in indigenous territory, making documents that materialise the same accessible.

It is important to emphasise that the reclamation process is closely linked to State recognition of the territorial rights of the Tupinambá, even though it extends beyond it, as I hope to indicate. The administrative procedure of demarcation (official recognition) of the Tupinambá de Olivença Indigenous Territory – which covers approximately 47,000 hectares, comprising portions of the municipalities of Buerarema, Ilhéus and Una – also began in 2004<sup>4</sup> in response to the Tupinambá mobilisation, which had become more visible since the 1990s<sup>5</sup>. At all stages, the process has been characterised by the violation of legal deadlines, which motivated the Brazilian Federal Prosecution Service to propose actions that hold the Brazilian State responsible for noncompliance with its legal obligations<sup>6</sup>. In an attempt to halt the progress of the procedure, individuals and groups mobilised against demarcation have pressured the federal government and turned to the judiciary. In 2016, the demarcation process was suspended for five months as a result of a preventive injunction filed three years earlier. Upon conclusion of this article, the demarcation procedure had been paralysed for five years, without justification, pending the referral of the Minister of Justice<sup>7</sup>.

Historically united by kinship ties and the sharing of a common ethnic identity, the Tupinambá are distributed over numerous localities, including Serra do Padeiro. Covered by the Atlantic Forest and associated ecosystems, the indigenous territory extends east to west from the coast to the mountainous

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4 Here I adopt the establishment of the working group in charge of the identification and delimitation studies of the Indigenous Territory as the point of initiation of the demarcation procedure. The working group was established by the presidency of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) by means of ordinance 102, dated January 22nd, 2004 (attached document to Brazil, Ministry of Justice, FUNAI 2009). It is worth noting that the Tupinambá people were officially recognised by the Brazilian State on May 13th, 2002 (Technical note no. 01/02/General Coordination of Studies and Research of the National Indian Foundation, annexed to Brazil, Ministry of Justice, National Indian Foundation 2009). At the time, the country had not yet adopted the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 169, which determines self-identification as a criterion for the recognition of indigenous groups.

5 For a sociogenesis of the Tupinambá movement, see Magalhães (2010), Couto (2003, 2008) and Viegas (2007). For strategies conducted by the Indians in the extremely unfavourable context that extended from the late 1930s to the 1990s, see Alarcon (2013).

6 Although the demarcation procedure began in 2004, the Circumstantial Identification and Delimitation Report (RCID) for the Indigenous Territory was only published in the Federal Official Gazette on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, in clear violation of Decree no. 1.775/1996, which regulates the process of recognition of indigenous territories. After rejecting all challenges to the demarcation, on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, FUNAI forwarded the case to the Ministry of Justice. On April 5<sup>th</sup> of the same year, the legal consultation body of the ministry approved the studies elaborated by the FUNAI. However, neither the minister at the time nor those who have subsequently ascended to the office have taken further steps. Regarding the public civil actions proposed by the Federal Prosecution Service, see: Brazil, Federal Prosecution Service, Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, Ilhéus (2007, 2013) and Brazil, Federal Prosecution Service, Federal Public Prosecutor's Office, Bahia (2012).

7 For further information on the most recent developments in the process of demarcation, including its judicialisation, see Alarcon (2017).

chain composed of the Trempe, Serrote and Padeiro serras and, north to south, from the Cururupe River to Mabaço Lagoon. There is no accurate data on the number of indigenous inhabitants of the indigenous territory, though considering official information, it is possible to estimate a population of about 5,000 people<sup>8</sup>. In 2016, I counted slightly more than 480 Indians inhabiting the Serra do Padeiro, although the total number of village members was significantly higher, and encompassed Indians who were circumstantially not there, as I will detail below<sup>9</sup>.

Prior to the onset of the reclamation process, the Indians lived on farms (as sharecroppers or wage labourers, or maintaining other relationships with the alleged owners of these areas<sup>10</sup>), in smallholdings, in towns in the region or in cities in the South and Southeast of the country, to which they had moved. The long process of territorialisation of the indigenous population of the region is marked by the establishment of the Jesuit village of Nossa Senhora da Escada in 1680, which today corresponds to Olivença, in the municipality of Ilhéus. As I shall discuss later, over time, areas in the possession of the Indians were drastically reduced, as large portions of the territory were devoted to farms. In the twentieth century, capitalist expansion on these lands intensified – driven by cocoa cultivation and tourism.

The process of territorial recovery engaged in by the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro has been the object of my academic investigations since 2010. Mobilising ethnographic and documentary data of different natures, I focus on land reclamations, which I understand as a specific expression among the *modalities of political intervention* (Pacheco de Oliveira 2006) contemporaneously constructed by indigenous peoples. This research forms part of a series of studies of interethnic relationships in Brazil, particularly in the Northeast, which is expressed in a growing number of academic works developed with indigenous peoples in the region, some of which have been presented in compilations, such as Pacheco de Oliveira (2004, 2011), Carvalho *et al.* (2011) and Carvalho & Carvalho (2012).

The research I have been developing aims to describe and analyse the Tupinambá mobilisation in its dual meaning: the involvement of relatives in the reclamation process and the daily maintenance of engagement in a collective project. It is, therefore, a study framed in a field that recognises Indians as historical subjects whose actuation is often elided by hegemonic historiographical currents (Monteiro 2001, Pacheco de Oliveira 2016) and that seeks to shed light on collective projects that, because they clash with hegemonic projects, have been historically blocked and are being updated contemporaneously, within the contexts of territorial recovery.

In this article, focusing on the *return of relatives*, I seek to examine the process of construction of the collective political subject that has been engendering the land reclamations, which is simultaneously, continuously and reciprocally, engendered by them. Here, it is fundamental to recover the idea of the *return journey*, as elaborated by Pacheco de Oliveira (1998), particularly with regard to the relationship between ethnicity and territory. The author draws attention to “a powerful connection between the sense of belonging and a specific place of origin, where the individual and their magical components unite and identify with the land itself, becoming part of a common destiny” (*Ibid*: 64-65). In this sense, the territory

8 The Indigenous Health Care Information System of the Special Secretariat of Indigenous Health of the Ministry of Health (SIASI/SESAI/MS) registers 4,534 Indians in the Tupinambá de Olivença Indigenous Territory, for 2013. The 2010 Census counted 5,851 Tupinambá; it should be noted, however, that this number refers to all those who self-declared as Tupinambá, and the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) does not provide disaggregated data for the indigenous territory in question (Brasil, Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística 2012).

9 This data comes from a census I conducted in the village, and completed in July 2016. Of the 482 residents, 320 lived in reclaimed areas and 162 in smallholdings. I return to this question in due course.

10 The categories of farm work that were most frequently mentioned to me in Serra do Padeiro were: 1, working *na meia* or *na ameia* [as sharecroppers], i.e. according to an agricultural “partnership” contract, whether formalised or not, in which the Indians planted and/or tended to perennial crops, or planted short cycle crops, and divided production with the alleged owners of the areas according to variable percentages; 2, acting as a registered employee, i.e. with a formal contract; or 3, working *na diária* [day contract] or *na empreita* (also referred to as *empreitada*) [piece work], as a precarious labourer hired for eventual tasks and receiving payment for the day worked, in the first case, or per completed task, in the second. In their relationship with non-Indians, the Indians also experienced other agreements, mentioned less frequently. Regarding these work modalities, see also Caldeira (1954: 36-41) and Santos (1957: 109-110).

mediates the relationship between the person and ethnic group, in a way that creates the conditions for the actuation of ethnicity. “Inscribed in their own body and always present [...], the relationship with the collectivity of origin refers to the domain of fatality, of the irrevocable, which establishes the north and the parameters of a concrete social trajectory” (*Ibid*: 65).

In the following section, I outline a brief history of the process of territorialisation of the Tupinambá, considering the mechanisms of territorial expropriation used against the Indians and the process by which the land reclamations became the group’s main form of political action. I seek to provide elements that show that the political intervention engaged in by the Tupinambá is a dynamic process, a project that is not conflict-free, constructed within daily living and the framework of struggle – and which, therefore, cannot be satisfactorily grasped by crystallising descriptions that do not take into account its historicity. In the section after that, I narrow the focus to the process of mobilisation, arguing that we are facing a form of action based on kinship, the implementation of which is capable of activating bonds that were latent or, in contrast, lead to weakening or even the rupture of ties between relatives who maintain opposing positions. I further argue that the process of territorial recovery seems to have extended the meaning of relative.

### From *caxixes* and massacres to land reclamation

Sitting in the kitchen at the foot of the mountain where she gave birth to ten children, Ms. Maria da Glória de Jesus extends her eyes to the yard, dominated by children running around during a break between classes. “Land is for living well”, she says, in a deep voice, projecting her body. At the back of the house, large stones maintain the memory of the ambushes she and her husband had to face so as not to lose the place left to them by the elders. In more recent times, after the struggle for the demarcation of indigenous land began, five of Maria’s children and a grandson had been imprisoned. On her left breast she bears the mark of a rubber bullet, which she got during police action to repossess land in 2008, tellingly named by the State apparatus of repression as *Operação Terra Firme* [lit. Operation Solid Ground]<sup>11</sup>.

The penetration of non-Indians on lands traditionally inhabited by the Tupinambá meant that a previously free territory, where the Indians were able to reproduce their own way of life, began to suffer limits imposed by those who came from outside. Reflecting on the arrival of non-Indians, Ms. Maria da Glória says that they “leaned on the Indians like *gameleiras*”. The term *gameleira* designates trees of different genera that sprout under the cover of other trees and end up enveloping and suffocating them. The image very clearly refers to non-Indians who moved the physical boundaries of their farms, altering the land partitions and swallowing, little by little, portions of the Indians’ lands. The change in the boundaries occurred in the dead of night or openly, accompanied by verbal threats or the presence of henchmen.

As the advance of the agricultural frontier in southern Bahia intensified from the late nineteenth century onward – driven mainly by cocoa monoculture, but also by tourism –, land ownership concentrated acutely, reducing the *buraras* (cocoa smallholdings) and increasing the *conjuntos* (continuous or discontinuous farming agglomerates under the same alleged owner). With the establishment of farms came numerous prohibitions for the Indians: using certain paths, hunting inside particular areas, accessing portions of forest to collect vegetal products, fishing in specific stretches of river and visiting places of memory and of religious relevance.

In this scenario, the State acted to facilitate the appropriation of lands for capitalist ends. In 1897, Bahia published State Law no. 198, which allowed for untitled holdings and lands of extinct Indian villages to be sold by the state or titled, upon payment of derisory amounts. Between 1898 and 1930, southern Bahia

<sup>11</sup> The testimony of Ms. Maria da Glória can be seen in the short documentary “Tupinambá – The Return of the Land” (2015). Available with English subtitles at: <<https://vimeo.com/127657520>>.

concentrated more than 68% of the processes of the alienation of state public land, i.e. handing over public lands to individuals (Falcon 2010 [1995]: 38). The procedures for legitimising tenure were complex and time-consuming, and the majority of the Indians were not informed about them and did not have the financial means to afford them. Thus land titling was not used to guarantee rights, rather to exercise violence. In Serra do Padeiro, such processes occurred throughout the twentieth century, transferring free lands to the hands of non-Indians.

In this context, one figure became central: the *caxixeiro*, i.e. someone frequently involved in *caxixes*. *Caxixe* is a regional term meaning fraud, cheating or, more specifically, shady land deals associated with cocoa. In a statement, Raymundo Pacheco Sá Barreto, who worked as a notary in Ilhéus, commented that the practice was very common: “the *caxixe* is a little monkey that gnaws the cocoa from the inside, you pass the field, the cocoa looks fine, you cut it down, there’s nothing there, so *caxixe* is business that looks completely legal, but it’s not” (Freitas & Freitas 2001: 52-53). Farmers frequently falsified titles, with the connivance of notaries, or cheated in the compulsory measurement of land, performed by regional land delegates responsible for the State Land Measuring Districts, established in 1897. In other cases, the Indians were sought out by the farmers’ lawyers, either personally or through correspondence, and summoned to leave their lands.

Other transactions worth highlighting include exchanges of land for insignificant amounts of money or for valuables far inferior to the land value – a bottle of cachaça, a maimed working animal, a radio, a house whose walls collapsed shortly after the deal closed, another which flooded when it rained, a cut of cloth ... In other cases, the land was delivered to non-Indians because of debts acquired by the Indians. At the time, as there was practically no banking system in the region, it was common for rural producers and merchants to extend loans for planting fields, the transportation of goods, medical expenses and funerals, among other purposes, using the land as collateral and relying on the collusion of the judicial system to then execute the mortgages in ways that were most favourable to them.

The penetration of non-Indians in Serra do Padeiro associated with the development of cocoa agriculture gained new momentum from the 1920s onwards, with the establishment of local political leaders. The name most often cited, from the coast to the mountains, is Manoel Pereira de Almeida. Born in 1880 in São Felix, in the Recôncavo Baiano region, Almeida graduated as an agronomist in Salvador in 1904. After working as a surveyor in the Land Office of Canavieiras, he approached João David Fuchs, a farmer of German origin who, between 1890 and 1900, was steward of the town of Una. Almeida married Adalice Fuchs, daughter of João David and, following the death of his first wife, married her sister, Alice. Like his father-in-law, he also led the administration of Una between 1919 and 1937, except for a brief interval due to the Revolution of 1930. Almeida maintained political influence in the municipality until the 1960s. In addition, in his time, he was the largest rural property owner in Una<sup>12</sup>.

The official history extols Almeida as a “pioneer”. The older Indians, however, remember him as *the big boss* or *owner of Una*. Many remember that their ancestors had to travel miles to the headquarters of Una to pay taxes; otherwise they would lose their land. As administrator, Almeida was also associated with the execution of mandatory land measurements. In the remarks of the Indians, the colonels appear as brutal figures, associated with diabolical pacts and visions. Using the occult arts, Almeida is said to have caused a bridge to construct itself; two natives described the dreadful image, transmitted to them by their ancestors, of cranes moving at night with no human help. In addition, his opulent mansion – still standing on a promontory on the bank of the Una River – is regarded as haunted.

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<sup>12</sup> Silva (2004) is the main source on which I based the brief reconstitution of Almeida’s trajectory presented here, complemented by elements from Santos (2007).

As synthesised here, based on oral reports and documentary sources, non-Indians who penetrated Tupinambá territory from the end of the nineteenth century constructed their areas favoured by the State and with the use of various forms of violence against the Indians. It is important to note that the expropriatory mechanisms set in motion by cocoa colonels and other figures of power have been updated in the contemporary practices of individuals mobilised against the recognition of Tupinambá territorial rights. Contrary to what the opponents of the Indians claim, their arrival in the disputed areas is quite recent, compared with the long Tupinambá presence in the region. Transmitting the memories of their ancestors, from generation to generation, the Indians remained in the territory despite expropriation, stuck like *mourões* (heavy fencing stakes), resisting and yearning for the future *return of the land*, which began to take form in 2004 with the first reclamations, and intensified almost a decade later.

Every year, on January 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro hold the most important event of their political-religious calendar: the feast of St. Sebastian. During this time, many *encantados* are manifested through incorporations, announce what is to come in the year that has just begun and give advice on what indigenous strategies should be. In 2013, the *encantados* had an important message: it was time to speed up the reclamation, covering the entire or almost the entire village. If before, as I have argued elsewhere (Alarcon 2013), the reclamation actions had been tracing a kind of ring around the rock formation that gives the village its name and is considered the home of the *encantados*, now it was a question of occupying all the areas in the possession of non-Indians within the territory, except for those in the hands of non-Indians considered *small* or *weak*, i.e. poor.

The demand of the *encantados*, promptly received by the village, triggered numerous actions of reclamation, taking the Tupinambá strategy to an unprecedented scale – including the reclamation of some of the more extensive farms within the village. From May 2004 to May 2013, the indigenous people of this village made 22 land reclamations. Between June and December 2013, an interval of only six months, 50 new areas were reclaimed. Subsequently, other farms would also be recovered, reaching a total of 89 reclamations. The intensification of the process triggered a particularly gruelling offensive by individuals and groups opposed to demarcation, with serious repercussions for the Tupinambá. In August 2013, a vehicle carrying students from the Tupinambá Indian State School in Serra do Padeiro (CEITSP) was shot at, dozens of houses belonging to village members were burned down, Indians were beaten and robbed, vehicles belonging to government agencies identified with indigenous rights were burned, and public buildings were plundered and looted, among other attacks. In the context of the conflict, many Indians were killed in circumstances that have never been properly clarified<sup>13</sup>. These onslaughts were also accompanied by the mobilisation of the State apparatus of repression, at a level that was unprecedented in the Tupinambá case, culminating in the militarisation of the indigenous territory, which extended up to 2015<sup>14</sup>. Although the forces of repression were moved into the region with the alleged objective of curbing the conflict between the Indians and the non-Indians against demarcation, their presence did not prevent violence against the former, and there were reports that agents of the State committed violations.

The year 2013 can be considered a landmark both in terms of transformations in the context of land ownership in Serra do Padeiro and the process of indigenous mobilisation itself. Although the Tupinambá of this village continued to act in accordance with the guidelines collectively constructed from the beginning of the process of territorial reclamation, certain inflections in the way reclamation actions were

13 For further details on these and other episodes of violence against the Tupinambá, see Alarcon (2014).

14 By determination of the then Minister of Justice, José Eduardo Cardozo, on August 20<sup>th</sup> 2013, agents of the National Public Security Force (FNSP) were installed in the vicinity of the indigenous territory. In January 2014, three police bases were implanted inside the same. In February, around 500 soldiers travelled to the region, under the command of then President Dilma Rousseff (PT), in an operation to “guarantee law and order”, Operation Ilhéus. Although the Army left the area in July 2014, the presence of the FNSP was extended successively, at the request of Jacques Wagner (PT), then Governor of Bahia. The last extension order was dated November 2014 and secured the agents in the area for 90 days. See Alarcon (2017).

conducted can be observed in the territorial distribution of the Indians, more broadly in the organisation of the village, and in the dynamics of the return of relatives. If, on the one hand, such transformations are related to tactical decisions and the greater availability of land, due to the intensification of the reclamation process, on the other, they respond to collective yearnings based on the way the Tupinambá understand their history, going back to the old lineages, each with a specific territorial domain, and how they conceive their collective project. If it is a matter of considering the reclamation process as constitutive of the village, as is argued here, it is essential to move forward within a description that at least seeks to grasp the complexities involved and to regard reclamation as a constantly changing process.

To refer to the changes in the reclamation process, some of my interlocutors resorted to the contrast between *living entangled* and *living dispersed*. The first image refers to the period prior to 2013, when reclaimed farms each housed a larger number of residents, often bringing together members of different extended families. The second refers to the present day, characterised by the reduction in the number of people per reclaimed area and by the allocation of members of different extended families in the same area only in exceptional cases. In this scenario, significant effort has been made to place each family lineage in its own domain, that is, in places identified as being occupied by their ancestors.

Broadly speaking, three levels of organisation have been constituted: the reclaimed farm, generally related to one or more nuclear families belonging to the same extended family; the sector, generally consisting of contiguous reclamations, associated with the domain of a family lineage; and the village, composed of the entirety of reclamations and smallholdings, together with relatives who, despite living outside the territory, are considered part of the village. The decision to situate each family lineage in its respective domain is conjugated with the search for balance between the concrete needs of each family (considering the number of members and their working conditions) and the characteristics of the farms (size, location, the presence and condition of permanent crops and other resources, such as houses, cocoa seed trays and cocoa driers).

However, the actual territorial distribution is not the result of the strict application of these guidelines, since circumstantial factors also apply. For example, the need to allocate families that lack a clear lineage or families whose old lineages trace back to other villages mean that, in practice, no reclamation sector is inhabited solely by members of the same lineage. Affinities or enmities, and the existence of relationships between certain Indians and specific portions of the territory other than the relationships associated with lineage are factors that, among others, assist in determining the territorial distribution. In addition, some situations lead to temporary arrangements – it is common, for example, that some people move from their homes, due to pregnancy, puerperium, illness and *fechamento de trabalho* [closing the body] with the *pajé*<sup>15</sup>, temporarily changing the territorial distribution in the village. Although marked by permanence, the territorial distribution shows constant transformation.

The existence of a variety of family arrangements disperses close relatives in different reclamations (e.g. in the case of a child raised by the grandmother, whose parents live in another area), engendering an intricate network in which each person is often implicated in several places. Specific work arrangements can also lead a person to live in one reclaimed area, work on a perennial crop in another, and maintain short cycle crops in a third. This network means families can access different possibilities and resources.

In Alarcon (2013), I described the distinctions between the domains of the smallholding and the reclamation. The former, strongly identified with a nuclear or extended family, was characterised by a preponderance of the authority of the *head of the smallholding* or *head of the family*, where some rules established for the whole village did not apply. If, for example, members of a nuclear family converted to

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<sup>15</sup> A process that can last for months or years, during which a series of taboos prevail; it concludes with a ritual of *closing the body* in the *casa do santo*, the main religious space of the village where the *pajé* conducts the most frequented ceremonies, located at the foot of the Serra do Padeiro.

an evangelical denomination and then refused to participate in the *toré*<sup>16</sup>, they could be banished from a reclamation, but never from their smallholding. On the other hand, in the reclamations – in some sense, much more directly associated with the struggle –, the power of the heads of families tended to be more nuanced by the power arising from the instances of village mobilisation. For example, a young Indian who did not get along with his nuclear family and was not welcomed by other members of the extended family, could encounter the possibility of insertion in the reclamations. Today, with the way things are heading in the identification between reclamation and nuclear or extended family, it seems that the differences between smallholding and reclamation are diminishing.

It should be noted that a series of tensions emerges in the day-to-day life between individual or family arrangements and the determinations of the collective village project, the latter, expressed in the maxim enunciated by some leaders: “It is not we who organise the land, it is the land that organises us”. The expected stance of a village member engaged in the struggle is that they are ready to move from one reclamation to another, depending on security or specific strategies, among other issues. However, people initiate negotiations on a daily basis to remain in the places they have become attached to, after years of care, or to move to the areas where they believe they have the right to be. Such managements may be more or less successful, depending on factors like the prestige of each family and the relationships maintained with figures of power, including the reclamation coordinators, old lineages, the *pajé* and the *cacique*.

It is important to emphasise that relatives who fight together also disagree. The fact that the village is intersected by ties of kinship and solidarity – including, emphatically representing itself as a united and organised village – in no way means the absence of envy, gossip, witchcraft. In this sense, it is fundamental to discuss the possibility of village construction through the handling of divergences between relatives, considering the relationships between the different family lineages, including the depictions that the members of one make of the others. These relationships are quite complex – opposing either whole lineages, or parts of different lineages or the same – and they change over time. In addition, they are developed in connection with collective efforts to ensure some balance between lineages in the administration of village life, including their representation in the Association of Tupinambá Indians of Serra do Padeiro (AITSP), at the CEITSP and in other areas. It is also important to look at indigenous representations of returning relatives after living on farms or in towns, and at the relationships established between them and those who already live in the village – some returns are deeply disturbing. Thus, it seems to me important to reflect on the role of divergence, whether or not it is visible, in collective actions.

Juxtaposing living entangled and living dispersed, the Tupinambá identify advantages and disadvantages in each situation. On the one hand, they emphasise that the new arrangement tends to contribute to a reduction in fights between neighbours and an increase in family income, since each now has more farmland available. On the other hand, some Indians argue that the new configuration can loosen ties, including weakening the village in the face of enemies. It is important to note, however, that the construction of roads and the greater availability of motorcycles, in particular, but of other vehicles as well, has created a scenario of intense movement, in which these modes of transit are added to dislocations on foot, in some cases, replacing the latter. Thus, perhaps, the discourse on the loosening of ties speaks more of concern and caution, than of an effective reduction in encounters. In any case, statements on the importance of visiting relatives intensified, thus a clear effort was made to reinforce the existing meeting spaces, to create new ones and to maintain the ceaseless sharing of care, knowledge and resources that serves to connect the village.

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<sup>16</sup> The *toré* is a central political-religious ritual for Indians of the Brazilian Northeast. See Grunewald (2005).

In concluding this section, it should be noted that the issues listed here, among others that are related to the territorial distribution in the village, have direct implications on the dynamics of the return of relatives. Previously, returning Indians were usually allocated to reclamations already occupied by other families – sometimes they had to build houses of mud or wooden boards, or erect canvas shacks. Today, it is common for new returnees to become the first occupants of a recent reclamation – in some cases, actually carried out to receive them. A returned family could also temporarily settle with relatives, until they carry out a reclamation themselves. I regard analysis of these different forms of entry into the village to be fundamental. Likewise, it is important to consider that, in a sense, each Indian or group of Indians that returns finds a different village from that of their relatives who have come in previous waves, such that each return also triggers new transformations.

### Relatives unite in the struggle, the struggle unites (and disunites) relatives

There was a time when the Tupinambá were scattered. A time of giving birth on farms, of having no ground to bury the stump of the umbilical cord of your children<sup>17</sup>, of placing your belongings on your back and leaving for the city. Those who managed to stay on their smallholdings were increasingly squeezed by non-Indians. My interlocutors used to allude to the fact that, when recalling their oldest memories of childhood, they found themselves on a different farm than the one where they had been born. Take the example of a 30-year-old teacher who, from the age of nine to sixteen years old, lived on nine different farms, four of which have now been reclaimed. As you can surmise, she lived on roughly one farm per year. Reconstructing their trajectories, many Tupinambá Indians situate their exit from the village at a time when the struggle had not begun, when living conditions were scarce, and they were being driven out by farmers.

Elsewhere (Alarcon 2013), I sought to discuss how the *martyrdom* of the ancestors and the *trauma* of dispersion, transmitted from generation to generation, were triggered in the framework of the land reclamation process. The article deals with situations that were often only alluded to or confided by some and silenced by others, regarding, for example, Indians who became prostitutes, those who had to give their children to others to raise, the many relatives who are understood to have *gone mad*<sup>18</sup> and those who disappeared. Much of the political power of the return of relatives comes from remembrance of the dispersion – understood within the framework of territorial expropriation and invested with suffering –, both by those who left and by those who saw relatives leave or heard the stories about the departures of ancestors.

The struggle for land thus draws on narratives concerning other struggles, woven into spheres that are occasionally more obscure and often occur outside the territory, conforming to a worldview that affirms that when you are poor, to live is to fight<sup>19</sup>. At the same time, however, leaving the village entails

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17 “In rural areas, the custom is for mothers to bury their newborn baby’s umbilical cord so that they stay emotionally attached to them and to their homeland. Since migration in search of better job opportunities in such regions is common, such a magical act (a ‘charm’) increases the chances that the child will one day return to their native land” (Pacheco de Oliveira 1998: 64).

18 For the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro, *madness* is closely connected with religiosity, particularly to the relationship with the *encantados*. When puberty arrives, it is common to go through a period of *madness*, marked by visions – including those expressed in prophecies related to the struggle for land –, which tends to end with the ritual of *closing the body* with the *pajé*. Within the framework of dispersion, madness can express a form of agency of the *encantados*, demanding that the Indian in question returns to the territory, to re-establish or reinforce their kinship ties, resume their religious obligations and engage in the struggle.

19 It is worth highlighting the interesting discussion by Comerford (1999) concerning the meanings of the term *struggle*, mainly considering data obtained in western Bahia. In this and other contexts, the word is used to characterise both the daily lives of the poor and the clashes between peasants and landlords, and, more restrictively, to refer to the field of trade unions. In the first case, which is intimately related to *suffering*, *struggle* alludes to daily living “that is permanently restored as a critical situation” (Comerford 1999: 26). In this sense, the notion is also used to qualify “the daily experience of people who have been struck very unfavourably by processes of rural transformation and have begun living precariously as temporary employees, sharecroppers in very unstable situation, or who have had a difficult migration experience”, a situation often aggravated by personal dramas and climatic events, such as drought (*ibid.*).

dimensions of discovery and learning, affording an opportunity to acquire skills (obtaining songs and prayers from others places, learning to read, to perform manual crafts, to use playing cards for divination...) and to gather stories that, within the process of village construction, add to the framework of narratives shared by the Tupinambá. Thus, reflecting on the political strategies of the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro necessarily inquires into a period when there was a marked tendency to leave the village.

With this in mind, during the census I conducted in 2016, I sought to gather quantitative and qualitative data on the trajectories of the Indians who lived in Serra do Padeiro at that time. We elaborated genealogies and discussed, among other issues, the displacements undergone by the Indians throughout their lives, considering the transformations in their situations in relation to housing, land tenure and work. It is important to note that the indigenous perspective on the experience of expropriation also unfolds in less obvious aspects, such as recurrent complaints concerning the temporality of the city and the feeling of isolation and confinement, affirmations on the discrimination that occurs there and that *everything is different*. Moreover, according to my interlocutors, in the city, it is common for others (non-relatives) to practice witchcraft against them, leading to illness or death.

Among the testimonies obtained during the census, it was possible to identify a set of recurrent destinations for Indians who left the village – dispersing to distant locations, in the south and central-south of the country, and even to the Amazon region –, associated with networks of relationships established outside the village. Some comments accentuated the precarious living conditions in these places: some have lived in favelas, there were hodmen who slept in the building itself (i.e. inside the skeleton of the building under construction, not in accommodation), an Indian who felled trees in the Amazon rainforest and whose only shelter was a precarious shack in the forest, and others who lived in farmhouses or under a tarp in landless encampments. The list of predominant occupations and labour situations in the dispersion, and the comments associated with them, provide an idea of what the imperative of *working for others* means for Tupinambá Indians. In reference to the city, the complaints tended to revolve around the cost of living, while in relation to farm work, depending on the employer, they mentioned impediments to working their own plots of land, eating fruits from the tree, and relatives visiting their home, among other prohibitions.

In the same census, I tried to gather information about relatives (grandparents, parents, siblings, children and grandchildren) who were outside the village, considering the anticipation and expectations of the interviewees about the possibility of their return. For the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro, *living* in the village and *being part* of the village are not synonymous. The number of people who make up the village as conceived by the Indians themselves includes relatives who live elsewhere but are closely linked to the life of the group, as well as relatives who are understood to be somewhere else but will return. Therefore, it is essential to look at the meanings of being inside and outside the village, according to the Tupinambá perspective, contrasting geographical limits with the limits demarcated by participation in the movement for territorial recovery. A significant tendency to maintain ties between relatives and with the territory is evident, even when outside the village. Among my interlocutors, emphasising the difference between *leaving* the village and *abandoning* the village is a common expedient<sup>20</sup>. Attention to this fact is fundamental when it comes to characterising the political subject delineated in the reclamation process. Contemporaneously, conceiving of the return of relatives traverses understanding how many of them remained part of the village despite the dispersion, and how this has been sustained over generations.

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20 Arruti's reflections on Pankararu mobility, which initiated a significant afflux from Pernambuco to São Paulo in the 1940s, are evocative. With this in mind, the author considers territory to be "a place of reference that you can always return to as a way of constantly reproducing indigenous identity" (Arruti 1996: 90). For him, "territory essentially appears as a reference, fundamental, but not like a mould, opening up to the 'vast exterior' of Pankararu identity" (*Ibid*: 190).

It is possible to identify repeated efforts on the part of those who leave the village that their destinations are located, whenever possible, in the vicinity or even within the indigenous territory itself, even while on farms, thus guaranteeing proximity with their relatives and place of origin. There are several cases where neighbouring towns were preferred to more distant locations, where they bought smallholdings nearby or began living in landless encampments or agrarian reform settlements in the region. Some of these situations involved daily dislocations between the house (in town) and the smallholding (in the village), with more complex arrangements involving circulation among more than one farm and more than one house.

Even travelling to more distant destinations usually does not cause loss of communication with the village. In the field, I was able to observe how mothers and grandmothers continue to care for their relatives at a distance, sending and receiving photographs, teaching remedies over the telephone (and now through social networks) or requesting prayers from the *pajé*. There is also an intense flow of goods and money, in the form of orders, presents, pensions and assistance. Visits to the village – which commonly extend throughout the holiday period, although they may be delayed due to financial difficulties – can be understood in this context as privileged situations for reinforcing ties, which serve as nourishment during periods of distance. The same can be said, for example, of relatives who return to tend pregnant and puerperal women.

Beyond the everyday devices for maintaining bonds, the comments made by the Tupinambá indicate an even greater depth of ties with relatives and territory. For example, the descendants of one of the old lineages of the village, João Ferreira da Silva (c. 1905-1981), known as João de Nô, narrated that he could talk to a brother who was in Rio de Janeiro *without needing a telephone*. Even if his case is special, because he is someone recognised for his powerful prayers, the understanding that it is possible to connect with the bodies and minds of distant relatives (through prayers and other forms), to move during sleep and to communicate in dreams is widespread<sup>21</sup>. An indigenous woman who spent two and a half months imprisoned with her baby, due to the struggle for land, said that the mastitis she developed in prison, aggravated by the negligence of the officials, only improved after her mother, who was in the village, squeezed her breasts while they both slept, leading her to wake up covered with secretion. Even if the ties are weakened, they seem to persist to the point of sensing that a separated relative is about to die, even when nothing can be done to prevent it.

The persistence of the place in the form of remembrance or, in the case of those who were born outside the village, in the form of images created by relatives, should also be highlighted. I have collected a rich set of narratives told to me by an indigenous woman born in the sertão of Pernambuco, as a consequence of a long series of wanderings undertaken by her family, in which she describes what the village was like in her father's childhood, a man born and raised in Tupinambá territory. It is important to add that she first stepped onto this land as an adult woman, married, and the mother of three children. The richness of detail present in the narratives and the ambience they are able to capture led me to think about the way in which the relationships of this woman and her siblings with the territory were being constructed outside of it, through the words of their father, and were updated later, when they engaged in the reclamation movement.

Thus, in the process of territorial recovery conducted by the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro, a collective of political action is also defined to some extent by people outside the village, some of whom are unaware that they form part of it. It is possible to discern distinct forms of actuation in the struggle for land engaged in by Indians living in the city – for example, by providing lodging for relatives who are

21 In research conducted with the Pataxó Hã-Hã-Hãe, also in southern Bahia, Pedreira (2016) reflects on the problem of distance in relationships – considering devices like dreams, night travels and visions, which even connect the living and the dead – and looks at narratives of expropriation and return to the Caramuru Catarina-Paraguassu Indigenous Reserve.

travelling to claim certain rights or by providing them with information on the actions and plans of groups against demarcation in neighbouring towns. That an Indian who resides outside the village expresses the desire to return may lead relatives to undertake actions to create the conditions to accelerate their return. Furthermore, reclamations have been conducted with a view to the return of absent relatives who have not even signalled their intention to come back. Therefore, it is important to also consider the indirect agency of Indians who reside outside the village in the process of territorial recovery.

Even when you only consider the Indians who are physically in the village at a given moment, it is clear that the project of the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro allows for different modes of participation. Representing the village as homogeneously engaged is a misconception. Indeed, we are faced with an interesting balance in motion, one not free of tensions with regard to the forms of participation of each person or family – which may even vary over time, and is often associated with the relationship dynamics between family lineages. Thus, a question that could be viewed as simple (what does it mean to participate in the village?) encounters a variety of responses, among the Indians, that refer both to the way each narrates their involvement, based on certain frames of reference, and on the extent of their participation. Actuating in reclamation actions, living on reclaimed farms, participating in community smallholdings, engaging in work that contributes income to the movement, participating in AITSP meetings, contributing financially to the same, participating in trips to claim indigenous rights are a few of the stated replies, and within the interstices lie the concrete commitments.

Even though the reclamations are what they are – founding aspects of the village in its contemporary existence – not everyone who is part of Serra do Padeiro is involved in them. Some say that their temperament is not suited to this; others that their health will not allow them to; still others offer no justifications, stating only that the moment they entered the struggle, they made it clear that it would be on their terms. Even among those involved in the reclamations, the forms of participation are diverse, ranging from those who take part in entering the farms, and those who live in these areas, to those who provide reinforcement to the residents in the form of visits or short stays, days after the inaugural action or when there is the threat of land repossession. Nor should we forget those who participate from afar, praying for a good outcome.

On a more general level, as a relative, the only requirement to be part of the village is to not act badly – a formulation which, as you can see, has conveniently undefined contours. Many private and public remarks affirm that the village should allow for different ways of living – which fit within certain goals, i.e. they conform to collectively established agreements – which must include different forms of participation in the struggle. Nevertheless, within the framework of relationships between families, the involvement of others in the struggle is subject to daily scrutiny and comparison with an individual's own engagement, which they have the opportunity to exalt before the village in any number of situations where the Indians devote themselves to remembering their bravery and recounting their deeds. In this context, and considering that the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro have managed to remain in possession of all the areas recovered while moving forward with their main strategy, it seems important to reflect on the role of divergence, whether or not it is visible, in collective actions<sup>22</sup>.

To a greater or lesser extent, returning relatives can be found in practically all of the extended families in the village. Although there are numerous cases of Indians who seek out the village to express their desire to join the territorial recovery movement – which often materialises in a conversation with the *cacique*, or in a request that a relative who resides in the village do so on their behalf –, in the majority of descriptions,

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22 Analysing the “ritual” and “everyday” actions of peasant movements and organisations, Comerford (1999) draws attention to the presence of concepts that are more or less divergent and different forms of participation in the same, such that these discontinuities are constitutive of the very processes of struggle.

the driving force is the call of relatives or of one relative in particular. Even a return that is not triggered by a concrete call should be understood, in a broader sense, as the result of the deep convocation that is the call of blood, allied with the actuation of the *encantados*.

Enabling the return of relatives means ensuring the material conditions for that to occur and be sustainable. Although the recovery of areas is the first condition for their return, other factors are also involved. Relatives who have recently arrived frequently need help until they stabilise – it is common for the AITSP to provide building materials, when necessary, and even basic food supplies, until it is possible to them to sustain themselves working in the fields or get a job in the village. Having an association with cash on hand and a reputation to buy on credit from local merchants, if necessary, is a condition that facilitates their return. Similarly, it is important to note that the existence of jobs contributes to establishing people in the village, while offering alternatives for those who do are unable or who lack the inclination to work in the fields.

In addition, the offer of school up to the completion of secondary education, including technical training, works to attract Indians and maintain them in the village, while reversing a historical tendency: leaving to study. That the village can offer health care, that the movement has been able to ensure, with certain difficulties, that the village was included in the federal rural electrification program, that when necessary, the AITSP mediates the relationships between the Indians and the State (for example, guaranteeing access to social security) are all mobilisation factors. Thus, the advancement of the movement in obtaining rights – which led to the allocation of resources by the State to operate the school, to install a small community health care clinic and dental service, and to hire Indians to work in the areas of education, sanitation and health care – also affects the process of the return of relatives.

In making these considerations, it is never my intention to suggest that involvement in the process of territorial recovery can be reduced to calculations of personal benefits, while blurring its profound implications and causalities, as some of its opponents argue. The point is to indicate that engagement does not necessarily result from full and *a priori* comprehension of indigenous rights and of the political project in course in the village – evidently, because the project of village construction is ongoing. Engagement seems to have much more to do with having expectations of and some confidence in the possibility of building a way of life among relatives, in association with the potential of the project itself, which can provide forms of involvement within the same that did not necessarily exist from the outset.

In some families, the data on returns is striking; here, I consider one of the extended families living in the village as an example. Three generations were heavily impacted by expropriation, their members wandered between farms, worked in domestic cleaning services, and even in situations analogous to slavery. In 2004, before the onset of the reclamation process, 12 Indians from this family were incorporated into the village, 15 people including spouses. All of them lived clustered around one female relative who had settled some land. Today, 72 extended family members live in the village. The reclamation process attracted 39 people, and the reunited family tripled in size. Since then, there have been 18 births. Today, the family is spread over five reclaimed farms and one smallholding. Clearly, the availability of land not only allowed for the return of a significant number of relatives, but has ensured that the family growth, through marriages and births, no longer implies renewed dispersion due to the lack of means of support.

In the past few years, some nuclear families who had apparently consolidated their permanence in the city returned, strongly undermining the assertion of “trajectories of no return”, even among Indians who have lived outside the village for decades<sup>23</sup>. This is the case of an Indian who moved to the metropolitan area of São Paulo at the age of 18, looking for a job, after his family saw their land dwindle drastically. In the city, he got a job in a factory. He married a co-worker, also from the Northeast, bought a house, had a daughter, and convinced two of his brothers to work in the same factory and live nearby, accompanied by their respective nuclear families. After living eighteen years outside Serra do Padeiro, in 2008, four years after the territorial recovery process began, he came back to live in the village. He returned to working in the fields and his wife opened a small confectionery shop. Today, he coordinates the work in the fields of his extended family. Besides being a connoisseur of the woods that surround the rock formation that gives the village its name, he holds detailed information regarding the historical process of occupying the foot of the mountain range.

The two cases I mention above contrast in different ways, for example, regarding the socioeconomic conditions of the Indians before they joined the process of territorial recovery. Both, however, seem to me indicative of the possibilities of the change in directions that open up during the reclamation process, engaging dispersed relatives in a collective project based on what is said to be the ideal of every couple (staying close to their children and grandchildren) and, more broadly, the ideal of the group (having land to reunite all the relatives). The recent, expressive increase in areas of land among the Indians, mentioned in the previous section, has enabled the intensification of the process of the return of relatives; at the same time, the ability to mobilise such relatives seems to be a fundamental condition for the development of the collective project of the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro.

In Serra do Padeiro, *if relatives unite in the struggle, the struggle also unites relatives*. We are faced with a kind of political action that is guided by kinship<sup>24</sup>, understood by the Indians as a bond that, even as it retraces the past back to the old lineages, when latent, it can be activated and updated within the framework of the process of territorial recovery itself. The examples are numerous; I will mention only two. Married to an overseer on a farm, an Indian woman only met most of her relatives as an adult, when the area in question was reclaimed. Even though she lived a short distance from her uncles, aunts and cousins, the routine of life on the farm isolated her from this circle, especially after the first reclamation took place – the alleged owners of the farm, knowing she was indigenous, began to watch the movements of her nuclear family closely. Another interlocutor, who became an orphan as a young woman, described in a choked voice the moment when she learned that she had relatives, within the context of the reclamations.

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23 In research dedicated to the Brejo and Agreste Paraibanos, Garcia Jr. (1989) already highlighted that the displacement of peasants to urban areas, as part of the expansion of cattle and sugar cane lands, did not necessarily imply their “proletarianisation”. In the trajectories analysed by the author, the journey to the city also composed the possibility of returning to the countryside and the “progressive breakdown of the subjection in the North”, with the eventual acquisition of your own land (*Ibid*: 269). Therefore, insertion in the industrial labour market was not a path with no return, but a path that could lead, among other places, to fields and peasant production. “The hypothesis of one way emigration is therefore arbitrary, since *a priori* it rules out any study of displacements that do not necessarily end in ‘abandoning declining areas’ and ‘integrating into the poles of prosperity’” (*Ibid*: 13).

24 In my efforts to construct an analytical strategy to understand living and struggling among relatives, I have established dialogues with authors like Comerford (2003), particularly considering his reflections on the processes of *familiarisation* and *defamiliarisation*, which are traversed by *everyday conflict* and define territories of kinship; Franco (2001), who while investigating the connections between family and political mobilisation, proposed the notion of *political coalescence of relatives*, arguing that affectivity supports collective action, solidarity between relatives and the willingness to take risks for each other, in a framework of conflict; Ayoub (2016), who while focusing on fights between neighbours and relatives, reflects on *knowing how to live* or *knowing how to live together*; Silva (2015), who discusses the constitution of borders within populations that are understood as collective, united by kinship ties, considering the constitution of identity by contrast and, simultaneously, by proximity, and examines the elasticity of the terms *family* and *relative*, whose meanings are necessarily contextual; Antunes (2016), who investigates the daily exercise of marking differences between the inhabitants of the same ethnic territory; Pedreira (2016), who while researching the Pataxó Hã-Hã-Hãe, in an ethnographic context that maintains numerous connections with that of Serra do Padeiro, explores the issue of difference, considering the constant movement of *becoming relatives* for people and families with different origins; and Benites (2014), whose analysis of the reoccupation processes of *tekoha* engaged in by the Guarani and Kaiowa, shows *extended families* occupy a central position.

I understand, however, that the claim that the struggle unites relatives has even greater scope: the process of territorial recovery has extended the meaning of kinship. If previously, the explanatory emphasis of kinship was on *blood*, with each person attributed to an old lineage, whether or not each nexus that united them was known, it now seems possible to consider another definition of relative: *those with whom you fight together*. The deep bonds that are established between those who engage in direct action side by side require attention. When I asked one of my interlocutors, while trying to place him within the genealogical diagrams, who his close relatives were, he replied emphatically: “everyone in the village”. Upon reformulating the question, he promptly indicated who his parents, siblings, uncles, aunts and grandparents were. But turning again to the issue of “close relatives”, he was inflexible. My belief is that if we take his statement at face value, it is precisely this sense of kinship that he is talking about.

On the other hand, we must consider that *struggle also disunites relatives*. The same process can lead to the weakening or rupture of ties with relatives who are against the mobilisation, aligned with the perspective against demarcation<sup>25</sup>. It can get to the point where, according to reports, an engaged Indian was threatened with death by a brother who was opposed to participating in reclamation actions. Even when it does not involve ruptures, estrangement between relatives caused by the land conflict, even when not intentional, should be taken into account. Some Indians, the elderly and sick among them, left the village following onslaughts by state forces of repression, due to the spectre of new attacks. Fearing further violence, some Indians who live outside the village stopped visiting their children. In at least one case, an Indian moved from Serra do Padeiro after being beaten and having his belongings stolen in the nearby town, as a reprisal for the Tupinambá mobilisation. In any event, for those who remain, the adversities are also interpreted positively, since they unite relatives, provide perspective to those who engage in the collective project and teach them to fight.

## Final considerations

The research that I have been developing dialogues with reflections engaged in different Latin American contexts, principally around notions of *living well*, with the intention of contributing to analysis of the processes of creating *indigenous utopias*. In reflecting on the practices and representations put forward in these processes, I seek to collaborate with certain keys to interpreting the dynamics of mobilisation among indigenous peoples, considering the political concepts and categories created by struggle itself. It should be borne in mind that the perspectives of the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro are not restricted to the village, rather in their project they conceive of the possibility of subverting power relations in the region, making connections with other struggles, such as those of Brazil’s landless movement and the *quilombolas*, to mention two examples.

In this article, I emphasise the need to invest in approaches to indigenous mobilisation processes that bear in mind their dynamic character, considering, in the case of the Tupinambá of Serra do Padeiro, that the strategies of territorial recovery and the existing arrangements in the village are transformed daily within the framework of the struggle itself, informed by both deeper and circumstantial reasons. I also highlight that the development of a collective project should not presume a homogeneity of perspectives and forms of participation, nor the absence of conflict between those engaged in the same.

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<sup>25</sup> The notions of *familiarisation* and *defamiliarisation*, as elaborated by Comerford (2003), may be useful here. According to the author, in the framework of processes of familiarisation and defamiliarisation, traversed by everyday conflict, territories of kinship are delimited, forming a “field of relations that in principal are of trust, mutual aid, respect, tolerance, intimacy, as well as, to varying degrees, sharing characteristics and responsibilities”, but that also imply hierarchisations, ruptures and segmentations (*Ibid*: 34).

Further, I argue that the interpretation of the territorial recovery process should confer centrality to the dispersion (within the framework of the expropriation process) and the return to the village (in the context of reclamation). Focusing on the maintenance of ties between relatives and with the territory, even in the event of leaving the village, I offer some elements to characterise the political subject formed in the reclamation process, defending that we face a political collective also composed of people who are outside the territory. The text briefly outlined some aspects that I consider important in the process of mobilisation, such as the roles of kinship and the *encantados* in precipitating the return of the Indians, the material implications of the return and some of the conditions required for it to be effective and sustainable. Finally, I briefly developed the argument that relatives unite in the struggle, while the struggle unites and disunites relatives, and propose a definition of relative informed by the process of territorial recovery under way in Serra do Padeiro: those with whom you fight together.

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*Daniela Fernandes Alarcon*

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, National Museum,

Post-graduate Programme in Social Anthropology, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Contact: alarcon.df@gmail.com

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# Territory and domestic ecology among the Kaiowa of Mato Grosso do Sul

*Alexandra Barbosa da Silva*

*Fabio Mura*

Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia, Universidade Federal da Paraíba, João Pessoa/PB,  
Brasil

## **Abstract**

This paper aims to analyse the territorial dynamics resulting from the dissymmetric relationship between two processes of *dominialisation* in which the Kaiowa are involved in Mato Grosso do Sul. The first is represented by the process of *territorialisation* established by the creation of indigenous reservations and their management by the State, as well as the simultaneous and correlated formation of rural properties and urban centres. The second process, expresses the indigenous response to the *territorialisation*, through the ecology of their households, engendering adaptations in the activities of its members and strategies to regain control of their expropriated lands. Under these real conditions, the Kaiowa reflect on the configuration of their territorial spaces by creating important cultural categories related to them, thus revealing that territoriality is not an immanent and/or previously defined structure, but something that is historically constructed.

**Keywords:** Territorial Dynamics; Processes of *Dominialisation*; Processes of *Territorialisation*; Household Ecology; Kaiowa Indigenous.

# Território e ecologia doméstica entre os Kaiowa de Mato Grosso do Sul

## Resumo

Este artigo busca analisar a dinâmica territorial decorrente da articulação dissimétrica de dois processos de *dominialização* que em Mato Grosso do Sul envolvem os Kaiowa. O primeiro é representado pelo processo de *territorialização* materializado na formação de reservas indígenas e na sua gestão por parte do Estado, bem como pela simultânea e correlacionada criação de propriedades rurais e centros urbanos. Já o segundo é expressão da resposta dos indígenas à *territorialização*, por meio da ecologia de seus grupos domésticos, dando vida a adaptações das atividades de seus membros, mas também a estratégias para recuperar o controle sobre seus territórios expropriados. A partir dessas condições concretas, os Kaiowa refletem sobre a configuração de seus espaços territoriais, produzindo importantes categorias culturais a eles relacionadas, revelando assim que a territorialidade é algo historicamente construído e não uma estrutura imanente e/ou previamente definida..

**Palavras-chave:** Dinâmica territorial; Processos de *dominialização*; Processo de *territorialização*; Ecologia doméstica; Indígenas Kaiowa.

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Alexandra Barbosa da Silva

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## Introduction

In his classic essay on seasonal variations among the Eskimos, Mauss (1993 [1904-1905]) introduced the important category of social morphology, attempting to contrast the theories of the anthropogeographers of the time, which attributed a central power to soil characteristics in determining the shape of human settlements. Comparing Eskimos lifestyle and spatial mobility with other (indigenous) populations occupying the same regions, the French author showed how the Eskimos had developed a seasonal morphology, with the dispersion of households during the summer and their concentration in the winter, while the latter maintained constant mobility throughout the year. These adjustments greatly contributed to the development and use of different techniques and materials, appropriate to the social morphology adopted.

It should be noted, however, that if on the one hand, the analysis of social morphology leads us to overcome a certain kind of material determinism, on the other, in Mauss's terms, it hinders us from understanding how morphological variations are produced in the same ecological and territorial context. It also hinders us from understanding how individuals belonging to households, who engage in various activities and who relate to each other through exchanges, war, cooperation, competition, domination, etc., take advantage of these multiple experiences and how these condition their lives over time. Therefore, we cannot imagine that the mere study of the social morphology of a human group allows us to understand how it organises itself in space, since understanding how it interacts with other groups is also essential. The way in which these interactions occur is dependent on how resources are mobilised in these geographical spaces and ecological contexts are encountered, or to which they have been redirected, by diversified forces, both human and non-human. In these terms, as Barth observes

“‘Society’ cannot be abstracted from the material context: all social acts are ecologically embedded. It is therefore not meaningful to separate “society” and “environment” and then show how the former affects or is adapted to the latter. Though the aggregate of social behaviours has a significant effect on the environment, and is contained within it, social decisions on *all* levels are connected with these ecological variables and have their forms significantly affected by them. Thus, the social and the ecological cannot, with respect the forms of social events and institutions, be treated as separate systems.” (1992: 20).

In order that the social and the ecological are not treated as separate systems, as the Norwegian author points out, we consider it opportune to embark on an effective surmounting of the distinction nature *versus* culture-society, seeking to bring together, under the same ontological horizon, aspects that are usually contrasted and not concatenated in the vital flow mobilised by distinct forces operating in the universe. These aspects configure *socio-ecological-territorial contexts* (Mura 2006, 2011),<sup>1</sup> where the properties of the social that – as Barth points out, lead to diversity and variation (Barth 1987, 2005), defining modalities of access to information and resources – may be considered alongside other forces, physical or chemical,

<sup>1</sup> With the notion *socio-ecological-territorial context* “we seek to understand how human and nonhuman elements, as subjects or objects, in a given place, relate to and interact with each other, forming sociotechnical systems and mobilising forces of the cosmos at their disposal” (Mura 2011: 114).

which produce similar diversification effects in a given space of interactions and relations. It is important to consider that these socio-ecological-territorial contexts cannot be understood as atemporal, nor can the interactions and relationships that occur in them be seen as arising from a spontaneous action. They must be understood based on specific *historical situations* (Pacheco de Oliveira 1988), characterised by a peculiar mode of power distribution.

The very dichotomy between natural and supernatural, derived from that between nature and culture, should also be rethought. This theme has already been addressed elsewhere (Mura 2014), indicating how religion can be considered an organisational type, which is formed by producing boundaries between distinct dimensions, something that allows for the regulation of specific modalities of communication and the mobilisation of resources in the universe. Thus, while intergroup boundaries (domestic, ethnic, communal, national, etc.) allow for the construction of identities, defining relational symmetries and dissymmetries in the sensory world, religious relationships, through specialists (priests, shamans, mediums, etc.), analogously and simultaneously do the same between distinct dimensions. In both cases, the mobilisation of resource flows and the production of borders allows for the generation of spatial configurations, which may be bi, tri or multidimensional, depending on specific cases. It should be noted, however, that since we intend to focus predominantly on human actions and interactions, the point of reference of these configurations (where they come from) is generally the place that humans inhabit, i.e. geographical space. From this understanding, most cosmologies are found to be geocentric, with the level of access to the territory and its control determined by a human collectivity found to be crucial in the construction and administration of the relationships and interactions that its members establish in the universe as a whole.

Having control over a geographical space and seeking to control access to it and to the flow of materials (cultural and others) that circulate through it is central to the way individual and collective life is organised and how they inhabit the world. This tendency leads to the definition of domains that allow better organisation of access to and control of such flows, as well as establishing the knowledge and skills acquired through the experiential trajectories that the subjects gave life to, internally, within and beyond these spaces. Thus, processes directed towards the construction of domains in a given socio-ecological-territorial context will herein be referred to as processes of *dominialisation* (Mura 2017).<sup>2</sup>

Having said that, this article returns to the understanding of territorial dynamics that derive fundamentally from the dissymmetrical articulation of two types of *dominialisation* processes that affect the life of the Kaiowa in Mato Grosso do Sul. The first is represented by that which Pacheco de Oliveira (1998) defined as a process of *territorialisation*, meaning “an intervention from the political sphere that (prescriptively and unmistakably) associates a well-defined territory with a series of individuals and social groups” (1998: 56). In the specific case discussed here, *territorialisation* refers to the formation of indigenous reservations and their management by colonial and neo-colonial states, whereas the second type of *dominialisation* process is that promoted by the indigenous people, through the ecology of their households.<sup>3</sup> Through the experiences of the members of these groups, this process is geared to exploring

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<sup>2</sup> On this, Mura affirmed: “If Foucault has made use of the pastoral metaphor to discuss governmentality among people, I consider it opportune to focus on the act of shepherding in the literal and technical sense, as a way of governing in the broader sense, relating human and non-human subjects, as well as forces and materials of different natures. The individualising action exerted by the man-shepherd corresponds to an attempt at governing, with significant implications in terms of the spatial configuration of the relationships in a certain socio-ecological-territorial context. This configuration, with implications in reactions, adaptations and mutual ties among all the subjects involved, manifests relationships of interdependence, in the manner indicated by Elias in understanding a *social configuration* (1991) – this concept is extended here to define what I call *socio-ecological configuration*. In turn, given that such a configuration is the result of domesticatory government practices, I define the actions that shape it as a *process of dominialisation*. I opt here for a neologism, in relation to the concept of domination, to highlight a dimension that besides being social, is also territorial and ecological. The aim is to show how each human or non-human subject tends to form domains, trying to impose, through direct or indirect actions, their will and power over other subjects or collectivities, as well as the material flows that they are concerned with” (Mura 2017: 30-31).

<sup>3</sup> By households, here we mean units formed not only by co-residing inhabitants, but, as indicated by Wilk (1984, 1997) and Wallerstein (2004), a collective

geographical spaces, enjoying the resources found there, and through the activities they develop, these members participate in the construction of a specific territory of reference.

The impact of the first type of process on the second has significant consequences, precisely on the construction of these territories. As we will see, the reduction of geographical spaces where Indians can settle, together with limitations of access to and use of other colonised spaces, lead to conditioning of the formation of the *repertoires of possibilities* (Mura 2000, 2011) of members of Kaiowa households – this is the relation between the accessibility and availability of desired resources. It should be observed, however, that here we are talking about a conditioning and not a determination. This is because, as Pacheco de Oliveira (1998) points out, processes of territorialisation are not one-sided, the Indians do not passively suffer their effects. Given the limitations of access to geographical spaces and their use, the Kaiowa react by engendering the adaptive and transformative processes of their domestic organisation, but also by establishing strategies and producing political movements to recover exclusivity of occupation and use of the territories traditionally occupied by them. In this process, they elaborate a complex cosmological vision and specific categories of territoriality.

To develop the idea proposed, the article is divided into three topics. The first is intended to provide a picture of the historical and cosmological processes in which the Kaiowa are the point of reference, observing their place in the world and their understanding of it, directly involving the colonial and neo-colonial relationships undertaken with non-Indians who have entered their territories. The second describes a domestic ecology, presenting composite calendars from which these Indians engender (and meet) a diverse range of techno-economic needs. Finally, an analysis of *territorial dynamics* seeks to address how the central categories of territoriality are produced by this people, combining their domestic activities with the process of retaking lands.

## Historical situations and the configuration of socio-ecological-territorial contexts

At the time of the European conquest, the Guarani-speaking peoples occupied a vast geographical space, which included the present south and southeast regions, and significant parts of central western Brazil, eastern Paraguay, and northeast Argentina (Melià 1986; Susnik 1983). Colonial sources and archaeological studies describe the way of life of these Indians as centred mainly on agricultural activities, their populations distributed along rivers and at the headwaters of the same, forming local groups, which inhabited large huts. In exceptional cases, these huts could house a few hundred people, organised in extended families that distributed the conjugal families around the domestic fires present inside the constructions (MCA 1951; Susnik 1979-80, 1982; Mura 2006; Thomaz de Almeida 2001). Slash-and-burn agriculture was cultivated in the vicinity of these settlements, and a network of paths (*tape po'i*) extended from them, which led to more distant places, where they engaged in hunting and fishing activities. These paths also led to the settlements of other local groups, forming networks of kinship relationships and military alliances.

The territorial organisation described through the lens of missionaries and travellers over the centuries shows how these Indians live “dispersed” in space, rather than forming actual villages.<sup>4</sup> The large huts,

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united by a certain form of cooperation. From this understanding, as Wilk (1984, 1997) observes, many households can be organized as agglomerates of housing units linked together. These are usually extended families of three or more generations. The social organisation of work defines the logic of cooperation and the eventual differentiation of tasks performed by its members, which engenders a domestic ecology (Wilk 1997).

4 When the Jesuit Montoya defined, in 1639, what a *reducción* (mission town) was, where the Indians were moved, he indirectly ended up expressing precisely the way the Guarani occupied space. He expressed himself thus: “Note that we call them ‘*Reduccion*es’ of ‘peoples’ or Indian settlements who, living in their former manner in jungles, mountains and valleys, by hidden streams, **in three, four or six houses only, separated from each other by a distance of two or three leagues, or more, ‘were reduced’ under the diligence of the priests to not so small settlements** and political (civilised) and human life, availed with cotton with which to dress, because they usually lived nude, not even covering what nature concealed.” (Montoya 1985 [1639]: 34; emphasis added).

therefore, were not built in clusters, but were located, several kilometres apart with respect to one another, in ample territorial spaces between fluvial basins.

The effects of European colonisation on these peoples and their ways of inhabiting their territories are very significant. Specifically the Itatim, ancestors of the present Kaiowa, were partly *reduced* in Jesuit missions, and were later attacked by *bandeirantes* and by Mbaya-Guaikuru groups, as well as being afflicted by serious epidemics brought by the Europeans. As early as the middle of the seventeenth century, this population suffered a consistent demographic reduction, with contingents of people having to leave their spaces of origin, located in the region of what is now Bodoquena, on the edges of the Pantanal (Gadelha 1980). Thus, they settled in what is now the Southern Cone, in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul and in eastern Paraguay. In these spaces, compared with the dynamics of the spaces previously occupied by the Itatim (as indicated), until the middle of the nineteenth century the Kaiowa managed to develop a domestic ecology and construct their territories with relatively few colonial controls. Indeed, changes in the plans of the Portuguese metropolis, which redirected its interests of conquest and exploitation towards the State of Minas Gerais, together with the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Americas, with a consequent embargo and extinction of the experiences of the *reducciones* (mission towns), meant that the large geographical spaces where the Kaiowa had begun to reside were not subject to another physical occupation for over 100 years, with colonial investments limited to the experiences of explorers and missionaries (Thomaz de Almeida 1991, Barbosa & Mura 2011).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, however, there was a significant change, largely as a result of the outcomes of the “Triple Alliance War” (1864-70), which led to a redefinition of the boundaries between Brazil and Paraguay. The spaces occupied by the Kaiowa were then divided by the new frontier, and impacted by an intense and systematic process of occupation and exploration of these places by two large tea companies: “Matte Larangeiras” and “Industrial Paraguaya”. On the Brazilian side of the border, in a few decades, Matte Larangeiras began building railroads, highways, and river ports to ship the *mate* tea to the Platina region, and to bring materials and merchandise to the spaces it was exploring. It received concessions from the Brazilian State of more than five million hectares of land, most of these coinciding with the places occupied for centuries by the Kaiowa.

The systematic presence of the extractivist company led the Indians to engage intensely in tea production, through temporary jobs, known as *changa* (Melià et al. 1976). The intent was the possibility of access principally to fabrics, metal materials with which to make tools, salt and soap. This engagement led to a change in the Kaiowa way of inhabiting territories: the communal houses that housed extended families were gradually associated with other smaller buildings. This was mainly due to the strategies of extended families, which began to develop greater flexibility in their organisation, engendering a more diversified domestic ecology, systematically including the temporary work experiences of tea exploration. Thus, temporary shelters were built for conjugal families as these displacements advanced. Many interlocutors point out, however, that in most cases, these movements were not accompanied by the elderly, who tended to remain in certain parts of the territory, serving as a reference to their descendants. Hence, a more disperse form of territorial occupation came to life. On the other hand, new materials and subjects began to be contemplated, with which socio-technical relationships were established.

It was in this socio-ecological-territorial context that, between 1915 and 1928, the Indian Protection Service (SPI) created eight tiny reserves in the region to unite the Kaiowa and their Ñandéva neighbours, both of whom spoke Guarani. The perception of the indigenist organ was that both groups were dispersed, understanding (as the Jesuits had centuries before) that the Indians did not live in “proper villages”. It was therefore necessary to create them, through State intervention, to concentrate families considered to be “*desaldeadas*” [*lit*: unvillaged; having no village]. As Souza Lima (1995) points out, the aim was not only to settle

indigenous people, but to simultaneously free land for colonisation – which, in fact, began to be developed, with the formation of farms, especially in the 1920s, when the Matte Larangeiras Company lost their exclusive right to exploit these wide geographical spaces. Thus, another important phase in the occupation of indigenous territories was inaugurated by neo-colonial fronts (Thomaz de Almeida 1991, Brand 1997).

The development of farms in the southern cone of what is now Mato Grosso do Sul was progressive, with different impacts on the indigenous communities located there. This was initially dominated by cattle raising, allowing most of the Kaiowa and the Nandéva to stay where they were. They came to be referred to as “[Indians from the] fringes of farms” (Thomaz de Almeida 1991, 2001), with farmers using their labour to establish and maintain their own farms. In the first few decades of the development of these rural “estates”, the forests were still predominant, and the Indians continued to reside there. Relationships with the farmers were thus established in a piecemeal manner, through the activities of *changa*, which were necessary to attain materials and goods that they did not produce. The systematic and massive deforestation of the region – which took place between the 1960s and 1980s to implement intensive livestock and mechanised agriculture – led to the systematic expulsion of the Kaiowa and Nandéva, who erected their local political communities in these spaces. Indigenous families were then massively removed by force or other forms of coercion to the reservations instituted decades before by the SPI. This gradual movement led to a population swell on the reserves, with families who were enemies and who came from different places being forced to reside side by side, provoking strong political tensions.

Thus, in the territories formerly used exclusively by the Kaiowa, cities, towns, and farms were formed, enclosed by walls, fences and porches, and a network of roads was created that currently occupies almost the entire region. Against this background, there was an indigenous reaction in the 1980s, with the retaking of lands they had traditionally occupied and the heightening of a struggle that lasts until today.

The historical facts briefly presented here allow us to identify distinct moments of indigenous life and its relationships and interactions with other peoples, for approximately 400 years<sup>5</sup>. These moments are characterised by the configurations of socio-ecological-territorial contexts in specific historical situations, diversified by several aspects, among the most significant of which is the access and control the Kaiowa have, to a greater or lesser extent, over the territories and the resources within them. The experiences of indigenous people in these contexts and situations, especially those marked by strong relationships of power due to the implementation of colonial and neo-colonial practices, allowed for the construction of a specific tradition of knowledge and cosmology. Interethnic relationships and the territorial dimension are revealed as key aspects to defining the architecture and dynamics of the cosmos, as understood by the Kaiowa. This cosmology, therefore, cannot be seen as something immanent or transcendent, but as a historical product (continuously under construction) and an integral part of the territorial dynamics in which the Indians participate.

In the next section, we will take a close look at the Kaiowa worldview and the answers they seek to provide to the problems they face, both from a practical and a moral point of view.

### **Cosmological processes: in search of good living**

The Kaiowa seek to frame the problems they face in everyday life in a perspective constructed from a marked awareness of the movement of the universe, trying to condition it with their actions, in search of what is understood as *tekovê porã* (good living).

Their worldview is thus based on a continuous comparison between the “time-space of origins” (Áry Ypy), the present (Áry Ypyrã) and the process (already underway) of the end of the world (*Ararapyre*). The

<sup>5</sup> For an in-depth study on the history of the Kaiowa, in addition to the texts already mentioned, see Monteiro 2003, Vietta 2007, Oliveira & Pereira 2009, Cavalcante 2013, and Chamorro 2015.

latter may be accelerated or decelerated, depending on the judgment of human behaviour on the part of the deities and/or by virtue of persuasion of the same by their shamans. Such collation between different space-times is directed towards constructing a moral and cognitive framework regarding the beings that populate the universe, emphasising their qualities at distinct moments. By presenting a perfect symmetry between the entities that inhabited the cosmos in the past, who all possessed shamanistic powers, spoke a single language and were immortal, the Kaiowa seek to show a process of decadence and hierarchisation of these living beings over time (Mura 2006). Through this comparison, they give meaning to the current architecture of the universe and how it came into being.

The separation of the pathways that communicated between the Earth (*Yvy*) and the celestial heights (*yváy*) produced the division of spaces between those now inhabited by pure beings, located beyond *Yvy Rendy* (the bright aura of the Earth) and the remainder located below that line where the imperfect beings reside. The subsequent concealment of these pathways also produced separation among diverse world dimensions: that where it is possible to perceive through common sensorial manifestations, and that where perception is possible only through hyper-senses, typical of shamanic abilities. Finally, cosmological conceptions are equally defined through collation between two equally cosmological spheres: that relating to the action and competence of the *karai* (non-Indian), and another concerning the Kaiowa, implying different ways of relating to the universe, which causes materials and energies circulating in them are channelled according to these divisions (Mura 2006, 2014).

According to the prestigious Kaiowa shaman Atanásio Teixeira, after a predominantly theogonic phase, led by Ñane Ramõi Jusu Papa (Our First Grandfather), the first Earth (*Yvy Ypy*) was created by the gods Verandyju and Yvakaju. At first, this Earth was a small disk a few centimetres in diameter, which would constitute the future centre of the current Earth (*Yvy Pyruã*). Indeed, using the disc as the geographical point of departure, these deities enlarged it through ñengáry (prayers with strong shamanic power). Ñane Ramõi completed the work, creating the forest, the waters and the mountains. Next, his son, Ñande Ru Vusu (Our Great Father), formed a network of tracks (*tape po'i*) through his wanderings, which in turn, were used by Ñande Sy (Our Mother), and by their sons Pa'i Kuara (owner of daylight) and by Jasy (owner of night light), children of Ñande Ru and grandchildren of Ñane Ramõi, to develop their actions on Earth in relation to the original humanities (Mura 2006).

Events of conflict between these humanities and their behaviours, considered inadequate by the deities, led Ñande Ru to destroy the surface of the first Earth and with it, the majority of its inhabitants. The renewed Earth was then repopulated with humanities devoid of original perfection and related to each other based on a hierarchy defined by a greater or lesser approximation with the gods. Thus, the majority of the beings we consider to be animals are understood by the Kaiowa as constituting humanities, though metamorphosis of an original anthropomorphism, who manifest the greatest degree of moral and behavioural decadence, and with whom it is possible to communicate only through prayers (ñembo'e). Regarding the other humanities, these are understood to form a network of kinship that refers, through genealogical ancestry, to the deities. The Kaiowa are related by direct bloodline to the main gods, understood as their own Ñande Rykey (Our Older Brothers). The other humanities originate from collateral lines, formed in the space-time of origins by affinity – understood, therefore, to be less close to the Ñande Rykey compared with the Kaiowa (Mura 2006). In fact, the latter constitute the favourite people of the gods, on whom the fate of the earth depends.

This understanding also involves the realisation that everything in the universe has its owner (*járy*), such that the Earth, as the shaman Atanásio claims, is the exclusive property of the deity Chiru Kurusu Ñe'engatu (the Talking Cross of Chiru), who is *Yvy Járy* (owner of the Earth). The Earth is also held up by a large cross,

made of *chiru* (a very powerful wood<sup>6</sup>), which is its support (*jekoha*). Other smaller crosses are distributed around her, to help keep her in equilibrium. With regard to the spaces on Earth's surface, these were ceded not as property, but as usufruct for humans, primarily for the Kaiowa, so that they could be put to good use. The feasibility of this was predicted in the time-space of origins by Ñande Ru, and the destination was given to extended (indigenous) families from specific places, close to the centre-navel of the Earth (*Yvy Pyte*). These families received *chiru* in the form of sticks and crosses so that, through these instruments, they could contribute to the equilibrium of the cosmos itself (Mura 2010). Thus, there is a set of supports, concatenated through the good behaviour of mutual support (*teko mbojeko porã*). We have Chiru Kurusu Ñe'engatu, the Earth and the extended Kaiowa families present in their places of origin as support for each other, and the *tamõi* (grandfathers) and *jari* (grandparents) as support for the households. In this aggregation, specific modalities of cosmological relationships are established that are fundamental to the search for cosmic balance, and with it, the quest to reduce the rhythm of the *Ararapyre* (end of the world), which, as we have seen, is a process that can be accelerated or decelerated depending on the situation.

Seeking cosmic balance is therefore an important task and simultaneously implies the search for good living (*tekove porã*), with the shamans interpreters of this state of life and evaluators of how to act to direct its course. It is evident to the Kaiowa that in order to achieve a satisfactory life, it is necessary to respect *teko porã* (the correct way of being and living), and in this sense, the point of reference is the behaviour of the gods. Similarly, it is also relevant to compare past conditions with those of the present, which gives them the meaning of the effects of the domination suffered by the neo-colonial occupation of their territories. On the one hand, these comparisons allow them to cosmologically define the aforementioned division between cosmological spheres, assigning that under the dominion of whites, plastic, glass, metallic materials and objects of industrial origin, as well as the large-scale creation of domestic animals. On the other hand, this sphere does not prevent the passage of the elements under its competence to other spheres, it merely defines the limits of its use and reproduction. In these terms, the Kaiowa perceive that they are not qualified to reproduce the industrial objects and knowledge attributed to the sphere of competence of the whites; however, nothing prevents them from seeking to refine techniques and strategies to access them (see Mura 2006)<sup>7</sup>.

### **Domestic ecology: morphological transformations, mobility and *jeheka* (“go in search of”)**

As we have seen, the large indigenous huts, which during the period of the European conquest could house hundreds of people, progressively declined in size, and from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, they were accompanied by other smaller constructions. During the 20th century, such constructions became the majority and, since the 1970s, were the exclusive choice in terms of housing. It should be noted, however, that despite this significant change in housing construction, the organisation of local groups did not undergo radical changes (Mura 2000, Thomaz de Almeida 2001). In fact, whenever the opportunity presents itself, the contemporary Kaiowa seek to reproduce a pattern of non-nucleated spatial occupation, based on the spatial distance between the local groups, each formed by a *te'yi* (group based on kinship of at least three generations that can form, therefore, relatives on a broader basis). With the abandonment of the great huts, the same pattern began to be applied to the members of *te'yi*. Thus, whenever there are minimally favourable conditions, the extended family of three generations begins to form an aggregate household, which distributes the conjugal families that compose it into housing units

<sup>6</sup> *Myroxylon peruiiferum*, several varieties of a legume tree, known commonly in Brazil as “pau de balsamo” [balsam wood].

<sup>7</sup> For more in-depth study on cosmology and shamanism among the Kaiowa, see also Schaden 1974 [1954], Melià et al. 1976, Chamorro 1995, Pereira 2004 and Montardo 2009.

(*óy* or *oga*) built in patios (*oka*) related to each other through of a network of paths (*tape po'i*) of hundreds of metres in length. The central axis of articulation is the *oy* of the oldest couple that is the origin of this group of relatives. This set of housing units, in turn, is connected through more extensive pathways (one or more kilometres in length) to similar sets, with whom they form a local community. Following this same proportionality, the spaces between related local groups are connected through even more extensive pathways, which can be up to a few tens of kilometres, forming local political communities through this alliance of relationships, known by the Kaiowa as *tekoha*. Finally, a broader network of trails across several *tekoha* defines what the indigenous people currently call *tekoha guasu*, a geographical space that is usually, but not necessarily, shaped by a river basin.

We will discuss the configurations of the *tekoha* and *tekoha guasu* in the next item. Before that however, we take a deeper look into how domestic ecology develops and how important it is both in the reproduction and adaptation of the social morphology, and in the spatial organisation of the Paí.<sup>8</sup> They always seek to build their homes in places that guarantee drinking water and spaces suitable for agriculture. The smallholdings (*kokue*) are made around or in close proximity to housing units. Under favourable conditions, which are quite rare nowadays, cultivation is achieved by planting food crops among native vegetation, using techniques of slash-and-burn agriculture refined over centuries. Surrounding the *kokue*, traps are placed to capture animals that approach in search of the foods being grown there. The paths that go through these cultivars are designed not only for the residences, rather for the forest and fields nearby. People can also reach more distant locations, where they can engage in hunting activities – using bows and shotguns, fishing with nets, traps and choking techniques, or even collecting wild fruits and honey. The relationships with these spaces are sustained through technical operations that involve the use of prayers (*ñembo'e*), to convince several spirit-owners – like that of cultivated plants (*Jakaira*), the forest (*Kurupyry*), hunted animals (*So'ó Járy*) and that of the waters (*Kaja'a*) – to grant access to these resources.

The domestic ecology developed by the Kaiowa follows a calendar that revolves around the agricultural activities, which also serve as reference for the main ritual activities. The cultivation of white maize (*avati morotí*), especially, allows them to perform *avatikyry*, the ceremony consecrating this corn and all new plants. It occurs during the harvest period between November and March of each year (see Melià et al., 1976, Chamorro 1995, Thomaz de Almeida 2001, Mura 2006). These periods are considered to be *karu porã*, that is, the abundance of food, with the off-season phases representing times of relative lack (*karu vai*). As indicated by Melià, Grünberg and Grünberg (Melià et al. 1976), in reference to Paraguay in the 1970s, during the period of scarcity *changa* activities are intensified, and resources that compensate the meagre results of agriculture are sought in nearby farms.<sup>9</sup> According to these authors, however, *changa* activities were then only complementary, with the resources coming from agriculture accounting for most of the intake, when the full annual cycle is considered.

It has been several decades since Melià et al. published their research, and if we look at the Brazilian side of the border, even in the 1970s the situation did not present itself as described for Paraguay. In fact, intense deforestation on the Brazilian side of the Kaiowa territory, as well as the systematic expulsion of the indigenous people from their places of origin, have created significant obstacles to the application of the slash-and-burn techniques adopted by these Indians. The African pastures (*Brachiaria*) introduced by ranchers and restrictions on the use of the spaces due to the implantation of farms, made the rotation of cultivable land, renovated through fire, difficult to achieve. This progressively led to the reduction in this form of food production, with the economic intake in other forms gradually acquiring more relevance.

8 “Paí-Tavyterã”, or simply “Paí”, is a form of self-denomination among the Kaiowa.

9 It is worth noting that the Kaiowa do not stock food in any quantity, even that derived from agriculture, and the accumulation of any kind of goods that are not distributed among close relatives is considered immoral and is heavily criticised.

Another process that should be considered is what progressively transformed the households from units predominantly focused on production techniques – not only food, but also the objects and tools needed for the development of daily activities – to centres of the spread of acquisition activities. In fact, before the systematic relationship with whites, household equipment consisted of the acquisition of materials obtained mainly from the forest surrounding the homes, the constant increase in objects and metal, glass and plastic tools, as well as mechanical, electrical and electronic devices, led to a potentiation, expansion, diversification and refinement of acquisition techniques. The necessities of use by the households then demanded this transformation, from which *rigid aggregates* became *flexible aggregates*, as defined by Wilk (1984).<sup>10</sup>

The domestic ecology thus began contemplating activities developed not only in forests, fields and rivers, but also in farms, cities, highways, places of garbage disposal. They then refine political techniques to capture so-called ethnodevelopment projects, and resources from municipal, state and federal governments. The members of the households can also engage as salaried workers (in indigenous schools and health units), enrol in benefit programmes, such as “*Bolsa Familia*”, and, when elderly, receive rural retirement benefits. It is also possible for them to form seasonal labour flows in the alcohol production plants close by or in regions bordering their settlement sites.

Monetary resources from these activities and public policies have become increasingly significant for the domestic economy, with the calendar previously described becoming more complex. In effect, the annual cycle, based on the agricultural rhythm, articulates monthly cycles, due to a bureaucratic schedule that provides the aforementioned resources, and, more recently, a seasonal one, with work in the fuel alcohol plants, based on contracts that generally last 60 days. Finally, a final temporality (with weekly cyclicality) is added to those already described. It is represented by the work regime in the farms surrounding the indigenous lands or wherever the Indians are settled. This cyclicality establishes an alternation between working days in these rural properties and the weekend, dedicated to rest, such that this has two implications for the indigenous activities and the mobility that derive from them. On the one hand, the Kaiowa can periodically be on these farms, as temporary workers (involved in *changa*) and thus engaged in a pendular movement between the place of work and their domestic spaces. On the other hand, this difference between weekly work and rest periods means that on the weekends, on the farms, there is an absence of owners or managers and of the other employees – who go to urban centres in the region or even further. In these moments, the farm spaces become less controlled, allowing the Indians to enter, to hunt and collect fruits and medicinal plants, to fish, to collect thatch (for the roofs of houses), etc. Thus, the radius of action of these activities is never restricted to the small spaces that have been assigned to them by the State, since they seek to access and use, in various ways, all the spaces beyond where reside, which they consider as occupational, as they constitute the possible means of developing their lives, on their own terms and in their own ways.

In order to articulate all the activities and temporalities described, going from a production-based economic and technical organisation to one mainly centred on acquisition, the Kaiowa have refined what they call *jeheka* (“go in search of”). This word is composite of *heka* (pick up) and the particle *jere* (circulation). This concept thus highlights not the act of seeking something precise, known in advance, which would imply a linear trajectory – a fact that would be expressed by *heka* – rather what *jeheka* activities variously highlight is the act of circulating inside a territory, such that the resulting movement can be conditioned by many factors, due to conditions imposed by the interactions that occur during

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<sup>10</sup> The group living in a residence is called a dwelling unit, while a cluster of units under a single direction forms a household cluster. These groups, in turn, can be of two types: tight and loose (Wilk 1984: 224-227). In the first case, activities are linked more than anything to collective work, with all individuals in the household (depending on sex and age) performing similar tasks, especially those aimed at the production of food for self-consumption. In the second case, although their members continue to cooperate in some tasks and are focused on providing for the domestic unit as a whole, they can also develop differentiated activities, like engaging in wage labour, so that each housing unit can establish strategies of action with a certain autonomy.

the course itself. The result of *jeheka* is thus partially planned, implying the making of distinct decisions in its composition. It would be inopportune, once an acquisition circuit is completed, to think of it as a predetermined or self-regulated system; the movement that gives it life effectively configures very open socio-technical systems, where the temporal factor is fundamental.

Although not based on pre-planned choices, the different temporalities and activities articulated by *jeheka* require, however, the refinement of a political behaviour that results from the practical experiences of household members. Such behaviour encounters moments of interpretation, synthesis and moral evaluation by the authority of the *ñanderu* (shamans) and the indigenous gerontocracy. This behaviour is based on and contributes to constructing criteria of relationships between Kaiowa subjects and the other subjects (human and non-human) with whom they engage, on Earth and in various levels of the universe. Thus, when people relate to the spirits who own the lands, forests, fields, and waters through *jeheka*, in some way they seek to mobilise resources, through strategies of persuasion, in order to take these to their homes. For example, when they relate to So'o J'ary, it is so he will grant animals that are under his dominion, so they pass into the domain of the hunter. Briefly, the relationships of force and political interlocution between the two subjects of dialogue lead, in some way, to collate the processes of *dominialisation* of each of them, in this case, resulting in the momentary extension of the dominion of the second over that controlled by the first.

It should also be noted that when itineraries of *jeheka* reach cities, farms and commercial establishments (both urban and rural), indigenous behaviour bears a clear resemblance to those maintained in the environments described above. Regarding the relationship with the spirit-owners, this now involves that established with other similarly powerful beings: the *karai* (non-Indian). These, seen as dominators and with whom dialogue is difficult (because they seldom listen to the views of indigenous interlocutors)<sup>11</sup>, require that the Kaiowa approach with caution. In an inexorable coexistence, the intent is to establish an approximation that results in some form of advantage, in terms of resources or services. With the merchants and farmers, whom they call *bosses*, and with whom they also establish relationships of co-parenthood (Barbosa da Silva 2016), the Kaiowa seek bonds that produce in effect a reciprocity of obligations. In these terms and since they plan their actions to deal with short periods of time, they end up delegating to their non-Indian partners (especially the merchant *bosses*) the task of managing longer periods. Thus, through the excise of reciprocity, when necessary they ask favours to these *bosses*, using them as a kind of fund (a savings account), to be mobilised when circumstances require it, but without planning for it in advance.

However, it is possible to affirm that the displacements produced by *jeheka* practices allow activities to be linked in time and space, through individual and collective strategies, aimed at setting up composite calendars and itineraries (see Mura 2006). It should be emphasised that such practices are not totally decentralised, defining only an *itinerant space*, but neither are they the result of a solely *radiant* perception, from a centre towards its surroundings, according to arguments used by Leroi-Gourhan (1965) to distinguish and contrast the characteristics of territorial organisation of nomadic hunter and gatherer peoples, on the one hand, and sedentary farmers, on the other. The very mode of movement and use of space derived from the *jeheka* experience, through *oguata* (wandering) – which, as we have seen, encounters its cosmological sublimation in the time-space of origins, in the formation of tracks by the gods – occurs by strongly valuing centres of irradiation, with the Earth itself having developed from a disk, which later became the Earth's own navel. In this context, therefore, we speak of a modality of construction of territories from centres of wandering irradiation. In other words, the Kaiowa people construct spaces of

<sup>11</sup> According to the aforementioned shaman Atanásio, this characteristic of not listening to the Kaiowa and of being greedy and selfish characterises the very mode of being of whites, the *karai reko*, which originates in the space-time of origins when the first white appears. For further study of this cosmological narrative, see Mura 2006; for the consequences of this behaviour in political terms and on social and political relationships with the Kaiowa, see Barbosa da Silva 2016.

use and occupation through an “irradiated itineration”. In fact, *jeheka* activities and those arising and/or correlated with them have an axis, that is, the point of departure and arrival, in the residential spaces of the various Kaiowa households.

In proceeding from an irradiated itineration in the daily development of *jeheka* two aspects are combined.<sup>12</sup> On the one hand, an action aimed at socialisation and the production and transmission of knowledge (between individuals and generations) related to the territory, while, on the other hand, household members seek to assert their dominion over a given geographical space. It so happens that, with regard to the latter objective, they encounter limitations that have repercussions on the formation of the very *repertoires of possibilities* presented to them. In fact, the accessibility of resources depends not only on the availability of these items, but on the ecological and territorial configurations that present themselves at each moment in time, as well as other limiting effects, especially those imposed by the processes of dominialisation initiated by both non-Indians and by the actions and policies of the State. In the latter case, these occur through the attempts to contain the Kaiowa in villages within small spaces, freeing the remaining lands for the formation of private rural properties and urban centres. These effects translate into a hierarchical relationship of accessibility to and use of land by the Indians, in terms of the composition of exclusive and inclusive spaces of use and occupation, as well as the articulation achieved between them, through *jeheka*. This is one side, while on the other, these effects are also seen in terms of alliance and cooperation between various Kaiowa households, the formation of local political communities and the definition of broader territorial configurations – which engender a specific territorial dynamic, as discussed below.

### **Territorial dynamics: neo-colonial conditioners and the notions of *tekoha* and *tekoha guasu***

As we have seen, colonial sources refer to Guarani-speaking peoples as residing in large huts, forming a local group that housed a whole family group. Susnik (1979-80, 1982) refers to these spaces as constituting a *te'yi-óga*, thus emphasising the characteristic relationship between the extended family (*te'yi*) and the house (*oga*). The author also refers to the unit of *guára*, a territorial category broadly described in a Guarani language dictionary published by the Jesuit Montoya in 1639 (Montoya 1876). *Guára*, which linguistically means “coming from a certain place”, when related to a river basin means revealing the distribution of the *te'yi-óga* according to the branches of rivers and tributaries. Based on these descriptions and definitions made in colonial sources, Susnik rightly considered *guára* as the main unit of political-territorial articulation of the Indians in question, a unit based on egalitarian political relationships. However, during studies conducted in the 1970s by Melià et al. among the Paî-Tavyterã (Kaiowa) in Paraguay, another category of territory was recorded that is now considered very significant, that of *tekoha* – from *teko* = “manner, way”, and *ha*, a suffix that in this case indicates place, you have: “a place where we realise our way of being and living”. It is through this category, as registered in contemporary ethnography, that Susnik indicates a presumed process of the centralisation of power among the Guarani, which had been defined in the period immediately preceding the European conquest, thus indicating an incipient though not widespread social hierarchisation.<sup>13</sup>

However, there are differences in the literature about whether the Guarani had constituted caciques. The archaeologist Soares (1997), for example, is of this opinion, which is based not on material findings,

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that displacements are also made for a variety of other motives (including witchcraft, fights, etc.) that influence the formation of local communities, a topic that will be discussed later.

<sup>13</sup> “When several “te'yi” were associated, 5, 6 or more, they formed a local partner consciousness, a “villager” bond, “teko'á”. The Guarani, however, did not develop multi-population villages in the manner of the Chané-Arawak. At the beginning of the Spanish conquest, in some regions “teko'á” units were only recently in the process of integration, from which some socio-political peculiarities of ‘guára’ are derived” (Susnik 1983: 128).

but on colonial sources, especially those related to the Jesuit missions pertaining to certain indigenous leaderships as *tuvicha ruvicha* (“the leaders of leaders”) (cf. Susnik 1979-80). It should be noted, however, based on detailed tables elaborated by Wilde (2003) on the presence of the Indians in Jesuit *reducciones*, that the population related to each general cacique was relatively small, a few dozen people, representing a *te’yi*, thus referring to a local group or to several interrelated groups (Mura 2006). Melià is also of this opinion when he affirms that

“What the Spaniards of the time – the Jesuits among them – called *cacicazgos*, were often no more than “*téyy*”, the meaning of which, according to the Treasure of the Guaraní language by Montoya (Madrid 1639b: f 376), is “company, faction, genealogy, many”. And these lineage factions did not have a fixed number of families. Those 400 families responding to 27 caciques, who gathered in San Pablo de Iníay, is an average of 15 families per cacique.” (Melià 1986: 79-80).

Colonial sources are thus not authorised to speak of caciques or centralised forms of political organisation, integration and control of large population contingents, which are not described, except in eventual cases of large military or religious mobilisations, and generally in response to European colonisation (see Susnik 1979-80, Melià 1986). Seeking, like Susnik, to understand the forms of organisation of the Guaraní in the pre-colonial and colonial period, Melià uses the category of *tekoha* and states that

“The type of villages that the Jesuit sources describe show remarkable coincidences with the *tekoha*, as they are known through modern ethnography; hence deducing supposed analogies is permitted, even for those aspects that historical documentation does not designate” (1986: 104).

Unlike the Slovenian author, however, he does not identify a process of power centralisation in this territorial organisation. It is supported by the definition of *tekoha* itself, elaborated together with the Grünberg couple (Melià et al., 1976), in which this territorial unit was presented as “a community space of variable size, but with a constant structure and function, with religious leaders and its own policies”. Each *tekoha* is autonomous with respect to others, thus there is no intercommunity political authority. In a typological definition, the authors add that the

“*tekoha* is usually an area well-defined by hills, streams or rivers and is exclusively communal property (*tekohakuaaha*), that is to say, the incorporation or presence of strangers is not allowed. *Tekoha* is a divine institution (*tekoha ñe’e pyru jeguangypy*) created by Ñande Ru” (Melià et al. 1976: 218 – emphasis added).

Well, it is a fact that today the Indians think about well-defined spaces, with fixed borders, circumscribing areas for the exclusive use of a community. However, it is necessary to analyse how such a concept came to be and what elements actually informed it. First, we have to ask whether it is an expression of an indigenous territoriality, independent of the historical conditions of its manifestation. As argued on other occasions (Thomaz de Almeida & Mura 2004, Mura 2006, Barbosa & Mura 2011), it is not appropriate to project the current characteristics with respect to such refined cultural categories to explain the territorial organisation in the colonial period and/or that preceded it. In fact, as Melià himself points out, the Jesuit sources are not exhaustive in this sense and when the author refers to the striking coincidences between what is described in contemporary ethnographies and what has been indicated by the Ignatics in the past, they are more concerned with certain characteristics of indigenous domestic ecology regarding the exploitation and techno-economic use of forests, fields and rivers – confirmed by archaeological data (Noelli 1993) – than with political and territorial aspects, such as the definition of physical and juridical frontiers, the exclusivity of use and occupation, or cosmological aspects, like the evaluative exaltation of the *tekoha* as an institution allocated by the deities.

Regarding these last three aspects, colonial sources are not very rewarding, so much so that the previously mentioned Montoya dictionary is very rich when it comes to defining (over several pages) *teko* as “way of being and living”, clarifying *te’yi* as faction or lineage, and *guára* as a territorial category; but there is no record describing the relationship between *teko* and space as a politically organised territory.<sup>14</sup> By this, we do not mean that this relationship did not occur. Indeed, sources in the Guaraní language from 1752 and 1753, and recently made public (Neumann & Boidin 2017: 118; [www.langas.cnrs.fr](http://www.langas.cnrs.fr)),<sup>15</sup> lead us to consider this relationship, though in a manner distinct to how the Kaiowa establish it nowadays.

These sources consist of letters elaborated by Indians in Jesuit missions shortly after the Treaty of Madrid (which apportioned the spaces of the Portuguese and Spanish colonies), endangering the occupation of the lands by the Guaraní of the time. They felt threatened with expulsion, similar to the current context. It so happens, however, that in these letters the expression *ore rekoha* does not occur in isolation, but is always related to the term *yvy* (earth), specifically “*yvy ore rekoha*”.

Therefore, *teko* (in its oscillatory form *rekoha*), is not a noun, a concept in and of itself that indicates a political-territorial order as it is understood today, rather it expresses an action that occurs on earth (*yvy*), with the latter being the main subject. In these sources, therefore, the expression “*yvy ore rekoha*” meant either “the land where we (exclusively) are” or “the land where we (exclusively) live”. This flexibility is due both to the multivocality of the term *teko* and the suffix “*ha*”, which allows for several conceptual combinations. Moreover, the characteristics of the land in these sources can also be considered manifold, expressing the concept of being the actual flesh of the Indians (“*ko yvy ore ro’o tee*”), or a place that allows people to multiply as families (“*ko yvy ore nemoñanga*”).

However, and this is of the utmost importance, when the sources speak of the land itself, no mention is made of either a territorial order or physical, fixed frontiers of units that divide it. This is not to say that no planning occurred, rather that we simply have no detailed knowledge of its characteristics. Thus, we feel that it is not fitting to force interpretations of colonial sources, acquired by their decontextualisation, to equate concepts and their contents to those currently promoted by the Indians. However, we do emphasise the relevance of these sources in providing a historical course of struggle engaged in by Guaraní-speaking peoples regarding access to and control of their lands and the experiential consequences in the formulation of cultural categories that express territoriality. It is high likely that this secular experiential course underlies how the Kaiowa currently elaborate their territorial categories, particularly taking into account the last 150 years of history of interethnic contact, while subjected to processes of territorialisation that, as we have seen, have subtracted from spaces for the exclusive use of households where they settled. They have also largely lost those spaces that were inclusive, such as forests and fields, widely used in *jeheka* activities by a plurality of households, since only warlike hostilities placed transitional limits on this action.

Prior to the significant constraints imposed by neo-colonial activities of the Brazilian and Paraguayan States, social boundaries were not necessarily plottable in a given geographical space. This is due, in part, to genealogical movement, since after a few generations, through their descendants, local groups of the past can engender processes of splitting between the lineages of a *te’yi*. This phenomenon is frequent and, when there were favourable situations, it implied territorial distancing between these factions, with those less affluent seeking other places to settle their households, forming a new local group – which, over time, could lead to the formation of a new local political community. The relationships between close *te’yi* could change from a policy of alliance to one of enmity, engendering a sequence of territorial configurations.

<sup>14</sup> The author briefly discusses the forms “*tecóá*” and “*tecoá*”, the former meaning “imitation” and the latter “luck”. The terms closest in meaning of spatiality are “*tequába*” and “*teco hába*”, which respectively mean abode and divine stay (Montoya 1876). It should be noted, however, that they are closer in meaning to that currently attributed to *tendápe* than to the organisational and cosmological properties currently attributed to *teko*, which makes no mention of internal organisation and territorial boundaries.

<sup>15</sup> We are grateful to Capidin Boidin for kindly providing information and reflections on these sources.

Thus, limits in the scope of dominialisation of these extended families could change according to these configurational variations, as defined by Elias (1991).

Another fact is that the establishment of farms, with their fences and a regime of property based on Cartesian principles of spatial division, led to modification of the landscape, where fixed spatial boundaries began to be incorporated, conditioning indigenous mobility. Thus, you have a different territorial dynamic.<sup>16</sup> It is precisely because of this impact that the Indians began to reflect on the limitations imposed on them by these policies of colonisation of their territories, leading them to assign boundaries to the spaces they occupied to try to defend them or to regain exclusive use of the places which they are conscious of originating from – places sublimated by the cosmological narratives and moralities expressed through *teko porã* (the correct way of being and living). It is thus, that we see the exaltation of a territorial unit that today is considered to be well defined, the exclusive right of a local political community: *tekoha*.

However, every *te'yi* considers itself to be from a certain place, referring to it as their *tendápe* – which, in this case, is the result of the relationship between a collectivity and a certain territorial space. Besides being of techno-economic order, this relationship is also defined through a territoriality that is constructed through the exaltation of geographical portions that acquire a particular meaning based on the memory of the collectivity that is linked to it. To this end, the experience and the memory of those who have resided there during a certain period and to whom it is possible to refer, through genealogical and cosmological ascension, is valued.<sup>17</sup>

These spaces acquire the characteristics of that which interested Bealet when proposing a “geography of the memory”. Returning to the concepts of historians Nora and Martin of “place-memory” and “region-memory” respectively,<sup>18</sup> the geographer Bealet (1997) started from the perspective that places “are the supports of a history, of a past. By their mere presence they allow you to remember.” (: 324). In the reconstruction of these memory-regions that are *tendápe*, the Kaiowa use toponyms often related to people who lived there, using the particle “kue” or “gue” (“that was”), which, associated with the names of people, indicate their previous presence in this location. Marks in space, such as rivers, streams, springs, trees, hills, etc., are also turned into toponyms, as are events occurring in a particular place,<sup>19</sup> the existence of elements of fauna and flora, and the presence of invisible beings usually serve to denominate the territorial spaces of a *tendápe*. Just as Bensa (1996) indicates in the case the Kanak of New Caledonia<sup>20</sup>, these places form monuments that allow us to update and reinvigorate the memory of the past. This denomination is made through movement, the use and exploratory occupation of territories - through *oguata*, in ritual or *jeheka* activities, as well as through the constant visits to relatives located in distant settlements, by crossing spaces of old occupation (or, often, sneaking through them).

16 In an important pioneering paper on land use in Africa, Bohannon (1960) had previously highlighted the implications of the Cartesian division operated by the West and which had been imposed through colonial domination on native territories, altering access to land and its resources.

17 Thomaz de Almeida (2001) suggests using the concept (legal-political and administrative) of canton to refer to *tendápe*. Despite the sense of a jurisdiction over space in both cases, explicit clarification reveals the specificities of *tendápe* that have no equal in the concept of the Swiss State.

18 The study by J.C. Martin is entitled “La vendée de la mémoire”, 1989, Paris: Seuil; whereas that by Nora, is called “Les lieux de mémoire”. Paris: Galimard. 1984-1993 (3 tomes, 7 vols.).

19 For example, the place in the Sassoró reserve where the well-known *tamöi* (head of the *te'yi*) and *nãnderu* (shaman) Galiano (or Galino) lived is now referred to by many families (both inside and outside Sassoró) as “Galino Kuë”. Similarly, “Jagua Amba Gue” is a place in the *tekoha* Kuru Amba where a dog (in guarani, *jagua'i* or *jagua*) died. It was on the edge of a stream, and its body fluids were mingling with water. Thus, this place became its last abode (emphasising that the word *amba* means the last place where a person or object rests) - v. Barbosa da Silva 2013.

20 “The routes memorise, from site to site, a migration that in fact reinforces the genealogical bond by uniting the members of the unit of relatives with their founding ancestor. The space - with its named places - which should be mapped - consigns a large family history that is always susceptible to extension by the last occupied dwellings. Around these “monuments”, tangible remnants of the ancient presence of the ancestors and of men, the current identity of the group is reflected on and reconstructed - with a simple glance” (Bensa 1996: 3).

The feelings generated by memory-regions are extremely strong,<sup>21</sup> with the interruption of occupational continuity provoking the evocation and appreciation of the “ancient origin” (*ymaguare*). Thus, a sense of autochthony is refined that leads the Kaiowa to produce (when conditions permit) a *circulation* effect (Thomaz de Almeida 2001), with the Indians seeking to stay as close as possible to places where their ancestors lived, moving close to them, each time they are expelled or harassed.

When autonomous, the *tendápe* can be considered a *tekoha*, since this is a place where the Indians achieve their way of being and living. However, it is more common for the *tekoha* to be configured by the relationship between several *te’yi*, thus forming a territory that is the sum of a plurality of *tendápe*. In this sense, the territory of a *tekoha* is constituted by the exclusive spaces of the *te’yi*, conjugated with inclusive places (generally forests and fields) of common use. Since it is formed by the relationship between several *tendápe*, the *tekoha* constitutes a local political community, and its configuration, as we have seen, can vary according to alliances and enmities between the extended families involved. Therefore, contrary to the presumed rigidity, over time the extent and scope of a *tekoha* may vary. The size and scope of the lands claimed to be those traditionally occupied are based on memories of their occupation, those of Indians who are still living on them, or by their direct descendants (whether they lived there or not). However, the size and composition of their spaces depend not only on the configuration of the local political community at the time being considered, but principally by that formed by their descendants and current representatives. Thus, the *te’yi* that has most political power at the time of the claim can condition the composition of the spaces of the *tendápe* of origin, extolling the centrality of the one they originated from – in this case, its reference toponym tends to be extended, renaming the *tekoha* as a whole.

It is also important to highlight the impact that SPI and FUNAI policies have had on the size of the lands assigned to indigenous people over time. Indeed, the delimitations made since the 1970s in Paraguay and 1980 in Brazil have followed a much more rigid understanding of the definition of *tekoha* as areas with well-defined limits, to a large extent due to the effects of an experiment founded by the SPI model of territory, which, through an agrarian measure inherited from the colonial period, has assigned indigenous communities lots of one league in a block, that is 3,600 hectares. In many cases, these spaces were even negotiated with non-Indian squatters, thus further diminishing their size (Thomaz de Almeida 1991).

The decades-long experience of this state policy also served as a reference to indigenous peoples for their land claims until the 1980s. The practices of the indigenist negotiating body, as a way of supposedly expediting the demarcation of territories, was to restrict the size of these as much as possible. Thus, this model also guided the understanding that the Indians formed not so much about the size a *tekoha* would have as that which they could claim and defend before the State, by virtue of the socio-ecological-territorial context of the moment.

The dynamics that we have just discussed indicate that, in addition to the negotiations that the State eventually forces on them, with their movements the Kaiowa always attempt to dynamise territorial configurations over time. Indeed, this is because configurations of the *tekoha* derive from much wider geographical spaces, currently denominated *tekoha guasu*. The adjective “*guasu*”, meaning “large” or “broad”, shows that this territory is not the extension of a *tekoha* in size, nor the extension of the characteristics of its political organisation at an intercommunity level, rather “*guasu*” indicates that in this space, the way of being and living can be realised by a set of *te’yi* that, over time, has constructed its *tendápe* within the same.

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21 Some reflections by Hirsch (1995) are important in this regard. Arguing about image and representation in the definition of the landscape by the human groups, the author establishes an important distinction between a Cartesian paradigm, which generates pre-established images of space, and Vichian, which links the perception of the same to feelings.

The *tekoha guasu* have a certain analogy with the *guára* described in the colonial period, principally (but not always, nor exclusively) in its geographical references to river basins.<sup>22</sup> In these regions, and not only in recognised or retaken indigenous lands, the Kaiowa circulate, using the spaces that compose it as they can and as dispersed as possible. In addition to settling on indigenous lands recognised by the State, households also settle on roadsides or (increasingly rarely) on farms, searching for places near water sources and the few forest areas that currently cover the southern cone of Mato Grosso do Sul. Several households, or parts thereof, have become bases in urban centres, and others are articulated as political communities, forming camps on lands they claim as their *tekoha* of origin. Thus, they form networks of relatives across different environments (Barbosa da Silva 2007, 2009), with movements (through *oguata* and *jeheka* activities) defining continuous explorations, experiences and appropriations of desired and accessible resources.

In these dynamics, as we have seen, indigenous people find significant obstacles to generating the domestic ecology they consider most appropriate. To these are added the effects of the struggle for land, which has recently led farmers to increase control of their properties, significantly hindering *jeheka* activities that take place there, in the *tekoha guasu*, further contracting the spaces held by indigenous people as inclusive.

Another factor that should be taken into account is the significant demographic growth of this people, which has not been accompanied by an appropriate distribution of the population in the spaces of the *tekoha guasu*. On the contrary, there is a very high concentration in tight spaces. Taking the *tekoha guasu* Iguatemipegua (see Map 1) as an example, constituted by communities settled along the rivers that make up the fluvial basin of the Iguatemi River (over 400,000 hectares), we encounter a population that was close to 10,000 individuals in 2014 concentrated on land effectively owned of approximately 10,000 hectares (indigenous lands plus camp spaces in retaken lands). The most emblematic case is the Takuapiry Indigenous Territory, established by the SPI in 1928, which has a population of 3,339 inhabitants on a mere 1,776 hectares.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the actual possession of exclusive use spaces in Iguatemipegua is less than 2.5% of the total area of the territory.

What we have witnessed over the past four decades is the tenacious commitment of political communities seeking to reverse this situation, recovering territorial spaces they were expelled from, in the process of territorialisation. By activating the notion of *tekoha* in the terms seen here, in a resolute movement, these communities have been reoccupying the *tendápe* where their *te'yi* originated, promoting occupations with each new violent expulsion on the part of farmers and paramilitary forces.<sup>24</sup> They have suffered gunshot attacks, the murder and disappearance of several of their leaders, in the perpetration of a neo-colonial project that, in its attempts to put an end to these occupations, has ethnocidal and genocidal effects. As a peaceful but tenacious response to these practices, the “*retomadas*” [lit. retakings]<sup>25</sup> are configured as a political action and project, the fruit of a collective reflection, aimed at the reconstruction of living conditions according to their *teko* (Benites 2014, Barbosa da Silva 2016).

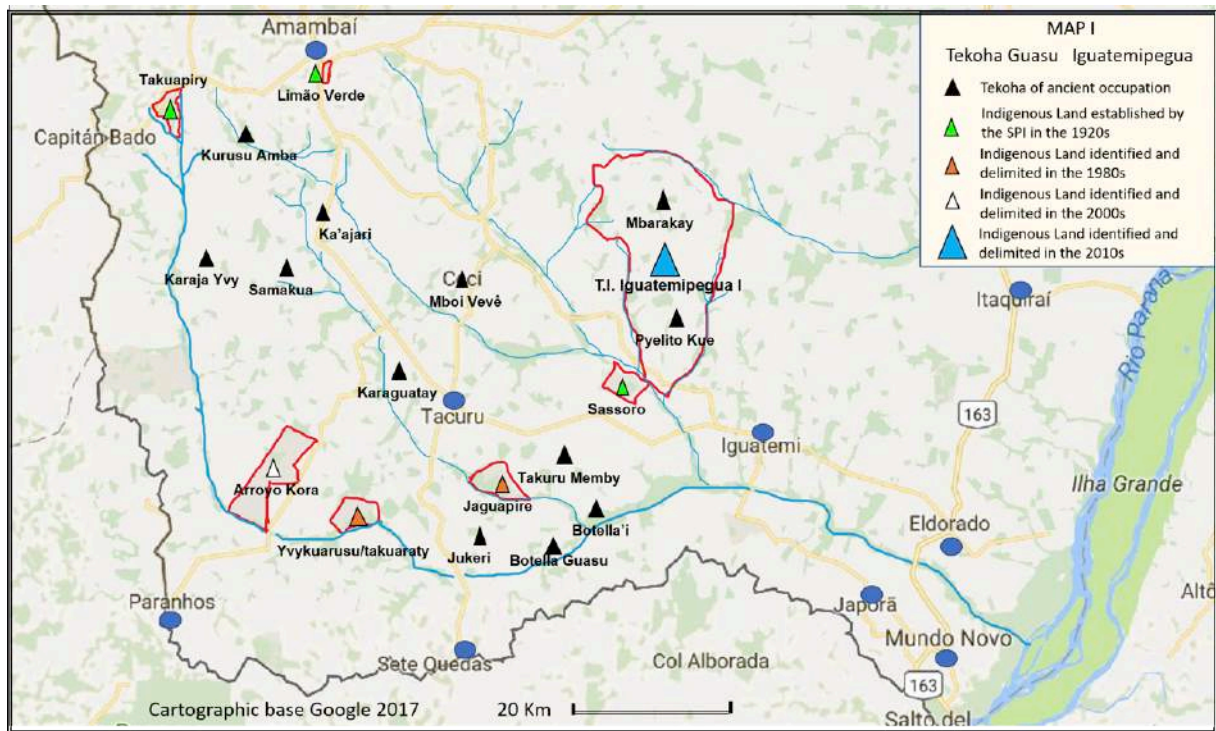
22 For example, the *tekoha guasu* of the Iguatemi river basin, i.e. the “Iguatemipegua”. The suffix “gua” (as in *guára*) means “coming from” – in this case, coming from this river basin.

23 The other two lands established by the SPI in 1928 also have significant populations: Sassoró with 2422 people on 1922 ha. and Limão Verde, with 1801 people on 668 ha. The other Indigenous Lands are: Jaguapire, with 1093 people on 2,349 ha; Takuaraty/Yvykuarusu, with 591 people on 2,609 ha. (both identified and delimited in the 1980s), and Arroyo Kora, with 606 people, in a camp situated within 7,175 hectares, delimited in the 2000s. The sources considered here are SESAI, ISA and FUNAI.

24 These militias present themselves as private security companies. The most emblematic case is that of the Gaspem company, which was closed by determination of the Federal Courts, accused by the Public Prosecutor’s Office of acting as a paramilitary force, while carrying out systematic attacks on indigenous communities. The documentary “Martírio” (Carelli et al., 2016), is dedicated specifically to land conflicts between the Kaiowa and has footage on this event, together with other footage filmed by the Indians themselves inside the camps, being shot at and intimidated by threats.

25 “*Retomadas*” are actions in which indigenous political communities in Brazil reoccupy parts of the land from which they were expelled or coerced to leave. In the Kaiowa case, this action is referred as “*jaha jaíke jevy*” (“we’re going in again”). These are areas traditionally used by their peoples, so they can reaffirm their community life: living according to their *ways*, establishing their dwellings, planting smallholdings, raising small animals, fishing, hunting, gathering, and practicing their ritual life.

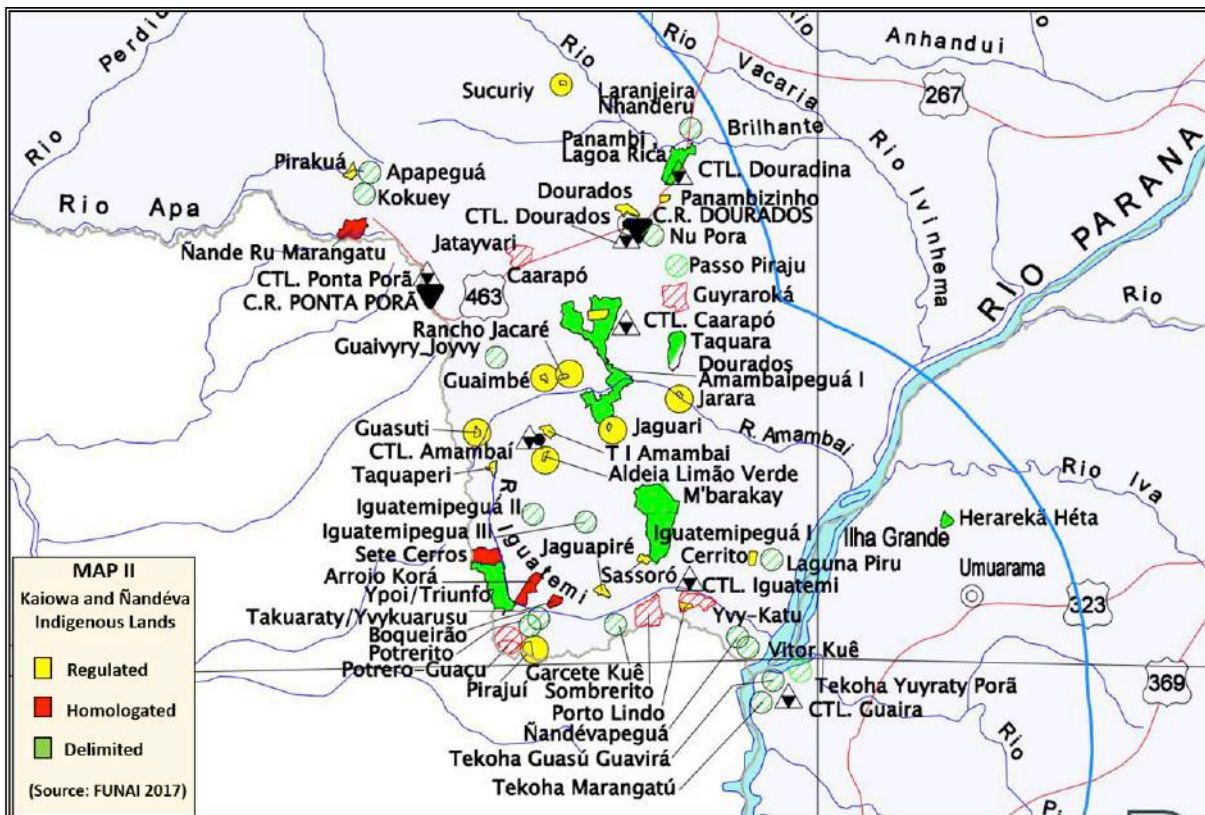
In this movement, the size of the retaken lands has grown steadily and significantly, also due in part to the effects of the Constitution of 1988. Recognising the right to the lands traditionally occupied, it defined more precise criteria to identify and delimit territories, including ecological factors, which are important to understanding the territorial dynamics. In the specific case of the Kaiowa and the Nãndéva of Mato Grosso do Sul, these new conditions progressively led anthropologists and scholars of these indigenous peoples to reflect on how the delimitations of the *tekoha* were achieved. As a result, in 2007, the FUNAI redefined the methodology previously used to meet indigenous claims, signing a Commitment for Adjustment of Conduct (CAC) together with the indigenous peoples and the Public Prosecutor's Office. The FUNAI placed six technical groups in the field to develop studies on the territorial demands located in hydrographic basins or other spaces that academic research indicated as forming the *tekoha guasu*. This procedure resulted in the delimitation not only of larger areas of land (something that has already been verified from 1995 onwards), but several indigenous lands were no longer circumscribed by the *tekoha*, but as portions of *tekoha guasu*, in which a plurality of *tekoha* of origin were contemplated and where the Kaiowa and Nãndéva were able to configure and reconfigure, with greater territorial flexibility, the relationship between the *tendãpe* and the communities that articulate them.<sup>26</sup>



The effects of this methodology and the resulting work have encountered (and continue to encounter) significant obstacles, due to the resistance of rural producers who feel their particular interests are affected. In order to defend them, as far as possible, they have sought to treat the processes of indigenous land regularisation judicially, while also influencing or pressuring numerous instances of government to paralyse or significantly reduce the pace of land regularisation. Therefore, from the identifications and delimitations from the six technical groups, so far only three lands have been published in the Federal *Official Gazette*, two of them referring to the Kaiowa, and which precisely follow the criterion of being part of *tekoha guasu*. The first was the Iguatemipegua Indigenous Territory I (see Maps I and II), of 41,571 hectares, and the second was Dourados-Amambaípegua Indigenous Territory I (see Map II), 55,600

26 For a detailed description of the CAC, the operational plan of the FUNAI and the activities of the six technical groups, see Cavalcante 2013.

hectares. These were the result of two separate technical groups, each of which contemplated two other indigenous lands (Iguatemipegua II and III, and Dourados-Amambaipagua II and III, respectively), which ten years after the CAC, FUNAI has not yet published, very similar to other indigenous lands identified by the remaining technical groups.



## Final considerations

In light of what we have seen and argued concerning the territorial dynamics and processes of dominialisation involving the Kaiowa, in conclusion we want to highlight two aspects for reflection on the construction of territories and territorialities, reaffirming certain theoretical considerations presented in the introduction. One is the importance of the adaptive and transformative processes of the activities of indigenous households over time in response to the characteristics of the socio-ecological-territorial contexts encountered in each moment and that they contribute to configuring. This shows that the territoriality and territories cannot be considered as mere reflections of the social morphology of the group, considered without reference to the historical situations in which they are manifested and refined.

A second and no less important aspect is that the transformations of cultural activities, institutions and concepts can follow distinct rhythms and intensities, depending on their emotional and affective relevance to the subjects. Often times, certain aspects of daily life tend to change rapidly to allow the reproduction of others, which are considered to be unrenounceable or even inevitable. Thus, as we have seen, while the Kaiowa transform and refine domestic ecology in a given context, they seek to guarantee and enhance the morphological characteristics of mobility and the modalities of spatial occupation defined over hundreds of years of practical experience. These characteristics are very important to the Kaiowa who, through them, seek to contrast the extremely negative effects of an enucleated spatial organisation, constantly and intensely imposed on them, through systematic territorial expropriation

and, later, in the restriction of access to their spaces of traditional occupation, which, as we have argued, is perpetrated much of the time by the Brazilian State itself.

To conclude, in light of that discussed herein, it should be emphasised that despite unveiling neo-colonial power and violence contrary to indigenous territorial rights, the Kaiowa have not given up on recovering their *tekoha*. This is predicated on the conviction that its attainment alone guarantees the realisation of their way of being and of living (*teko*), and consequently the maintenance of the equilibrium of the Earth, making good use of it. This use is not merely an option for them, rather it represents a duty, imposed by the deities themselves, who chose this people as their favourite, destining them to live and care for the centre of the Earth, precisely where their territories are.

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Alexandra Barbosa da Silva  
PPGA / Federal University of Paraíba  
Contact: alexandrabar01@gmail.com

Fabio Mura  
PPGA / Federal University of Paraíba  
Contact: fabiomura64@gmail.com

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# Indigenous Activism, Territorialization and Ethnicity in the Middle Rio Negro

*Sidnei Clemente Peres*

Instituto de Ciências Humanas e Filosofia, Departamento de Sociologia,  
Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói/RJ, Brasil

## **Abstract**

This paper addresses the processes of territorialization, formation of indigenous associations and ethnogenesis in the Middle Rio Negro that have led to the most recent struggles for official recognition of indigenous lands. The central focus of description and analysis is the antagonism between the *aviamento* regime and the “community” as modalities of natural resource consumption and strategies for social reproduction. In the Upper Rio Negro, in the mid-1980s, at the heart of a process of inversion of ethnic stigma, crisis of missionary tutelage and developmentalist militarization; the community became the territorial base for political codification of the emerging formation of associations. At the beginning of the 21st century, indigenous associations gained new life in the Middle Rio Negro, clashing with the *aviamento* regime and intensifying the fight for territorial rights.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity, State, Amazon, Indigenous Peoples.

# Ativismo Indígena, Territorialização e Etnicidade no Médio Rio Negro

## Resumo

Este artigo aborda os processos de territorialização, etnicidade e associativismo no Médio Rio Negro que desembocaram nas lutas mais recentes pelo reconhecimento oficial de terras indígenas. O eixo central da descrição e análise é o antagonismo entre o regime de aviamento e a “comunidade” enquanto modalidades de uso dos recursos naturais e estratégias de reprodução social. No Alto Rio Negro, em meados dos anos 1980 no cerne de um processo de inversão do estigma étnico, crise da tutela missionária e militarização desenvolvimentista; a comunidade se torna a base territorial de codificação política do associativismo emergente. No início do século XXI, o associativismo toma novo fôlego no Médio Rio Negro, colidindo com o aviamento e incrementando a luta por direitos territoriais.

**Palavras-Chave:** Etnicidade, Estado, Amazônia, Povos Indígenas.

# Indigenous Activism, Territorialization and Ethnicity in the Middle Rio Negro

Sidnei Clemente Peres

## Introduction

Between the *malocas*<sup>1</sup> of the Upper Rio Negro and the city of Manaus, in the 1950s, anthropologist Eduardo Galvão envisioned the formation of a mestizo and *cabocla*<sup>2</sup> society, with the concomitant rise of a regional ethos. The result of this process of cultural change was a tendency towards assimilation – the complete cultural fusion of the Indians<sup>3</sup> to Brazilian society, which could only be delayed or interrupted by modifying the orientation of the pioneering front of colonization that would drive the region’s urbanization and industrialization. These conditions accentuated processes of discrimination and ethnic and social cleavages. The main factor of accommodation of the indigenous groups to *cabocla* society in formation was the extractive economy that isolated indigenous families in small rural settlements leaving them subordinated existence to the non-indigenous population, instead of “resulting in a retraction of the remaining tribal population to the *malocas*, in an ‘indigenous reservation’ type system” (Galvão 1979:186-187). In this social topology of stagnation and backwardness, this type of *cabocla* assimilation was expressed by the “*sítio*” (small rural plots of land) in contrast to the “*maloca*” and the “city”, which are anthropologically characterized as original cultural impulses disrupted by the expansion of extractive activities that impeded a modernizing acculturation.

Three decades later, a process of ethnogenesis and indigenous activism has developed through the formation of indigenous associations on the Upper Rio Negro that expanded to the Middle Rio Negro in the following decade. Territorial rights made concrete in a mosaic of indigenous lands and an indigenous movement closely linked to international cooperation and to a global environmentalist public sphere would question this anthropology of modernization (or better, of the regional impediments to modernization) on the Rio Negro.

The idea of a *folk-urban continuum*, represented by the *maloca* (a metonymic sign of the “tribal”) and by the “city” (a metonymic sign of the “civilized”) as two extreme poles, is not foreign to the schemes of intelligibility subjacent to the public discourse and action of missionaries, indigenous activists, the military and other state agents in the Rio Negro basin. The concentration of the presence of missionary centers, non-governmental and governmental organizations on the Upper Rio Negro, in comparison to the Middle Rio Negro, is one of the forms of expression of this imaginary topology of acculturation in which going up or down the Rio Negro corresponds to entering or leaving civilization. Therefore, this imaginary topology must be considered as an element that is relevant to the anthropological understanding of the genesis of a social space of indigenous militancy on the Rio Negro, considered as a semantic field

1 *Malocas* are large communal houses where several domestic groups lived, constituting a modality of social organization of the indigenous settlements in the Amazon Northwest that succumbed to the fierce combat promoted by the Salesian missionaries.

2 *Caboclo* designates a condition or status resulting from cultural contact between indigenous and non-indigenous individuals or groups.

3 “Many among those who trace their roots to the Aboriginal peoples of the Americas prefer *American Indians* to *Native Americans*, and in certain historical works *Indians* may be more appropriate. Canadians often speak of *First Peoples* (and of *First Nations*) when not referring to specific groups by name.” (<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/book/ed17/part2/cho8/pseco38.html>)

of redefinition of meanings and experiences that originated from other social configurations such as the Salesian missionary centers and the *aviamento* regime<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, this imaginary topology must be denaturalized (by a historic anthropology) and explained as part of a web of practices and representations; and not naively considered and transformed into part of the analytical arsenal of the research without consideration.

We propose to understand the Middle Rio Negro based on the *aviamento* system, which is a social configuration that serves as a gateway to comprehending a social totality constructed by anthropological reflection in models that are never definitive; taking this compulsory form of recruitment and exploitation of work and control and use of natural resources, based on a notion of *debt* that transcends its economic dimensions. *Aviamento* is seen as a principle of constitution of a network of interdependence between individuals and groups; systems of positions and dispositions, ties of strength and meaning subjacent to the categories of *patrão*<sup>5</sup> and *freguês*.<sup>6</sup> It involves a complex system of relations and experiences that condition the objective opportunities and the subjective expectations of social recognition (Peres 2008). Despite the limitations of Galvão's model of acculturation, he perceived the importance of *aviamento* for understanding the social dynamics and processes in an Amazon border situation;<sup>7</sup> such as the "extractive industries" in contrast to the formation of a "system of Indian reservations". On the Upper Rio Negro the mosaic of indigenous lands that were demarcated and sanctioned in the 1990s buried this social configuration, directly confronting large extractive projects (mining) that operated according to a mercantile logic different from *aviamento* and that obfuscated the power of the *patrões* as the main antagonists of indigenous territorial rights. Meanwhile, on the Middle Rio Negro are found *patrões* who present themselves as the principal interests affected by the official regularization of the indigenous lands.

Observing the map on the following page, we see that the area currently in a conclusive phase of identification and demarcation studies is a zone that is free for the social reproduction of the *aviamento* regime. Mainly the left bank of the Rio Negro is a region rich in *piçabais*.<sup>8</sup>

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4 The *aviamento* regime is a mode of recruitment and exploitation of forced labor based on debt, in which the *patrão* (boss) lends goods at exorbitant prices (compared to the prices of the small shops in Barcelos and Santa Isabel do Rio Negro) in exchange for forest products (*seringa*\*, *balata*\*\* , *sorva*\*\*\*, *piçava*\*\*\*\*, Brazil nuts, ornamental fish, etc.). The extractive workers (*fregueses*) become beholden to the *patrão* because of the debt contracted in the purchase of goods, and were required to deliver their production only to the *patrão* with whom they had a personal tie and an informal agreement based on moral commitments that supported a cycle of mutual favors and commitments (kinship, compaternity and neighborliness). There were no formal labor contracts or legally affirmed rights or payments in money for the extracted products. Under these conditions it was difficult for the extractive workers to reach a *saldo* or *surplus* (that is to exceed in the value recognized for the products the price of the goods advanced by the *patrão*). The *patrão* monopolized access and control to the respective commercial chain and held ownership of the boats needed for carrying large volumes of forest products.

\* Elastic gum extracted from *hevea brasiliensis*, an Amazon tree species, for the manufacture of rubber.

\*\* Elastic gum extracted from *Minilkara bidentata*, a type of tree found in the Amazon, for the manufacture of balls, shoes, etc.

\*\*\* Elastic gum extracted from *Couma Macrocarpa*, a species of tree found in the Amazon, for the manufacture of bubble gum.

\*\*\*\* The fiber of a palm tree, *Leopoldinia Piassaba*, found in the Upper and Middle Rio Negro, used to manufacture brooms.

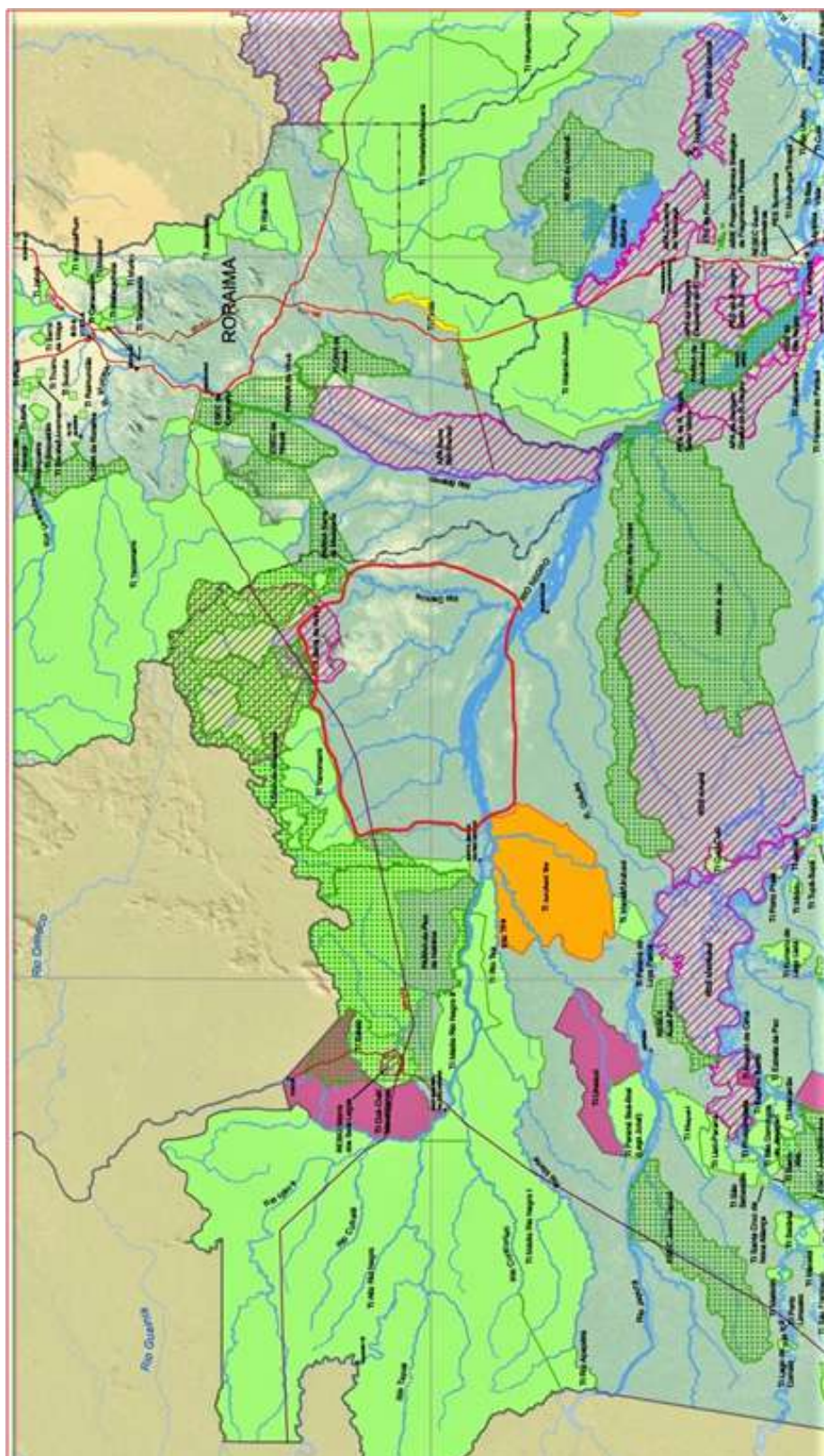
5 *Patrão* is the local designation for someone who controls the conditions of commercialization and financing of extractive production.

6 *Freguês* is the local designation for an extractive worker subordinated by commitments based on debt relationships with those who provide goods needed for support during the productive activity.

7 For the definition and use of the category of border that is relevant to this study: cf. Pacheco de Oliveira 2016a. See also Pacheco de Oliveira 2015 and 1988.

8 *Piçaba* is a type of palm cut for the fiber in its leaves, which is used for brooms and other items. *Piçabais* are the groves of these palms and *piçabeiros* are the people who cut the leaves to extract the fiber.

## Map of Indigenous Lands and Conservation Units on the Rio Negro.



Map adapted from: Mapa Terras Indígenas e Unidades de Conservação na Amazônia Legal Brasileira [Map of Indigenous Lands and Conservation Districts in the Brazilian Amazon] ([www.socioambiental.org](http://www.socioambiental.org)), accessed on 12/10/2017. Observation: The indigenous lands in orange are identified; in violet they are declared; and in green are sanctioned. The polygon in red is the area that is in a phase of identification and delimitation.

Since 2001, political pressure mounted from the indigenous associations of the Middle Rio Negro and in 2007 the Fundação Nacional do Índio [National Indian Foundation] (FUNAI) established two technical groups for identification and delimitation: one in the Jurubaxi and Téa river basins (both on the right bank of the Rio Negro); and the other for the right bank of the Rio Negro including the Caurés, Quiunini and Aracá, Demeni, Preto and Padauri river basins (these four are on the left bank), encompassing the municipalities of Barcelos and Santa Isabel do Rio Negro. The anthropological reports of both working groups were considered unsatisfactory by the National Indian Foundation and for this reason two other teams were created to redo the respective studies. The Jurubaxi-Téa Indian Land was declared in 2017. In this article I will concentrate on the processes of indigenous territorialization, ethnicity and activism in the field of scope of the Aracá / Demeni and Preto / Padauri river basins, where I coordinated the identification studies,<sup>9</sup> since late 2009. Sixteen communities were involved, embracing a majority Baré (72%) population, totaling 781 people.

**Communities of the Padauri-Preto and Aracá Demeni River basins:  
Population and Ethnic Identification.**

Etnia	População por comunidade e etnia							
	Baré	Tukano	Tuyuka	Baniwa	Tariana	Desana	Pira-tapuia	Não Indígenas
<b>Comunidades</b>								
Águas Vivas	18		1	11				12
Acuacu	27							
Acuquaia	17							
Campinas	73	3	1	2	2			3
Ilha Nova Vida	23			4				
Floresta	53	15		3				
Canalé	74	4		10				
Mangueira	25	3		6				
Malalahá	36		1	11				1
Nova Jerusalém	29							43
Tapera	89		2	1				
Becatal	22			27				10
Elsbão	10	3						
Becuquara	1	1		9				1
Sumauma	19	2		3		3		
Terra Preta								
Romão	45	3		12			5	3
<b>População étnica</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>73</b>

Source: Peres & Nascimento 2016. (Population by community and ethnicity)

<sup>9</sup> I had the support of anthropologist Luiz Augusto Nascimento who conducted field work in the Padauri-Preto river basin and wrote the anthropological report with me.



## **Tapuia, caboclo amazônico and immigrant nordestino:<sup>10</sup> processes of territorialization,<sup>11</sup> historic positionings and sociogenesis of the caboclo on the Middle Rio Negro.**

The main modalities for the imposition of Portuguese sovereignty on the Rio Negro were: the rescue troops, forts and religious missions that gave origin to various cities along the large river and its tributaries. Expeditions were organized that went up the Amazon River in search of “articles from the *sertão* [forest products]” (cacao, vanilla, cinnamon, cloves, sarsaparrilla, roots, “bitter barks”, etc.), lumber and indigenous slaves. Their contingent was composed of some soldiers, a few clergy and a large number of Indian “archers”, guides, “*línguas*” (translators), and rowers. In the mid seventeenth century the first rescue troops were formed that traveled up the Rio Negro (Monteiro 2000: 38-39).

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Portuguese crown disseminated forts throughout the Amazon basin, alongside which were founded settlements and missions, demonstrating a clear objective to populate the colony until its most distant limits. During the eighteenth century various forts were built along the Rio Negro. Merchants and Carmelite missionaries were active along the river and founded various villages such as: Santo Elias do Jaú, Aracari, Cumaru, Mariuá, São Caetano, Cabuquena, Bararuá and Dari (Monteiro 2000: 95). But the eighteenth century also saw prolonged wars against some insubmissive indigenous peoples; including the Manao, who together with the Tarumã and the Baré, constituted part of the indigenous population in the lower Rio Negro (Leonardi 1999: 31).

In 1728, the village of Nossa Senhora da Conceição do Mariuá was founded by the Carmelite monk Matias São Boa Ventura. It reached an estimated population of 2,000 people, from various ethnic origins, such as: Werekena, Baniwa, Baré and Passé. On May 6, 1758, it attained status of a Vila and was given the name Barcelos (see the map on page 4), becoming the center of the captaincy of São José do Rio Negro (Monteiro 2000: 123-137).<sup>12</sup> Barcelos gained urban improvements and economic incentives, because it was also chosen as the location for the meeting of Portuguese and Spanish commissions for the demarcation of borders, and for two years was home to the governor of the captaincy of Grão Pará and Maranhão, Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado — brother of the Marquês de Pombal — who led the Portuguese delegation. Other settlements that gained village status - such as Carvoeiro, Moura, Moreira, Tomar and Airão — served as strategic points in the conquest and occupation of the Amazon by the Portuguese colonizers.

The excursions to descend the rivers continued during the turn from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. The settlements on the Lower Rio Negro included indigenous contingents of various ethnicities, including those from other river basins. Nevertheless, the forced recruiting of Indians to fight in the Paraguay War led to the decline of various settlements, whether because the youth did not return or because

10 *Tapuia* refers to the descendants of Indians who had lived in the missionary settlements in the 17th and 18th centuries; *caboclo amazônico* [Indian considered acculturated] and *imigrante nordestino* [immigrant from Brazil's Northeast] (or *arigós*) until the period of rubber tapping, diversification of the extractive economy and consolidation of the *aviamento* regime in the late nineteenth and twentieth century.

11 I use here João Pacheco de Oliveira's concept of territorialization: “In this sense, the notion of territorialization is defined as a process of social reorganization that implies: 1) the creation of a new sociocultural unit through the establishment of a distinct ethnic identity; 2) the constitution of specialized political mechanisms; 3) the redefinition of social control over the environmental resources; and 4) the re-elaboration of the culture and of the relation with the past” (Pacheco de Oliveira 2016b: 203).

12 The Amazonian northeast was a colonial frontier of concern to the Portuguese Crown due to the missionary activities linked to the Spanish king and the negotiations over the territorial limits between the two colonies. On the other hand, since the early eighteenth century, the commercial circuits in which the Dutch and Indigenous groups were engaged in the Upper Rio Branco extended to the Lower Rio Negro through merchandise brought by those indigenous people to the settlements of this region. For this reason, a solid governmental structure was implanted, that is, the greater presence of the colonial Portuguese state, through the creation of the captaincy of São José do Rio Negro, in 1757.

of a climate of terror that drove many residents to flee. They were also fleeing the heavy burden of the exploitation of indigenous labor by the colonists, imposed more brutally with the end of the missionary settlements and the creation of the *Diretório*.<sup>13</sup>

At the end of the eighteenth century, the end of the *Diretório* did not lead to a better situation for the indigenous population that was forcefully recruited in the most distant settlements on the smaller rivers and *igarapés* (very small rivers) to work in services and public construction projects, in the extraction companies of the traders or on the farms of the *colonos* (colonists). This coercive type of mobilization of the labor force, which at the core involved corporal punishment of indigenous workers, remained known locally as *agarrações* and had the complicity of the directors (Leonardi 1999: 107-108).<sup>14</sup> The prohibition of the colonial authorities did nothing to impede the compulsory removal of indigenous men and women from caring for their own *roças* (small plantings) and families. The conditions were established for the engagement of many indigenous residents from the colonial nuclei of the Middle Rio Negro in the revolt of the *cabanos*.<sup>15</sup>

The decline of the main villages (Airão, Moura, Carvoeiro, Barcelos, Moreira and Tomar), which had become reduced to a few houses of *taipa* (mud) and churches in ruins, was also due to the *Cabanagem*, because this political movement interrupted trade, navigation, extractive activities, food production and supply. The implacable repression of the *Cabanos* after the defeat of the movement afflicted many *tapuias* who were involved in the conflict, provoking the abandonment of many settlements and villages. One traveler found only two villages on the Rio Negro, Barra do Rio Negro<sup>16</sup> and Barcelos, and both presented extremely precarious conditions by the standards of urban life of the time. In 52 years (1790-1842) the number of residences (identified as *fogos* (fireplaces) in Barcelos fell from 640 to 74 (Leonardi 1999: 118). The *agarrações*, as well as the repression of the *Cabanos* movement, were important factors in the population movements on the Rio Negro.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, however, a new possibility appeared for the precarious urban areas of the Middle and Upper Rio Negro, due to the introduction of steam navigation in the Amazon in 1854 (Leonardi 1999: 122-123). The implantation of a regular transportation line for goods and people from Manaus to Santa Isabel do Rio Negro drove the extraction of *piaçava*, *breu* (vegetal resin), *estopa* (coconut fiber), dried fish and *salsa* (plant used in cooking). With the increased extraction and sale of rubber, the number of steamboats increased even more. However, it was in the late nineteenth century, with the rubber cycle, that the social and political elite of the Lower Rio Negro sought a possible economic and demographic recovery in the region. The composition of the population changed drastically with the intense immigration of people from Brazil's Northeast (Cearenses, Paraíbaes etc.) who provided needed labor – as well as small merchants – to provide raw materials to the exporting companies and to English financial capital, both located in Manaus. It was at this time that the network of *aviamento* was implanted and linked to large commercial stores in Manaus, the merchants of small urban centers on the Rio Negro, the smaller merchants located at the mouths of the tributaries and *igarapés* and the workers in extraction (Pacheco de Oliveira 2016a: 134-137). Many commercial houses were installed in the main urban

13 The *Diretório* was a legal-political order (1757-1798) that redefined relations between colonizers and indigenous groups, transforming indigenous settlements into villages, imposing use of the Portuguese language, regulating the use of indigenous labor and granting lands to colonists in villages where they lived, stimulating miscegenation and commerce with non-Indians and instituting the figure of the director as a tutor directly in charge of the civilization of the Indians.

14 The *agarrações* were activities for capturing indigenous people who lived in the settlements and villages of the Middle and Lower Rio Negro, which began soon after the end of the *Diretório* in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century.

15 The *Cabanagem* was a popular revolt that began in Belém and spread through a vast region of the Amazon basin, also reaching some parts of the Northeastern coast. This political movement lasted five years (1835-1840) and was harshly repressed by the regent government, resulting in more than thirty thousand deaths. About the revolt of the *Cabanos* see Harris 2010.

16 In 1850, Amazonas became a province, separated from Pará. In 1856 the former village of Barra do Rio Negro received the definitive name of Manaus.

centers on the Rio Negro, introducing new members of the local elite as well as a new lifestyle in which the consumption of conspicuous goods (lipsticks, wines, porcelain cups, ivory combs, fabrics, musical instruments, fireworks, shotguns and munitions, etc.), coming from the capital (Manaus) gave a tone of refinement and superiority that marked the social distinction among *patrões* and *fregueses*, between civilization and backwardness. Meanwhile, the owners of the commercial houses of Airão, Carvoeiro, Moura, Barcelos, Tomar, Moreira, Santa Isabel and Cucuí sought to imitate the ostentatious life of the Manaus oligarchy (Leonardi 1999: 91-128).

The local intermediaries spread along the various rivers were integrated in a web of personalist relations, through which circulated mutual obligations and favors, whose center was the firm of the Portuguese immigrant, J. G. Araújo. With the progressive drop in rubber prices in the international market after 1914, and the competition with the production of rubber in Southeast Asia, the river navigation dropped considerably and economic alternatives, previously abandoned or relegated to a secondary plane, were reconsidered - such as the extraction of Brazil nuts and *piçava*. In the 1940s, during World War II, the extraction of rubber gained new strength with the arrival of the “rubber soldiers”<sup>17</sup> from Rio de Janeiro and Brazil’s Northeast (IBGE 1957: 114). According to the demographic census of 1950, Barcelos was one of the least populated municipalities of Amazonas state (4,911), but the largest in territory in the state and perhaps in Brazil. Only 970 people lived in the center of the municipality. *Piçava* became the main product of extraction, stimulating the recruitment of labor in the indigenous communities of the Upper Rio Negro, para as *colocações*<sup>18</sup> of the Aracá, Padauri and Preto Rivers, due to the scarcity of workers caused by the decline of rubber extraction. The mechanism of debt formation was the pillar of all the other extractive activities, including the capturing of ornamental fish.<sup>19</sup>

In the twentieth century, the urban centers, settlements and farms appeared and disappeared according to the dynamics of the productive and commercial chain of extraction (of *seringa* (rubber), *balata*, Brazil nuts, *piçava*, *piaba*, etc.); as well as the flow of indigenous families who moved from the Upper Rio Negro, recruited as a labor force and inserted in the networks of personal dependence and subordination that constituted the ties between *patrão* and *freguês*, as well as the positions and identities of *caboclos* in contrast to the *arigós* (Northeasterns who also assumed coercive control of the indigenous who worked in extraction).

The *tapuias* and Amazon *caboclos* were joined by the *nordestinos* (natives of Brazil’s northeast),<sup>20</sup> (or *arigós*, the regional designation by which the *caboclos* distinguished themselves) to certify the highly boasted disappearance of the indigenous people from the Middle Rio Negro.<sup>21</sup> This long historic process of social construction of the *caboclo*, constituted by a series of material and symbolic violence against the indigenous peoples, resulted in the dilution of the *tapuias* (generic indigenous descendants of indigenous residents of villages at the missions before the creation of the Diretório) at the heart of the miscegenated Amazon population with migrants from Brazil’s Northeast. The tense and combative encounter of the *tapuia* and the immigrants from the Northeast (as socially constructed historic positions) resulted in a new category,

17 About the exploitation of rubber in the Brazilian Amazon during the Estado Novo [New State] period, cf. Garfield 2014. For an approach to the rubber cycle at the heart of a social history of the Amazon, cf. Weinstein 1993.

18 *Colocações* are a system in which extractive workers process the *piçava* and deliver it to the *patrão*.

19 The *piabeiros* (fishermen) are highly exploited by the bosses who demand enormous production of *piabas* (small fish) in exchange for goods (whose prices are much lower than at the shops in Barcelos or Santa Isabel do Rio Negro) supplied in advance. If they reach a surplus, the fishermen can receive it in money and look for another boss who pays better, or purchase more manufactured goods, once again loaned against their next job. In the 1980’s and 90’s, the extractive economy of ornamental fish grew gradually with the falling prices of other forest products such as *balata*, *sorva* and rubber, even exceeding the cutting of *piçava*, coming to be responsible for 60% of municipal income (Prang 2001: 47).

20 These categories should not be considered in an exclusive and reified manner, but should be seen as relational categories that are socially constructed in historic processes, as positions that refer to social spaces of identity construction and or asymmetrical relations of reciprocal recognition.

21 Victor Leonardi inserted his approach to the decadence of the old village of Airão in this perspective of decimation or expulsion of the autochthone peoples, contributing to the academic consecration of the indigenous invisibility, based on their supposed extinction, in the Middle Rio Negro (Leonardi 1999: 197).

the *caboclo Amazônico*, which removes any tangible expression of cultural differentiation. There was a process of ethnogenesis in the Middle Rio Negro in which the memories and identities are reformulated at the heart of a movement of social construction of demands for citizenship supported by identity politics, contrary to the supposed inexorable route that leads to tribal societies, passing through generic Indians (whether in settlements, detribalized or *tapuias*), to the *caboclos* who were completely integrated into the marginalized and “backwards” sectors of national society as peasants excluded from the main political and economic flows of the country. Nevertheless, this ethnogenesis in the Middle Rio Negro is inserted to new processes of territorialization in the twentieth century, related to the Salesian missionary activity and the formation of a network of indigenous associations on a regional scale.

### **Missionaries, the Military, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro (FOIRN): developmentalism, environmentalism and the formation of associations in the Rio Negro basin.**

The Salesian missionary policy of the 1970s and 1980s revealed a modification in the principle programs to emphasize “community development”, through courses for training teachers, local leaders (known as captains, administrators or presidents, according to the region of the Rio Negro) and pastoral agents.<sup>22</sup> The reformulation of the missionary practice conceded a relevant role to the training of lay and catechist agents; to activities located in the indigenous settlements (known as *itinerâncias*);<sup>23</sup> and to the participation of lay people in the planning and evaluation of the parochial work (on parochial councils); with decreased emphasis on boarding schools and a limitation of the range of action of the central offices. The formation of associations was encouraged, mainly among young people, whether for strictly religious purposes (through the organization and participation in events of the parochial agenda) or to promote public benefits (health, education, economic support, politics, leisure, etc.) (Peres 2013: 57-97).

The *inculturation* proposed that the missionaries learn the indigenous language, and the introduction of elements of indigenous traditions (objects, musical instruments, dances, songs, etc.) into the Catholic liturgy. The indigenous were called on by the Salesians to participate in the preparation of these signs of ethnic authenticity in Catholic spaces of interlocution (parochial assemblies, encounters and courses for Pastoral and lay leaders etc.). From this perspective, the pastoral action must understand the reality in which it is inserted and position itself in relation to it. The social struggles were framed within a religious language, while the religious demands were framed in the code of activism in defense of the universal rights of man.

The direct action of the state with the indigenous peoples in the Rio Negro region was considerably limited in relation to the powerful competition of the Salesian missionary structure implanted with government support. In the 1920s, the Indian Protection Service (SPI)<sup>24</sup> was established based on

22 The Salesians settled in the Rio Negro in 1914-1915, with the creation of the Apostolic Prefect (later transformed into a Prelacy) in São Gabriel da Cachoeira (Jackson 1984). Their domain then broadened with the foundation of various pastoral units: Manaus (1922), Barcelos (1925), Taracá (1929), Iauareté (1929) and Pari-Cachoeira (1940), Tapuruquara (1942), Içana (1950), Cauburis (1958), Cucuí (1967) and Maturacá. In 1925 the Apostolic Prefect of Rio Negro was raised to a Prelacy, subordinated to the Missionary Inspector's office in Manaus, and in 1981 became a diocese. The Salesians attacked some social institutions, insisted in imposing the use of the Portuguese language and invested in the education of children in boarding schools.

23 The *itinerâncias* were periodic visits of Salesian missionaries to the indigenous settlements to administer the sacraments (marriage, baptism, confirmation, extreme unction, requiem mass and Sunday mass) and corresponded to a regular monitoring in the process of (trans)formation of ecclesiastic base communities. The pastoral reports statistically registered the results of the *itinerâncias* as missionary productivity, rituals of institution of the ecclesiastic community through meetings, religious festivals, celebrations and sacraments (Peres 2013: 80-82).

24 State indigenous agency created in 1910 and extinguished in 1967, when it was substituted by the current Fundação Nacional do Índio [National Indian Foundation] (FUNAI).

geopolitical objectives of national integration of this border region.<sup>25</sup> Its tasks were to control trafficking of indigenous labor, conflicts involving activities of Colombian traders in Brazil and to monitor the catechizing activities. For this reason, the focus of action chosen was the Vaupés River and its tributary the Papuri.

In the 1960s, more specifically after the military coup of 1964, the Brazilian state enacted another strategy of affirmation of national sovereignty in the Rio Negro: creating the Rio Negro Forest Reserve, which covered the entire territory of the municipality of São Gabriel da Cachoeira and established an enormous reserve of natural resources for future economic exploitation. The construction of the highway Perimetral Norte (BR-307), which crossed the forest reserve, intensified the presence of state agencies and the military contingent on the Upper Rio Negro. The official indigenous network received a new impulse with the reactivation of the indigenous posts of the ancient Indian Protection Service by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). The opportunity to work on construction of the highway and receive a plot distributed by the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA) along highway BR-307 triggered an enormous flow of migrants from Brazil's Northeast (particularly from Ceará and Maranhão states). The population shifts on the Rio Negro also included the Indians, who went mainly to São Gabriel da Cachoeira, which became a regional point of convergence of economic activities and opportunities to access public services (Peres 2013: 117-140).<sup>26</sup>

Since the 1970's, the indigenous peoples in Pari-Cachoeira demanded a single area and not a fragmentation of their traditional lands. Indigenous militancy was institutionally materialized through the entity Christian Encouraged Family Union (UFAC).<sup>27</sup> There were also institutional responses from FUNAI to that context.<sup>28</sup> In 1986, leaders of the Union of the Indigenous Communities of the Tiquié River (UCIRT) traveled to Manaus to obtain information from the regional administrator of the National Indian Foundation about the *Projeto Calha Norte*.<sup>29</sup> The assembly for the creation of Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro (FOIRN)<sup>30</sup> resulted from a complex process of political articulation among indigenous leaders and government authorities.<sup>31</sup> The focus was a strongly politicized ethnic identity movement, which formulated demands for participation in decisions about the fate of the Upper Rio Negro, bringing to the region the debate about a geopolitical and developmentalist plan of the Brazilian state that had been secretly drafted in the backrooms of government leadership. If on one hand the goal

25 It should be highlighted that nearly a decade earlier (in 1912), an Indian Protection Service post for attraction and pacification was established, led by indigenous agent Alípio Bandeira, on the Jauaperi River (Lower Rio Negro), to engage the Waimiri-Atroari. A year earlier, he had commanded an expedition up the Jauaperi River, leaving from Moura (Carvalho 1982).

26 The migration of indigenous families from the communities and *sítios* (small plots of land) to the municipal center also took place because of the closing of the Salesian boarding homes in the late 1970s.

27 When it was created, the Union of the Indigenous Communities of the Tiquié River (UCIRT) was opposed by the Salesians who supported the Christian Encouraged Family Union (UFAC), which was founded in the early 1970s, and terminated in 1984, after differences among the indigenous leaders of the Pari-Cachoeira district because of the denunciations of Álvaro Tukano at the Russell Tribunal in 1980 against the action of Catholic missionaries on the Rio Negro.

28 In 1976, a working group was established to identify the land, which formulated a first proposed area. It followed the territorial model of Salesian power, proposing the demarcation of three distinct and contiguous units: Pari-Cachoeira (1.020.000 ha), Iauareté (990.000 ha) and Içana-Aiari (896.000 ha). In 1985, another working group proposed the inclusion of the mining areas of the Serra do Traíra in the Pari-Cachoeira Indian Land (which was increased to 1,418,000 ha). The following year, a new proposal from FUNAI expanded even more the limits of this indigenous land (to 2,069,000 ha). It continued to encompass the Serra do Traíra, recognized as traditional territory of the Maku people.

29 This was a government project for integration of the region north of the courses of the Amazon and Solimões rivers, which included development policies and plans for military occupation, mainly of the international border regions that was proposed and executed during the government of Brazilian President José Sarney.

30 Federação das Organizações Indígenas do Rio Negro.

31 The II Assembly of the Indigenous Peoples of the Rio Negro was held from April 28-30, 1987, in the sports gymnasium of the Salesian school in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, Amazonas. The importance of the Upper Rio Negro for achieving the government objectives for the region is indicated by the presence of the Secretary General of the National Security Council, General Bayma Denis, at the event. Also present were representatives of various government agencies, indigenous organizations and support entities (União das Nações Indígenas/[The Union of Indigenous Nations]UNI, Conselho Indigenista Missionário/[The Indigenous Missionary Council]/CIMI and the Centro Ecumênico de Documentação e Informação/[The Ecumenical Center for Documentation and Information] CEDI), mining companies (Parapanema and Gold Amazon) as well as local merchants and politicians.

was to negotiate resources and legal recognition of the indigenous lands, that is the very conditions for implantation of the Calha Norte Project; on the other it was to change the direction of a state structure that was being implanted to achieve objectives not foreseen by the project: the organization of the indigenous movement according to a federative, vertical and centralized model. The Federation would be the link between government, communities and the indigenous movement.

The creation of the Federation of the Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro, the new and conflicting processes of occupation and use of natural resources in the Upper and Middle Rio Negro<sup>32</sup> and the recognition by the Federal Constitution of 1988 of the right of indigenous peoples and their organizations to represent themselves directly in the courts and before the Brazilian state, stimulated the increased formation of associations as a privileged form of political mobilization and organization of ethnicity. There was a culmination of a phenomenon of transformation of the stigma of native ancestry into ethnic pride, of the moral recuperation of indigenous ethnicity as a positive element of social recognition. The deliberate and reflective efforts to redefine ethnic borders have been generated in an emerging and relatively autonomous discursive space, which was no longer exclusively linked to the semantic field of Salesian missionary action and its new strategies for ecclesiastic control.

The movement to form associations, after the Federal Constitution of 1988, whose focus is the concept of universal recognition of a diversified citizenship, substituted Christianity after the Second Vatican Council of 1962, whose central principle is the preferential option for the poor. New allies arose: non-governmental organizations, in the place of the Missions; and a new non-indigenous mediator: the anthropologist-advisor (as well as other professionals who would occupy this role), instead of the itinerant priest. And a new type of action developed: scientific and technical collaboration instead of religious proselytizing, while both were politically engaged. A public sphere emerged around “Indianness”, an incipient local and indigenous civil society pressured government agents to dialog.<sup>33</sup>

From 1987 to 1992 twelve new associations appeared (ISA 2000: 267-268) in a climate of sharp conflict among the indigenous population around the various proposals for demarcation in indigenous colonies or on continuous territory. The agglutinating criteria was geographic (a set of communities located in a stretch of the river, on one or more rivers, or in a district), and its composition was ethnically diversified. This demonstrated that the current distribution of the ethnic groups along the rivers, their social organization in communities, and the common problems of a group of communities established in a given location shaped the organizational model of political mobilization of ethnicity on the Rio Negro. Some more immediate motivations can be identified: dissidence towards an already existing association, a demand for political representation and mobilization of a group of communities still not integrated to the emerging organizational structure or inserted in an association where it does not have its own visibility and expression of sectorial interests (gender, occupational etc.) (Peres 2013: 140-193).

In the early 1990s, the physical and logistical conditions (offices, administrative equipment, communication, transportation etc.) of the Federation of the Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro were extremely precarious: a small house, a table and a borrowed typewriter. The only local support for the organization came from the Catholic Church of São Gabriel da Cachoeira. The Federation began to establish itself through international cooperation when it obtained financial support from a Belgium finance agency, the Broederlijk Delen. This was the first step in the expansion of a range of connections and the search for more durable partnerships with indigenous organizations and support entities on multiple scales.

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<sup>32</sup> Triggered by a strong presence of the mining companies and gold diggers.

<sup>33</sup> These in turn, considering this demand for participation, strategically recruited leaders to their ranks of employees and sought to steer the emerging indigenous movement to its geopolitical objectives. They manipulated categories of the regional interethnic imaginary, interpreting them according to the then dominant official concepts of “isolated Indian or *arredio*” and “integrated or cultured Indian”. In this context, development and complete guarantee of territorial rights were presented to many as incompatible; tradition and modernity could not be conciliated.

With the expansion of the networks of indigenous associations, the demands for access to public benefits were closely linked to reflexive acts of preservation of the “natural and cultural patrimony” of the Rio Negro peoples. The connection of the local problems of the indigenous peoples of the Rio Negro with the interests of citizens of the first world in the preservation of tropical forests provided the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro with symbolic capital that was converted into institutional partnerships with foreign environmentalist organizations. This process substantially expanded the agenda of indigenous struggles, embracing the themes of transportation and communication, education and healthcare, cultural valorization and economic alternatives.

The signing of a cooperation agreement between the Federation of the Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro, the Ecumenical Center for Information and Documentation (CEDI)<sup>34</sup> and the Austrian Institute for International Cooperation (IIZ)<sup>35</sup> in 1993 sacramented the insertion of the indigenous movement of the Rio Negro in the European campaign in defense of the planet’s ecological equilibrium, the “Climate Alliance”. The Ecumenical Center and the Institute for International Cooperation assumed a more regular and permanent role in providing assistance and financing to a broad range of activities of the indigenous movement in the Rio Negro. Expanding and consolidating the framework of financial support for the Federation, its core actions and conditions for the institutional strengthening were redefined, and other fronts of actions were undertaken that had previously been considered specific projects.

The administrative structure of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro grew along with the increasing financial and material resources and the need to register, file and process information about the planning, execution, evaluation and promotion of a growing and complex set of tasks and demands. It also invested in transportation and communication logistics (boats and motors, radio systems), needed to overcome the geographic obstacles that impeded the approximation and consonance of the policies of the Federation with the affiliated associations and indigenous communities. Other support agencies helped to provide local organizations with means of transportation to conduct both their political activities in the communities and *sítios* and to improve the conditions for sale of local products (manioc flour, *piçava*, crafts, etc.). The radio communication systems were also expanded with support of other partners.

With a more positive perspective, supported by an official guarantee of indigenous lands in the Upper and Middle Rio Negro,<sup>36</sup> territorial management and the creation of economic alternatives received greater attention through the preparation of pilot projects. The strategy for the sustainability of the communities was clearly defined by selecting some of them to conduct experimental pilot projects in the fields of aquiculture, agriculture, aviculture, mining, crafts and ecotourism, which would be diffused if successful. The initiatives that were considered as laboratories for future proposals of a macro-program of regional sustainable development were that of aquiculture on the Upper Tiquié, crafts on the Upper Tiquié and education on the Upper Içana and Upper Tiquié. Other initiatives continued to receive financing, and a permanent technical, logistic and financial support structure was mounted, which concentrated the most intensive and systematic investments of the partnership between the Federation, the Brazilian entity Instituto Socioambiental (ISA)<sup>37</sup> and the Austrian Institute for International Cooperation in a few selected areas. New opportunities arose for articulation between the market, state, civil support entities and indigenous society organized in associations.

34 Centro Ecumênico de Informação e Documentação.

35 Instituto de Cooperação Internacional da Áustria [Austrian Institute for International Cooperation].

36 Delimitation (through the issue of a ministerial edict) of the Indigenous Land Alto Rio Negro, Middle Rio Negro I, Middle Rio Negro II, Apaporis and Téa. In 1998, these five indigenous lands were approved.

37 Instituto Socioambiental, [Socioenvironmental Institute] created in 1994.

The frontier of formation of associations on the Rio Negro shifted to the Papuri, Upper Içana/Aiari and Upper Tiquié Rivers and to the most distant areas of the Middle Rio Negro (closest to the city of Santa Isabel do Rio Negro) where some associations were being created. The invasion of enormous contingents of gold diggers on the Upper Içana and Cauaburis rivers increased concern for demarcating the indigenous lands of the Upper and Middle Rio Negro and triggered the creation of indigenous associations. In the first half of the 1990s, the associations of the Middle Rio Negro were able to suggest and implement activities in their respective communities due to the entrance of resources (financing for assemblies, boats, aluminum skiffs, outboard and inboard motors, radio equipment, office supplies, agricultural implements etc.) motivated by the need to increase political mobilization due to the invasion of gold diggers and miners. The Autonomous Indigenous Census conducted in 1992 should also be mentioned as an important factor in the mobilization of the communities and rise of associations on the Middle Rio Negro. The physical demarcation of the Indigenous Lands of the Middle Rio Negro I and II – due to its participatory character – in 1997, maintained the dynamism of these local organizations. With the guarantee of indigenous land conquered and the decision taken in the decision making bodies of the Federation to concentrate efforts of implementation of sustainable development and cultural valorization through demonstration projects<sup>38</sup> on the Upper Tiquié and the Upper Içana, these associations still did not have the conditions (such as permanent assistance, continuous and localized training, a constant flow of resources) to remain active and dynamic.

### **“Making community” and “closing the river”: Family trajectories, reproduction strategies and compulsory forms of mobilization of the labor force.**

In the municipality of Barcelos, unlike Santa Isabel do Rio Negro and São Gabriel da Cachoeira, the indigenous population is numerically a minority. Considering only the Middle Rio Negro, according to the last demographic census (2010), Santa Isabel (formerly Tapuruquara) encompassed 62,846,382 Km and was among the five municipalities that had the largest indigenous population in Brazil in absolute terms and was sixth in terms of indigenous proportion of the total population.<sup>39</sup> More than half of the population of the municipality is indigenous (59,24%), corresponding to 10,749 individuals. In twenty years the indigenous population grew in absolute and relative terms, increasing more than the non-indigenous population. From 1991 until 2000 the indigenous population decreased sharply, while the non-indigenous population grew a little. From 2000-2010, the demographic tendency changed radically: the indigenous population grew sharply, exceeding the non-indigenous population, which grew very little. The reasons for this considerable demographic fluctuation are complex and difficult to define, but may be the result of both the movements of migration (to other Amazon municipalities or even to other states), as well as movements of ethnic affirmation, or both factors combined.

It should be remembered that the 1990s were especially difficult for the indigenous groups in the municipality because of the presence of gold diggers and miners who prohibited access to certain areas with resources essential to the indigenous communities and caused other problems such as criminality, violence, alcoholism, etc. (ISA 1996: 146-147). This situation was overcome with the demarcation and

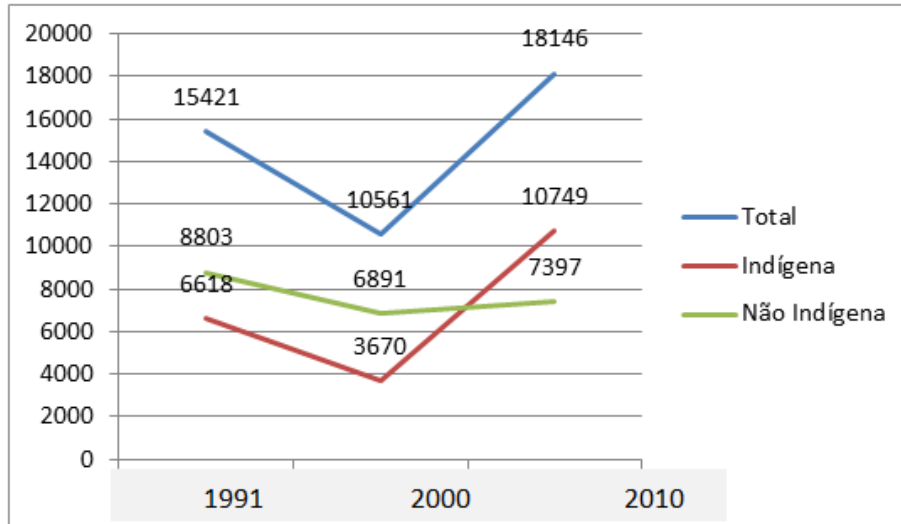
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38 The Demonstration Projects Subprogram (PDA) was “created in 1995 and began operating in 1996 when it initiated support to the first projects. [...] Implemented by the Ministry of the Environment in the realm of the Pilot Program for the Protection of Tropical Forests (PPG7), it mainly received support from German International Cooperation [...] In the first phase (1995 to 2003), the PDA supported 194 projects, with 147 in the Amazon and 47 in the Atlantic Forest” (<http://www.mma.gov.br/apoio-a-projetos/sociobiodiversidade>, accessed on 20/12/2017).

39 Considering only Northern Brazilian or Amazonas state, Santa Isabel is in fourth place in indigenous population, behind only São Gabriel da Cachoeira, São Paulo de Olivença and Tabatinga. (Total, Indigenous, Non-indigenous)

ratification of indigenous lands in the municipality in the second half of the 1990s; and later, after 1999, the implementation of the Special Indigenous Sanitary District, and the process of identification of Indigenous Lands after 2007 sparked the collective mobilization of ethnic identity.

**Population Indigenous / Non- Indigenous – Santa Isabel do Rio Negro (1991-2010)**



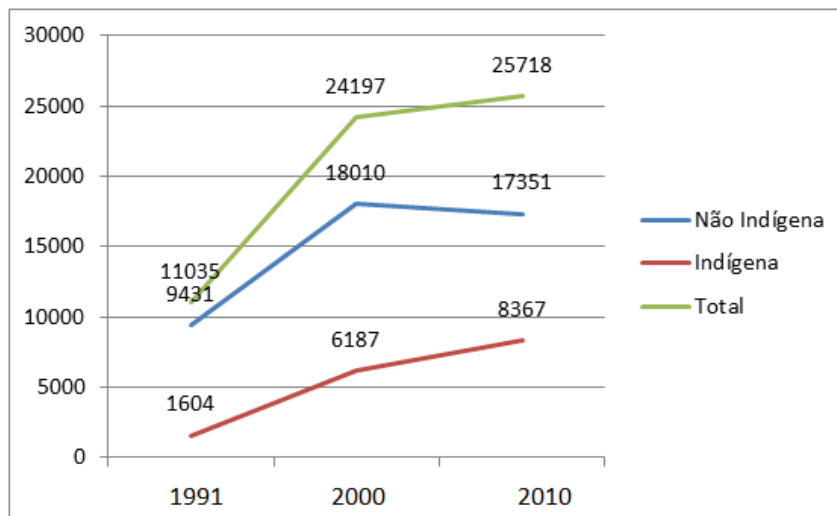
**Map based on <http://indigenas.ibge.gov.br/graficos-e-tabelas-2>**

(Total, Indigenous, Non-indigenous)

Barcelos, which is older than Santa Isabel, and also known by its former name, Aldeia de Mariuá, was founded in 1728 and was the first center of the captaincy of São José do Rio Negro. This municipality encompassed 12,313,841.70 km and a population of 25,718. Barcelos is among the ten Brazilian municipalities with the highest indigenous populations, in ninth place.<sup>40</sup> Nearly one third (32.53%) of the population is indigenous. The indigenous population grew more than the non-indigenous population, corresponding to greater portions of the total population over twenty years. While from 2000 to 2010 the non-indigenous population decreased, the indigenous population grew, although less sharply than in the previous period.

<sup>40</sup> Considering only the Brazilian North and Amazonas state, Barcelos is the municipality with the seventh and sixth highest indigenous population respectively.

### Indigenous Population/ Non-Indigenous Population – Barcelos (1991-2010)



Map based on <http://indigenas.ibge.gov.br/graficos-e-tabelas-2>  
(Total, Indigenous, Non-indigenous)

As can be seen, the population of the municipality of Santa Isabel do Rio Negro decreased considerably in the 1990s, probably because of both migration (due to the presence of mining that restricted access to areas of natural resources essential to the sustainability of the communities), while the indigenous and total population of Barcelos grew considerably. We can thus deduce that a part of the total and indigenous population of the neighboring municipality migrated to Barcelos. In the following decade, the indigenous population of Barcelos grew at a slower pace, concomitantly to a sharp increase in the indigenous population of Santa Isabel (and even exceeded the non-indigenous population), which may have received a return of some of the indigenous people who had emigrated in the previous decade. This is very probably due to the intense flow and mobility of the indigenous groups on the Rio Negro, but which simultaneously sustained the absolute and relative growth of the indigenous contingent in both municipalities. We must also consider that, as we have indicated, the social conditions of public affirmation of ethnic identity had changed, encouraging more individuals to declare themselves to be indigenous in the censuses conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). This explains the register of such a small portion of self-declared indigenous in 1991, when prejudice and discrimination were still very strong in the municipality, the indigenous movement had not increased and there were no specific public policies for the indigenous (in education and healthcare for example).

Spatial mobility is fundamental to the reproduction of the domestic groups and the movement to urban centers is inserted in this complex web of relations (economic, political, religious, of kinship, etc.) and of flows (of people, objects and meanings) regularly maintained between “community” and “city”. Many indigenous families who reside in the municipal centers have homes and *roças* (small farm plots) in communities or *sítios*/small rural plots, where they go during the school holidays of their children; since they have relatives in the communities and *sítios*, with whom they share norms of access and use of natural resources. The cities of Barcelos and Santa Isabel do Rio Negro grew in the last four decades from the migration of an important indigenous populational contingent that settled in the neighborhoods of the urban periphery. Many reached the city after having passed through and lived in the communities, *sítios*

and other urban nuclei of the Rio Negro and many others are children or grandchildren of the “*caboclos* of the Upper Rio Negro” who were recruited by the *patrões* to work in extraction under the *aviamento* regime in *seringais*, *piaçabais* (rubber-tapping, palm-cutting) or gathering Brazil nuts, etc (Peres 2008: 156-162).

The processes of indigenous territorialization, affirmation of ethnicity and formation of associations can only be understood in the region under analysis by considering this interplay of tensions between two antagonistic and competing territorialities. This antagonism is synthesized in two expressions formulated by these subjects: “closing the river”, as an action promoted by the bosses and the logic of the *aviamento* regime; and “making community”, as an action promoted by the indigenous *fregueses* and the logic of social reproduction of domestic groups. That is, tension and antagonism between subordination and autonomy are subjacent to the relations between *patrões* and *fregueses*. The dynamics of “making community” that is at the base of the social reproduction strategies of the indigenous families (of the collective modalities of use of natural resources and territorial occupation) implies the mobility and multi-locality that are restricted by the dynamics of “closing the river” subjacent to the *aviamento* system. The “home” / “farm” versus the “colocação”<sup>41</sup> / “merchandise”.

The trajectory and the memory of many indigenous peoples are marked by the experience in extraction and for many of them establishing definitive residence in the city means freeing themselves from the entrapment in debt and the brutal subordination to the *patrão*. This subordination is more brutal when the *piçabeiros* live close to the *piaçabais*, a situation when the families dedicate themselves exclusively to this activity and are totally dependent on the merchandise acquired through debt for their survival and the reproduction of their domestic group. When the *fregueses* live in communities or in the city, the room for maneuver and negotiation is broader, because the relations of subordination based on personal dependence are more flexible; which does not eliminate tensions, conflicts and accentuated asymmetries.

The constant mobility of the reproduction strategies of the domestic groups should be highlighted, as well as the alternative economic activities and the search for autonomy whose expression is the establishment of residence in a community of residents, the belonging to which is socially recognized by establishing “uma rocinha” (a small plot for farming). Expressions that are recurrent in the accounts of the indigenous about the formation of communities such as, “it was all *cerrado*” (dense vegetation), it “was all *mato*” (jungle), “it was very ugly”, form the basis of ethical and aesthetic judgments that contrast to the expression “making community” as social production of an inhabitable place in the middle of the forest, that is, the result of a political and moral economy of kinship that involves memory, religion, family trajectories and socio-environmental knowledge. Together with the home, they constitute the symbolic elements of filiation to a community; which does not exclude the possibility of having a home in another place like the city of Barcelos or Santa Isabel — multi-localization. There is an interlinking between the production of kinship and of community – the community makes the relatives and the relatives make community – with the choices of economic alternatives emphasized in a given moment of the reproductive cycle of the domestic group.

School education is one of the main pillars in the formation of the community and its forms of sociability. A school unit has central importance not only to the formation of communities, but also in internal disputes and relations with outside agencies. School and chapel (Catholic or Evangelical) are two pillars in the formation of the communities, of the process and dynamics of social organization and of habitable space in the forest that incorporate a model of sociability or good society based on kinship and neighborliness. The chapel or house of worship is a foundation for good sociability (good conviviality among relatives, kin and neighbors) inherent to the ideal of a prosperous community. The festival of the

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<sup>41</sup> See note 18.

patron saint and the chapel are indicators of the importance of the religious sphere for the community sociability and for the knowledge of traditional indigenous occupation on the Middle Rio Negro. There is an hierarchical tie established between the saint, the oldest family nucleus and the community, which is fundamental to guaranteeing prosperity and good sociability among relatives, kin and neighbors, or that is, of “making community”. The festivals maintain intra- and inter-community ties, and articulate the sacred and the profane in a privileged form of public and symbolic manifestation of the community. They stimulate and concentrate economic exchanges and ritual interchanges that encompass ties among relatives and kin dispersed through the various communities as well as relatives in the cities of Barcelos and Santa Isabel do Rio Negro.

The formation of indigenous communities in the Middle Rio Negro, therefore, is directly linked to the use and handling of geographically dispersed basic natural resources that are strategic to social reproduction. The communities are population nuclei formed by various domestic groups.<sup>42</sup> There is a strong sense of collective belonging, subjacent to memories of biographic and family paths through the social networks of *aviamento*, the identification with the protective spiritual forces (Catholic patron saints, *pajés*, *rezadores* and *benzedeiros*) and the desire for autonomy from the boss. Therefore, good sociability and “making community” also involve relations with dangerous supra-human entities, which can cause disease or death (*encantados*, *curupiras*, *maquiritares*, *matis*, *mapinguari*, *matinta-pereira*, *cobra-grande*)<sup>43</sup> the control of which also relates to appropriate or prohibited uses of natural resources. The disappearance of people is attributed to *encantados* (spells) that lead them to their city or to the *bichos* (bewitched animals) that transform the people into animals.<sup>44</sup> The categories of mediators of this relationship (whose limits are flexible) are the *pajés*, *rezadores*, *benzedeiros* and *sacacas* who correspond to different practices of cure, and distinct supra-human powers and abilities, as well as the various modalities and instruments of acquisition and conservation of abilities of interlocution with these figures of alterity (Peres 2013: 288-294). There are sacred places (mountains and lakes) where the access to and use of natural resources is possible only when accompanied by ritual procedures that suspend an interdiction and guarantee protection. There are times when bathing in rivers should be avoided, because *encantados* can attack, causing illness in someone who does not respect certain rules of conviviality, domestication (pacification) of the *bichos da mata*, *do fundo* and *do mundo de cima* (bewitched creatures of the forest, waters and sky). The “baptism of water”, for example, protects the child who is vulnerable to these *bichos* or *visagens* or *assombramentos* (which are interchangeable categories), when she acquires a godfather who will be respected even after a Catholic baptism, when she gets another godfather (Peres & Nascimento 2016: 303-306). It should be highlighted that around these categories of pathogenic and dangerous agents, representations are articulated about the past and present that are at the foundation of experiences and interpretations about the social changes experienced (Peres 2013: 270-288).

The communities are social configurations characterized by personal ties of kinship, affinity and neighborhood in which is established a moral universe that defines the collective norms of access to natural resources and to the flexible limits of territorial rights in relation to other communities and social groups.

42 The number of domestic groups may be from a few to dozen, as in the case of large communities like Piloto or Cumaru on the right bank of the Rio Negro.

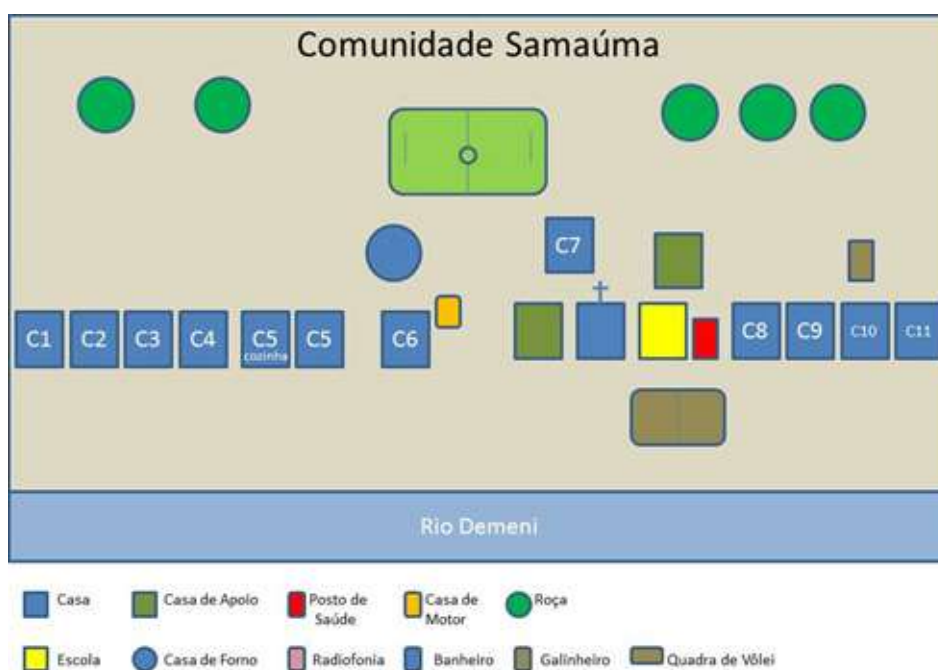
43 Types of spells that take the form of animals or hybrid beings, partly human and partly animal.

44 *Encantado* can relate to a category encompassing all the *bichos*, *visagens* or *assombramentos* (apparitions) or can define a specific modality of threatening super-human agency. In the later case, the *encantados* are vengeful beings that are angry with humans (according to a Tariana version), because they were not able to be transformed into people when the first ancestors (fish) left the snake-canoe and originated the indigenous peoples of the Rio Negro. The *encantados* live in invisible cities, located at the bottom of rivers or in environments that are seen by humans as forests; they are relatives (ancestors) of the whites, because they are also beings characterized by the absence of ethnic or tribal attributes. In the world of the *encantados* they understand that they are people and the humans are seen as animals and they appear to humans as animals here in our world (Peres 2013: 295-300).

They are founded on a central tripod composed of the social center, chapel and school. They are doted with a scheme of positions of formal authority represented in the positions of president or administrator, teacher or healthcare agent.

The *roça* (small plantings) is a materialization of the kinship relations and of territorial rights. It has a multiple dimension, with a quite complex signification. The home is also important as an icon of domestic life and social reproduction of the family group, which delineates the local physical space of the community in differentiated segments of appropriation and common and private use – the *quintais* (yards). The flour house or oven (as well as the number of *roças* - small plantings) is also a relevant icon of social position of the families, because it expresses collective projects of permanence and identity ties with the community as a unit of social conviviality and not only as a restricted space of residence or even of use of certain public services, such as schooling for small children.

### Scheme of a community located on the Demeni River.



Home, support building, health clinic, Shack for motors, garden  
 School, Oven house, Radio station, Bathroom, Chicken coop, Volleyball court.

The indigenous groups are organized in a community in Rio Negro, which is a social formation that has its historicity and singularity not linked to any notion of static, genuine and immemorial culture. The formation of ethnic associations is organized on a territorial basis, using as a reference groups of indigenous communities that inhabit stretches of rivers or even entire river basins. This network of organizations can encompass river basins, such as the Association of the Indigenous Communities of the Rios Padauri and Preto and the Association of Indigenous Communities of the Aracá and Demeni Basin (ACIRPP and ACIBAD);<sup>45</sup> a municipality, such as Indigenous Association of the Middle Rio Negro (ASIBA); a microregion, such as the Indigenous Association of the Middle Rio Negro (ACIMRN)<sup>46</sup> and a region, the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro (FOIRN), linking them to other regional networks;

<sup>45</sup> Associação das Comunidades Indígenas dos Rios Padauri e Preto and the Associação das Comunidades Indígenas da Bacia do Aracá e Demeni.

<sup>46</sup> Associação Indígena do Médio Rio Negro.

such as the Coordination of the Indigenous of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB)<sup>47</sup> or transnational; such as the Coordinating Committee of the Organization of the Amazonian Cuenca (COICA) networks,<sup>48</sup> in an hierarchical model of coordination that is more or less centralized, but whose units have relative autonomy. The formation of associations in the region is a model of organization and social and political expression of ethnicity that is transmit and redefined according to singular situations of conflict and interlocution with allies and antagonists (active through local, regional, national and global agendas).

This social field, described in general lines, expands the horizon of intelligibility of the process of indigenous emergence of the “*caboclos* of Barcelos”. This situation is necessary, but not sufficient, because it should be completed with the delimitation of the political context in which ethnicity is objectified in an indigenous association, in which the entrance of new actors and standards of interaction introduce sharp social transformations in the configuration of interethnic relations and in the conditions for social production of the conflicts involving the promotion of specific territorial rights.

### **Formation of associations, ethnicity and the emergence of the “Indians of Barcelos”**

The rise of the Associação Indígena de Barcelos/ASIBA [Indigenous Association of Barcelos] is inserted in a larger movement of recapturing of ethnic identity, the formation of indigenous associations and the conquest of territorial rights on the Rio Negro, but has some specific characteristics. On the Upper and Middle Rio Negro, the indigenous movement arose in the context of struggles for demarcation of indigenous land and the associations mainly originated in the communities from the interior. On the Lower Rio Negro, the indigenous movement emerged at the heart of demands for better conditions of insertion in the urban social fabric, whether through the commercialization of production of crafts and valorization of cultural goods, or through access to healthcare services; and was developed through a process of ethnic reaffirmation that involved indigenous residents of the city of Barcelos.

The Indigenous Association of Barcelos was created in 1999, at the First Encounter of the Provisory Indigenous Commission, held on November 5, in the parochial hall of the Nossa Senhora da Conceição church, because of the situation of privation and discrimination of indigenous families that live in the city experience, mainly in the spheres of health, housing, education and income (minimum prices paid for indigenous crafts). In 1999, a survey was conducted of the cultural goods destined for preservation in Barcelos, based on registration and recognition as national patrimony, by a team from the 1st Regional Superintendency of the National Institute of Historic and Artistic Patrimony/IPHAN, based in Manaus. The Tariana writer and indigenous militant Ismael Moreira, a long-term resident of Manaus, was invited to help establish trust and make viable the work among indigenous residents of Barcelos. He became part of a team from IPHAN that issued questionnaires and coordinated meetings in the houses of 131 indigenous families from Oct. 27 to Nov. 10, 1999, stimulating a latent sense of collective belonging based on public affirmation of their differentiated ethnic origin and common experience of privations and discrimination in that urban Amazon context. Ismael helped to organize the 1st Indigenous Encounter of Barcelos. Two Baré leaders, from the neighborhoods of Aparecida and São Sebastião respectively, had been speaking with Ismael about the possibility of mobilizing the “relatives” and creating an association. They were the main articulators of a survey of the indigenous population of the city proposed by one of the directors of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro, Miguel Maia, to support a proposal for expansion of the Special Indigenous Sanitary District of the Rio Negro/DSEI-RN (Peres 2013: 309-365).

47 Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira.

48 Coordinadora de las Organizaciones de la Cuenca Amazónica [Coordinating Committee of the Organization of the Amazonian Cuenca].

On November 5, 1999, in the parochial hall of the Nossa Senhora da Conceição church, the first large meeting was held with participation of a total of 90 people of various ethnicities. The local representative of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) was present, the priest of the Nossa Senhora da Conceição parish; and the secretary of tourism. That is, three important entities from the structure of municipal power were inserted: the federal and municipal governments and the church. The indigenous assembly established a sphere of dramatization of indigenous power and autonomy in relation to “our authorities” as in a ritual of inversion and domestication of ordinary power relations. Another fact that strongly expressed this idea of the assembly as a space of the Indians, for affirmation of their identity and respect and valorization for the “customs of the ancestors” were the discourses given in the indigenous languages that constructed a public space guided by modes of communication relegated to the domestic domain. Ancestry was a recurring reference in this new scenery of visibility and reformulation of “Indianness”.

The moment was marked by strong manifestations of ties to traditions. The main issue raised in the meeting related to the need for the Indians to organize so that they are valued and their culture and identity preserved. Two other recurring categories at this time synthesize the aspirations and expectations generated there: respect and rights. Thus, they demanded the right to be indigenous and respect for their differences. They also affirmed a broader identity through the common experience of life in that small Amazonic urban context, expanding the term of inclusion “relative” to all “Indians of the city”. The image of the *maloca* rose as the architectural symbol of the process of revitalization of the culture of the past. A new meeting was set for Dec. 10 -12 1999.

The 2nd Encounter of the Provisory Indigenous Commission took place on these dates. Some 40 people participated from the following ethnicities: Baré, Baniwa, Tukano, Desana, Piratapuaia, Arapaço and Werequena. The meeting had collaboration from representatives of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro and the Instituto Socioambiental, the Coordination of the Indigenous of the Brazilian Amazon, and CIMI (the Indigenous Missionary Council). The absence of any representative from the municipality should be highlighted, while representatives of indigenous organizations and support entities did attend. This meeting was less charged by emotional demonstrations of valorization of ancestry and was more oriented to the instrumental aspects of establishing the organization. The discursive space was predominantly occupied by the representatives of the agencies that may be able to assist in establishing more permanent cooperation. The event thus marked the entrance and recognition of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos in the network of the indigenous rights movement in a regional and macro-regional realm. In the same month, indigenous militants from Barcelos were invited to attend a course in leadership training promoted by the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro at São Gabriel da Cachoeira.

Nevertheless, in the following year, the Indigenous Association of Barcelos established closer ties with communities in the interior when it conducted visits to undertake a census of Barcelos’ indigenous population, considering the expansion of the Special Indigenous Sanitary District (DSEI) of the Rio Negro (DSEI/RN).<sup>49</sup> Representatives of the communities appeared at the II Indigenous Assembly in 2000, taking their demands and denouncing invasions; and mainly complaining of the degrading working conditions in the *piçabais* and the arbitrary and violent power of the bosses. In the following year the Indigenous Association of Barcelos made closer ties with the communities, holding small preparatory assemblies to mobilize the III General Assembly in the city of Barcelos. At this time, the representatives of the communities renovated their charges of invasion of their lands by *geladores*,<sup>50</sup> sport fishing tourism,

49 Promoted by FOIRN/ISA for the expansion of DSEI/RN, which was restricted to the municipality of São Gabriel da Cachoeira.

50 “Gelador” (which literally means freezer) is the local term used to designate commercial fishing boats that operate in the region to obtain large volumes of fish.

arbitrary command of the extractive *colocações* by the *patrões* and accentuated exploitation of labor in these locations. They also presented, for the first time in public, the demand for demarcation of indigenous lands. The establishment of organizations thus established a new channel for the collective expression of the desire for autonomy in relation to the *patrões* (a type of utopian vision) and of control over the basic resources needed for the social reproduction of the communities.

The Indigenous Association of Barcelos then came to count on important partners such as the National Indigenous Foundation/Barcelos, FUNASA/Barcelos, the Fundação Vitória Amazônica/FVA, the National Institute of Historic and Artistic Patrimony (IPHAN), the Catalan NGO Caldes Solidaria, the University of Barcelona, and the Nucleus of Amazon Studies of Catalonia/NEAC. The project for institutional consolidation, supported by Caldes Solidaria, began from an annual plan that some members of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos prepared in 2000 for the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro to include in its annual planning for 2001. The financial, human and logistic support from the Federation were restricted to electoral assemblies of the associations, which compromised realization of the general assembly of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos. Therefore, the direct capturing of resources from international cooperation showed that the Indigenous Association of Barcelos was tracing a path of relative financial autonomy in relation to the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro.

An important component of the project for consolidation was the approximation with the communities of the interior and the mobilization for the general assembly of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos. Four mini-assemblies were planned: one in Cumaru, on the Rio Negro up river from Barcelos; one in Tapera, on the Padauri River; one in Elesbão, on the Aracá river; and another in Carvoeiro, on the Rio Negro down river from Barcelos. The main issues raised were indigenous rights, land, the Special Indigenous Sanitary District/Barcelos and the formation of the local indigenous health council. In the discussion about rights, land and socio-environmental conflicts, the representatives of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos suggested and oriented requests for demarcation of indigenous territory that were presented to the regional administrator of FUNAI/Manaus who was present at the general assembly of 2001.

The consolidation project also consisted in the realization of the general assembly which was held from Oct. 26 – 28, 2001.<sup>51</sup> At this time, various participants made denunciations and asked what more immediate measures could be taken in response to the invasions from sport fishing tourism, the *geladores* and the accentuated exploitation by the *patrões*, while their requests for demarcation of indigenous lands were not attended. This assembly expressed the visibility conquered by the Indigenous Association of Barcelos in the local political situation. The appearance of two municipal secretaries and of the vice-mayor revealed that the indigenous association had become an important and independent interlocutor in the micro-regional correlation of forces.

The assembly was also a condensed demonstration of the new local public sphere constituted by ethnic identity politics, codifying a diffuse perception of privations and injustices in the language of indigenous citizenship. A notable novelty in relation to the previous assemblies was the substantial presence of indigenous leaders from the Amazon, indicating the increased access and visibility of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos in the indigenous movement on the macro-regional level. It demonstrated its capacity to establish partnerships and alliances, thus constituting a solid base of support for its demands. Land – a dominant demand among the residents of the communities, absent in the previous assemblies – came to integrate the agenda of an organization for collective mobilization of ethnicity because of the privations (material and moral) suffered in the urban environment.

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51 The indigenous participation was good, varying from 100 to 267 participants, residents of the city and the community, from the following ethnicities: Baré, Baniwa, Tukano, Desana, Werequena, Tariana, Arapaço, Tuyuca, Piratapuaia, Lanaua, Canamari, and Apurinã.

The Catalan NGO Nucli d'estudis per a l'Amazònia de Catalunya – NeAC, was an essential partner of the Indigenous Association of Barcelos, acting as a mediator in Barcelona, Spain for capturing resources for the projects (mainly in the fields of agriculture and apiculture) undertaken together with the indigenous of the city and the interior. The Fundação Vitória Amazônica collaborated with studies and actions aimed at training in indigenous crafts and their commercial viability. Various departments were created (education, agriculture, women, crafts), responsible for the actions in course, and suggested problems common to the process of consolidation of various indigenous organizations in Brazil, linked to project management<sup>52</sup> and the disproportion between the possibilities for service and the expectations and demands created. These difficulties led to internal conflicts that culminated in a sharp and intense electoral dispute for leadership positions of the association, in which members of the board formed rival slates at the VI General Assembly of 2005.

In late 2006, the Nucleus of Amazon Studies of Catalonia suspended its collaboration and beginning in the following year the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of the Rio Negro and the Instituto Sociambiental began to act with greater regularity together with the Indigenous Association of the Middle Rio Negro and the Indigenous Association of Barcelos. Barcelos thus became a stage of important events on the indigenist and environmental agenda of these agencies for intervention. Emphasis should be given to the Mobilization of Indigenous Peoples of the Middle Rio Negro, realized in July 2009; and the two Seminars about Territorial Order in the Middle Rio Negro, held in November 2008 and October 2009. In this context, four indigenous associations were created: the Indigenous Association of the Aracá and Demeni Basin – AIBAD; the Associação Indígena de Floresta and Padauri (AIFP) [Indigenous Association of Floresta and Padauri]; the Associação Indígena da Área de Canafé e Jurubaxi – AIACA [The Indigenous Association of the Area of Canafé and Jurubaxi]; and the Associação Indígena do Baixo Rio Negro e Caurés – AIBRNC [Indigenous Association of the Lower Rio Negro and Caurés]. Nevertheless, the *patrões* also organized (Peres 2010: 213-232).

The Cooperativa de Piaçabeiros do Médio e Alto Rio Negro (COPIAÇAMARIM) [Cooperative of Piaçabeiros of the Middle and Upper Rio Negro] was created in 2008 to confront any proposal for delimiting territorial demarcation that recognized indigenous rights. This cooperative is led by small *patrões*, who directly recruit the *piçabeiros* and are subordinate to the *patrões* who occupy privileged positions on the commercial network of *piçava* that extends outside the region of the Middle Rio Negro. Together with the Barcelos City Council, COPIAÇAMARIM conducted a strong campaign (including marches, vehicle processions, and on radio, internet and newspapers of Manaus) against the official recognition of indigenous lands in Barcelos. In this context of political mobilization, social conflict and dispute for control of natural resources, in 2007 was created the Cooperativa Mista Agroextrativista dos Povos Tradicionais do Médio Rio Negro (COMAGEPT) [Mixed Agro-extractive Cooperative of the Traditional Peoples of the Rio Negro], which proposed to represent farmers, fishermen (of edible and ornamental fish) and extractive workers, indigenous or not, to promote better conditions for the sale of their products and break with the dependence of the bosses. This organization was not as emphatically opposed to the demarcation of indigenous lands, but postulated the creation of Extractive Reserves. The Colônia de Pescadores Z-33 (COLPESCA Z-33) (a fishermen's association), which was created in 2002, also took a position against the demarcation of indigenous lands (Menezes 2014: 44-60).

With the institutional strengthening of the ASIBA, in 2007, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) promoted the realization of studies for identification and demarcation of indigenous land in the municipalities of Barcelos and Santa Isabel do Rio Negro, forming two technical groups (GTs). Nevertheless,

<sup>52</sup> Like the projects for construction of a Maloca, the Indigenous Urban Park and a warehouse for manufacturing brooms, which were not successful. In the later case, the warehouse was constructed, but became the offices for the Indigenous Association of Barcelos.

the respective anthropological reports were not approved by the General Coordination of Identification and Delimitation of FUNAI and two new technical groups were formed, in late October 2009, to conduct new anthropological and environmental studies. One of the teams was responsible for the studies of identification on the Jurubaxi and Téa river basins; and another on the Aracá and Demeni river basins, on the left bank of the Rio Negro, also including the area of scope of the Comunidade Canafé, on the right bank.<sup>53</sup> The Jurubaxi-Téa indigenous land (1,208,000ha) concluded its process of identification and delimitation with the emission of the Declaration by the Ministry of Justice on Sept. 11, 2017.<sup>54</sup>

## Final considerations

The effect of “Galvão’s” culturalist approach, considered at the beginning of this article, is not very different from the current culturalist approaches, which are apparently more sophisticated, because they seek reified alterities, Amerindian ontologies that process the changes (the designated *transformations* and *cosmopolitics*) in cultural logics destitute of historicity. The notion of assimilation surreptitiously invades this paradigm in an inverted manner. Historically constituted networks of interdependence, which involve the state and other social actors are reduced or even ignored based on simplifying formulas (replete with facile dichotomies: traditional x modern; cosmological alterity x ethnic identify; authentic x spurious; cultural imperative x historic contingency) that are used to understand agricultural systems, indigenous bureaucracies, policies for patrimonialization, health and education and social and political construction of territorial rights or even to propose a structural aptitude of certain indigenous groups to the assimilation of the other. Research often becomes merely an opportunity to attest to what is already known, with problems of incongruence with the empiric situation resolved by using the canonic ethnological bibliography to authorize decontextualized interpretations and analyses.

The approach presented here is different. It is inscribed in a proposal of historic anthropology in which processes of territorialization, ethnicity and indigenous activism are understood based on the academic debate about the *Amazonic Frontier*. Pacheco de Oliveira (2016a) revised this debate, deconstructing the various approaches to the so-called rubber-cycle, proposing two models of rubber production and highlighting some analytical potentialities of the category of frontier. The focus here was directed towards the link between frontier, social reproduction of domestic groups and compulsory modes of mobilization of the labor force. The model of *seringal* (rubber production) that Pacheco de Oliveira (2016a) calls *caboclo* is highly pertinent to an ethnography of *aviamento* the formation of associations by the indigenous and of social production of territorial rights on the Middle Rio Negro, due to the following aspects:

- a. In this study I am considering two different productive units and modes of social reproduction that are coexisting and articulated;
- b. Community is a mode of social organization that is historically constituted in the context of relations of subordination of the labor force and ecclesiastic tutelage;
- c. The domination of the *patrão* is not supported by expropriation of land or land ownership, but by control of access to sale and financing of the production of extraction;

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53 These second technical groups conducted studies to identify a broader area including the Quiuini and Caurés river basins, the communities down river from Barcleos at the mouth of the Caurés river. For administrative and budgetary reasons at FUNAI, the identification studies had their area restricted, and it was decided to conclude the report on the left bank of the Rio Negro where the studies were more advanced.

54 The proposal for identification and delimitation was approved by the president of FUNAI and published in the Diário Oficial on 19/04/2016. The anthropological report for identification and delimitation of the Aracá-Demeni Indigenous Land was still being evaluated by the General Coordination for Identification and Delimitation/FUNAI.

- d. The close relationship between family trajectories, compulsory labor, market and individual and collective projects of autonomy;
- e. (Dis)junction between agriculture and extraction and relations of subordination of the labor force;
- f. The limited stock of free land for agriculture (due to ecological and social conditions), geographic dispersion of natural resources, mobility and multiple opportunities for productive activity through access to reserves of natural resources controlled or not by the *patrões*.
- g. The complexity, dynamics and flexibility of the relations of *aviamento*.

Thus, the categories of “community” and “association” are fundamental to understanding interethnic relations and the expansion of territorial rights on the Middle Rio Negro. “Botar uma roça” (Plant some ground) and the life in community (amid relatives) are the core elements of the recurrent practices and representations of autonomy that permeate the individual and family projects in contrast to “working for the *patrão*”. The establishment of associations created a social context propitious to the inversion of the stigma through the resignification of privileged cultural forms such as language, the *pajelança* (indigenous healing practices) and the *maloca*, because the indigenous assemblies became a situation of representation of tradition, memory and identity as symbolic resources for the legitimation of demands for territorial rights and ethnically differentiated public policies. The formation of associations incorporated the community as a basic social unit of ethnic mobilization and political representation. Another important category is “aviamento”, the compulsory form of mobilization of the labor force based on debt and confinement that is a counterpart to the community as a form of organization and social reproduction that is sustained by the mobility inherent to the use of geographically dispersed resources and to a sociability based on kinship, affinity and *vizinhança*.

The expansion of the mosaic of indigenous lands on the Rio Negro is currently concentrated on two river basins, the Padauri-Preto and the Aracá-Demeni, where there is greater incidence of *piçabais* and the indigenous communities have more open conviviality with the domain of the *patrões* and the repercussions of the *aviamento* regime.<sup>55</sup> This region rich in *piçabais* is the key element in establishing the conditions of material and symbolic reproduction of the *aviamento* system.

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<sup>55</sup> Not only various individuals and families but indigenous communities are also subordinated to the *patrões*; as in the Padauri and Preto river basins in which the number and size of the *roças* (planted grounds) is very limited due to the dependence on time dedicated to extractive activities in the *piçabais*. In the Aracá and Demeni river basins there is greater autonomy in relation to the *patrões*, which is expressed in larger numbers and sizes of the *roças*.

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*Sidnei Clemente Peres*

Federal University Fluminense

Institute of Human Sciences and Philosophy

Department of Sociology

Author's e-mail: sidperes63@gmail.com

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# The Karodaybi Government and its Invincible Warriors: the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement versus large construction projects in the Amazon

*Rosamaria Loures*

Programa de Pós-Graduação em Recursos Naturais da Amazônia,  
Universidade Federal do Oeste do Pará, Santarém/PA, Brasil

## **Abstract**

In this article we analyze the context of a territorial dispute in the Brazilian Amazon from the perspective of the resistance strategies of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement in relation to the development model of the Brazilian state. The objective is to understand the rise and action of the Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, its particularities and the ways that it established itself and acts. The Movement is seen as a complex process of cultural recreation, inspired by reviving elements of Munduruku cosmology and traditions, re-elaborated to a current historic context that presents new dangers and threats, but that also creates new uses and meanings. To a large degree, the Munduruku resistance presented here confronts the nation building projects that the dominant classes have for Brazil. The government plans contemplate the Tapajós River as a source of energy resources and as a route for the shipment of commodities through the construction of a series of hydroelectric dams and other large associated projects. On the other hand, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ movement conceives of the Tapajós River in a particular form, considering the resources provided by the river and places in the cosmology of the people. The movement uses a variety of strategies to confront the model imposed by the federal government.

**Keywords:** Munduruku; Ipereğ Ayũ movement; Tapajós hydroelectric complex; resistance; territorial conflict.



# O Governo Karodaybi e seus guerreiros invencíveis:

## Grandes Projetos na Amazônia versus o Movimento Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ

### Resumo

Analisamos nesse artigo, o contexto de disputa territorial na Amazônia brasileira sob a ótica das estratégias de resistência do movimento Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ frente ao modelo de desenvolvimento estatal. Trata-se de compreender o surgimento e a atuação do movimento Ipereğ Ayũ, com as suas particularidades e modos como se constitui e age, como um complexo processo de recriação cultural, inspirado numa retomada de elementos da cosmologia e das tradições Munduruku, mas que é reelaborado com vistas a um contexto histórico presente, que implica em novos perigos e ameaças, mas que também lhe propicia novos usos e significados. A resistência Munduruku, aqui apresentada, em boa medida, vai de encontro aos projetos de nação que as classes dominantes constroem para o país. Os planos governamentais concebem o rio Tapajós como fonte de recursos energéticos e como rota de escoamento de commodities com a pretensão de construção de uma série de usinas hidrelétricas e outros grandes empreendimentos associados. Por outro lado, o movimento Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ, concebe o rio Tapajós de modo peculiar, desde os recursos oferecidos pelo rio até lugares na cosmologia do povo e apostam em uma pluralidade de estratégias frente a esse modelo imposto pelo governo federal.

**Palavras-chave:** Munduruku; movimento Ipereğ Ayũ; complexo hidrelétrico do Tapajós; resistência; conflito territorial.

# The Karodaybi Government and its Invincible Warriors: the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement versus large construction projects in the Amazon

*Rosamaria Loures*

## **Brief Context: Expansion fronts in the Amazon and the Tapajós Hydroelectric Project**

Since the beginning of Brazil's military government in 1964, official discourse focused on the integration of the Brazilian Amazon to the world economy. In the 1970's, there was an intensification of what Oliveira (1991) called the invasion of international and Brazilian capital in the Amazon. This form of development was considered equivalent to economic progress and growth and was supported by the technical-scientific apparatus to exploit natural resources and undertake large construction projects in the region.

Oliveira affirmed that the speed that the Amazon's natural resources were plundered – a strategy legitimated by government agreements and plans – left the local population with only the burden of these development projects (1991). It is important to emphasize that, as Little explains (1991), the currently planned megaprojects differ from other movements of expansion of capitalist frontiers because of the “geographic reach of their impacts, their magnitude and the speed with which they are being realized” (2013, p.58).

Martins, referring to large projects proposed and implemented by the federal government in the Amazon argues that:

It is not that they offer nothing to the lives of these populations [indigenous, peasants, [local indigenous and peasant populations], but that they take from them what is vital for their survival, not only economic: land and territory, but means for material, social, cultural and political existence. It is as if they did not exist, or if they exist, had no right to the recognition of their humanity (Martins, 1991, p.16).

The territorial expropriation and territorialization of capital occurs in various means, from the violent expulsion of people from their places of origin to the extraction of natural resources from their territories and the attempt to assimilate them to the development model.

Projects to build hydroelectric dams in the Tapajós basin, a priority of the II National Development Plan (PND 1975-1979), made clear the strategies traced for progress in the country's energy sector. “This next step would necessarily be marked by the influence of factors related to the international situation, mainly to the energy crisis” (II PND, 1975, p. 2). Energy was thus “a decisive element in the national strategy” for large projects (II PND, 1975, p. 5),

In this process, it was the role of the I National Development Plan (1972 – 1974) to consecrate this principle that was developed in U.S. military schools and transferred to Brazil through countless military agreements between

the two countries during and after World War II. As we have affirmed, they were no longer complementary acts that were drafted, they were **government plans**, and therefore goals to be achieved. Acting in this way, the military government obeyed the logic of the “ideology of the Escola Superior de Guerra” and as is known, did not even ask civil society of this country if this was what it wanted (Oliveira, 1991, p. 90).

Government planning, in recent decades, was determined to undertake hydroelectric projects in the Amazon region. Forty-three large hydroelectric projects were planned and in progress in the Tapajós River basin included in addition to a group of small hydroelectric generators.<sup>1</sup> Large hydroelectric projects are planned for the Tapajós River and its main tributaries including: the Jamanxim, Teles Pires and Juruena Rivers. Three of the dams will be located on the Tapajós. River, four on the Jamanxim, six on the Teles Pires and thirty on the Juruena (cf. Fearnside 2016).

The Hydroelectric Survey of the Tapajós River Basin,<sup>2</sup> conducted between 2006 and 2008, was approved by the National Electrical Energy Agency (ANEEL)<sup>3</sup> in 2009. The survey involved seven hydroelectric projects: three on the Tapajós River and four on the Jamanxim tributary: and hydroelectric utilization projects of São Luiz do Tapajós, Jatobá and Chacorão on the Tapajós River; and Cachoeira do Caí, Jamanxim, Cachoeira dos Patos and Jardim do Ouro on the Jamanxim River. This group of hydroelectric projects is defined as the Hydroelectric Complex of Tapajós (CHT), as shown in Map 1 (CNEC, 2014).

The Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex is one of a number of large construction projects planned for the Amazon in the Tapajós river basin. Established in the Ten-year Energy Plan 2021 (PDE 2021) and in the Accelerated Growth Plan II (PAC II), it became a priority for the federal government, because it is a project that would support others, such as mining, river transportation and ports planned for the region.

It is important to emphasize that the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement, concerned with the violations against the indigenous peoples caused by dam construction in the Amazon, undertook essential actions to analyze the federal government’s intentions to build the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex. The conflict took shape in each of the phases in the realization of the dam. The land conflict currently in focus in the Tapajós also stimulated an accumulated experience among the indigenous peoples, which have had their rights violated in various ways by the implementation of dams in the Amazon, conferring coherence to the processes of struggle and resistance of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement, which we will describe further on.

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<sup>1</sup> The “large” hydroelectric plants are those with capacity greater than 30 MW, while those smaller than 30 MW - which are considered Small Hydroelectric Plants - are exempt from Environmental Impact Studies and Environmental Impact Reports (EIA-RIMA) as determined by Resolução Normativa nº 343 of the Agência Nacional de Energia Elétrica (ANEEL), of 9 December, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> The studies of the Inventário Hidrelétrico da Bacia do Rio Tapajós were conducted by Eletronorte (Centrais Elétricas do Norte do Brasil S.A.) and by Contratista Construções and Camargo Corrêa S. A. (CCCC). The sections about engineering and the environment that were the responsibility of the CCCC were realized by CNEC Engenharia S.A.

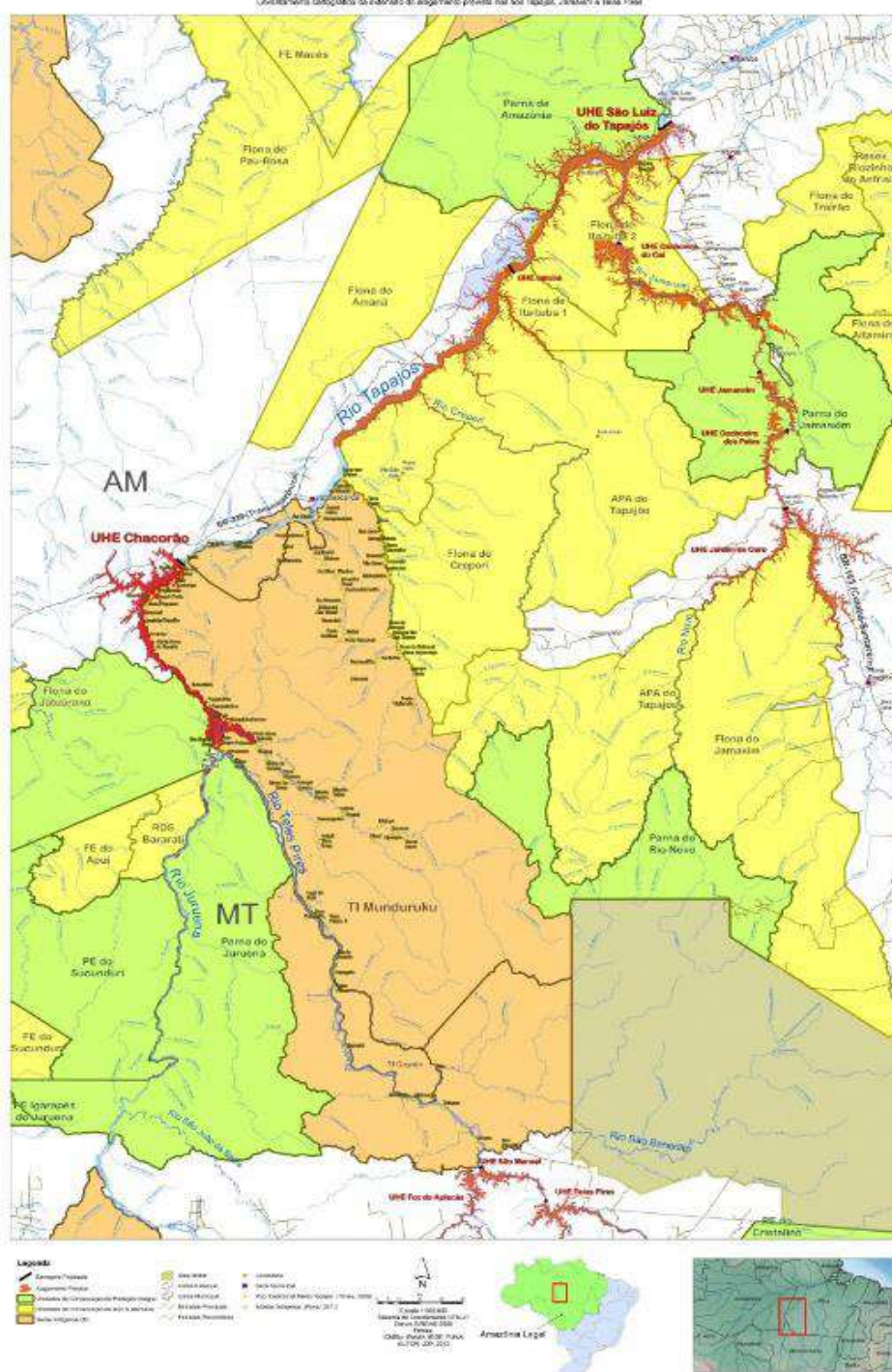
<sup>3</sup> Despacho nº 1.887, 22 May, 2009.

### Tapajós complex: protected areas affected

Map 1 – Projection of the Indigenous Lands and the Conservation Districts and flooding caused by the dam.

Source: Arquivo MMIA. Prepared by: Juan Doblas.

### COMPLEXO TAPAJÓS: ÁREAS PROTEGIDAS AFETADAS



### The Munduruku Territory and the successive threats

The Munduruku, who call themselves Wuy Jugu, (which means “we are people”) and whose language pertains to the Munduruku linguistic family and the Tupi trunk, currently total some 14 thousand people, residents of the Tapajós river basin, in western Pará state. Although they inhabit different regions in the states of Mato Grosso, Amazonas and Pará, the greatest concentration of their population is in the region of the Tapajós river basin, particularly on the upper stretch. They live in more than 130 different villages

on the banks of the Tapajós, Tropas, Kabitutu, Kadiriri, Teles Pires, Cururu, Anipiri and Waredi Rivers and other tributaries (Saw 2013). Of these, approximately 120 are on the Upper Tapajós.<sup>4</sup> The Munduruku also occupy, in addition to the Upper and Middle Tapajós, the lower course of the river (see Ioris, 2014 and in this dossier), the Madeira River, the Xingu and other areas to the north of Mato Grosso and in Amazonas State.

The reports about the Tapajós River and its occupation, according to Rocha and Honorato de Oliveira (2016) and ROCHA (2017), began to be produced more systematically after the opening of the ports decreed by Dom João VI, in 1808, when expeditions of naturalists began. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Munduruku nation occupied so much land that the European began to refer to the entire Tapajós as Mundurukânia (Aires de Casal 1976 [1817]).

The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, although it involves villages in all these locations, has its bases in the villages of the Upper and Middle Tapajós and the lower Teles Pires River (Map 2), and our analysis is limited to the Indigenous Lands occupied in this region.

The situation of the demarcation process of the indigenous lands is presented in the following table:

**Table 1** – Synthesis of the situation of indigenous lands, occupied by the Munduruku of the Upper and Middle Tapajós that are the object of this study

<b>Indigenous Land or Reserve</b>	<b>Situation</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>People who occupy the land</b>
Indigenous Land Munduruku (PA)	Sanctioned	2.382 thousand hectares	Munduruku and Apiaká
Indigenous Land Sai Cinza (PA)	Sanctioned	126 thousand hectares	Munduruku
Indigenous Land Sawre Muybu (PA)	Identified	178 thousand hectares	Munduruku and Apiaká
Indigenous Land Sawre Juybu (PA)	Under study	No final proposal for delimitation	Munduruku
Indigenous Land Sawre Apompu (PA)	Under study	No final proposal for delimitation	Munduruku
Indigenous Reserve Praia do Índio (PA)	In process of physical demarcation.	28 hectares	Munduruku
Indigenous Reserve Praia do Mangue (PA)	In process of physical demarcation.	30 hectares	Munduruku

<sup>4</sup> The number is quite dynamic. Reasons such as accusations of witchcraft, political disputes, death of a relative, etc. commonly provoke divisions of villages. Families migrate and settle in other villages or establish new ones.

**Table 2** – Synthesis of the situation of the indigenous lands occupied by the Munduruku in other states and regions.

Source: Funai, 2016.

TI Apiaká-Kayabi (MT)	Sanctioned	109 thousand hectares	Apiaká, Kayabi and Munduruku
TI Apiaká do Pontal and Isolated groups (MT)	Identified	982 thousand hectares	Apiaká, Kayabi and Munduruku
TI Kayabi (MT, PA)	Sanctioned	1,053 thousand hectares	Apiaká, Kayabi and Munduruku
TI Munduruku Taquara (PA)	Declared	25 thousand hectares	Munduruku
TI Bragança Marituba (PA)	Declared	14 thousand hectares	Munduruku
TI Coatá Laranjal (AM)	Sanctioned	1,153 thousand hectares	Munduruku and Sateré Mawé
Dominial Indigenous Village Beija-Flor (AM)	Sanctioned	41 hectares	Baré, Borari, Desana, Kambeba, Marubo, Munduruku, Mura, Sateré Mawé, Tukano and Tuyuka

The demarcation of lands traditionally occupied by the indigenous peoples is conducted according to an administrative system described and analyzed by Pacheco de Oliveira (1998), the last version of which was established in Decree 1775 of January 8, 1996. The indigenous lands are considered to be federal property and the procedures for their creation include phases that are the responsibility of the executive branch, specifically of the National Indian Foundation (Funai) and the Ministry of Justice. The first step is the realization of identification and delimitation projects, and when these are concluded, the presentation of the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation (RCID). The National Indian Foundation is responsible for approving, signing and publishing a summary of this report in the official government journal, the *Diário Oficial da União* (DOU). After being opened to questioning, the physical demarcation is conducted and is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. After an indigenous land is declared, through a government edict and its demarcation is established by the Ministry of Justice in another edict, the last step is the administrative procedure of homologation through a presidential decree.

The Munduruku of the Upper Tapajós have had the indigenous lands of Sai Cinza and Munduruku sanctioned, while in the Middle Tapajós they await recognition and demarcation of their indigenous lands. These include the Sawre Muybu Indigenous Land (the Daje Kapap Eipi territory),<sup>5</sup> which encompasses a territory that – if the government advances with its plans for construction of the São Luiz do Tapajós hydroelectric project, would have part of its land flooded. Thus, although the identification and demarcation report has been finished since 2013, there was considerable political pressure on the National Indian Foundation to not sign it. The government chose to not officially recognize this indigenous land, because it would make the São Luiz do Tapajós hydroelectric project unconstitutional because of the flooding of part of indigenous land.

Although the identification and demarcation report for the Sawre Muybu indigenous land was published in April 2016, eight questionings were presented, a step called for in the procedure for

<sup>5</sup> The Daje Kapap Eipi territory is an area of special interest of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement and will be the object of specific consideration later in this article.

demarcation of indigenous lands in Brazil. One of the filings, by the Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (ICMbio), is not formally a challenge, but a relatively favorable declaration, which affirms that the overlapping areas of the indigenous lands and the national forests of Itaituba I and II create a type of environmental and indigenous comanagement.

The challenges made to the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation of the Sawre Muybu indigeneous land are the following:

- Ministry of the Environment (MMA) – Processo nº 08620.085237.2015.51;
- Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) – Processo nº 08620.085233.2015.73;
- Associação Nacional do Ouro (ANORO) – Processo nº 08620.138849.2015.54;
- Rio Vermelho Importação e Exportação de Diamantes Ltda. – Processo nº 08620.136082.2015-29;
- Instituto Chico Mendes de Biodiversidade (ICMbio) – Processo nº 08620.128804/2015-71;
- Consórcio Tapajós – Processo nº 08620.127451/2015-92;
- Associação dos Mineradores de Ouro do Tapajós (AMOT) – Processo nº 08620.138845.2015-76;
- Confederação Nacional da Indústria (CNI) – Processo nº 08620.049081.2015-45.

These questionings come from the ministries of energy and the environment, the federal environmental agency responsible for conservation districts (ICMbio), private companies and a mining association, which have countless political interests in the territory traditionally occupied by the Munduruku. The first two challenges, from the ministries of the environment and energy, were presented even before the identification and demarcation report was published in the Diário Oficial da União.

The document filed by ICMbio is a proposal for comanagement of the area, given that the Sawre Muybu indigenous land is essentially overlapped by the Itaituba II national forest. Anoro [The National Gold Association], Rio Vermelho and Amot [The Gold Miners Association of Tapajós] challenge areas that are sought for mining. The Consórcio Tapajós, which is composed by Eletrobrás and companies from the Tapajos Study Group, presented a challenge due to their interest in the construction of the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex.

The interest of these companies in these areas conflicts directly with the traditional occupation by the indigenous and traditional riverine communities along the margins of the Tapajós. This fact can be seen in the declarations against the regularization of the Sawre Muybu Indigenous Land presented not only by companies directly interested in the installation of hydroelectric dams or in mining in the region, like the Consórcio Tapajós and Rio Vermelho Mineração, but also by the National Confederation of Industry, which affirmed:

The central concern of the sectors involved is the precedence that this type of decision [demarcation of the Indigenous Land] can generate, with a consequent series of damage to the country. The insecurity for investors can be highlighted, the probable consequent reduction of investment in infrastructure and all of the related harm (...)” (Questioning presented by the Confederação Nacional da Indústria. 2016. Processo nº 08620.049091.2015-45, p. 63).

If on one hand, there was a significant advance in the struggle for regularization of the Sawre Muybu Indigenous Lands, with the compliance of another step in the long process of demarcation of indigenous lands described above, on the other hand, the reaction by the part of all the sectors that exploit or plan to economically exploit the region takes various forms – by administrative means, presenting challenges to the identification and demarcation report of the National Indian Foundation; through campaigns broadcast in the local media opposing recognition that the indigenous lands are traditional indigenous territories;

and by inciting conflicts between *riberine* communities and the indigenous, with direct impact on the historic relations that these groups constructed throughout the entire Tapajós river basin.

Various arrangements have been made to guarantee the execution of the large projects in the Amazon. In this case, it can be noted that even before any Environmental Impact Study and Environmental Impact Report (EIA-RIMA)<sup>6</sup> were completed, the size of the Conservation Units was reduced through Provisional Measure no. 558/2012 (which was converted into law)<sup>7</sup> which changed the borders of the conservation districts that are in the area of interest of the large hydroelectric projects. The limits of the following conservation units were changed, calling for flooding of the areas: the national parks of the Amazon, Campos Amazônicos and Mapinguari; the Itaituba I and Itaituba II and Crepori National Forests; and the Tapajós Area for Environmental Protection (cf. Torres 2014).

To a large degree, the Munduruku resistance challenges the nation building projects that the dominant classes have for the country. This process involves contradictions. While the federal Constitution of 1988 assures differentiated rights to citizenship, a right to cultural diversity, and guarantees not only territory, but the ways of living, producing and creating of the indigenous peoples, flexible complementary laws and administrative procedures have allowed the implementation of nation-building projects that carry with them developmentalist models that infringe on these constitutional rights.

The protocol for consultation, a specific regulation of the Munduruku people, was prepared to demand compliance with norms established by International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169 that determines that prior free and informed consultation must be conducted with the indigenous peoples before the implementation of projects on their lands. The convention was ratified by the Brazilian state in 2002, in legislative decree no. 143 of 2003.

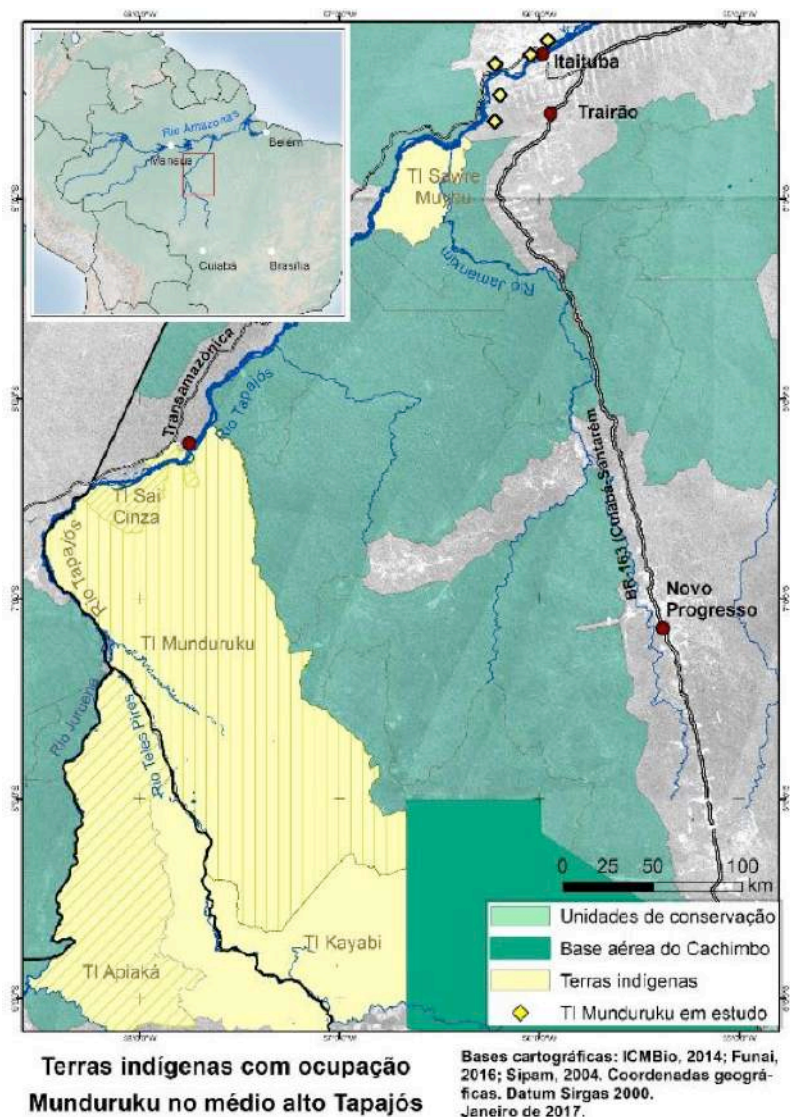
After many meetings with the federal government, letters were published by the Munduruku Movement, explaining the need for dialog and consultation of its people before beginning construction projects that would drastically transform their ways of life. The documents can be found on the blog of the occupation of Belo Monte (<https://ocupacaobelomonte.wordpress.com/>) and on the blog of the self-demarcation (<https://autodemarcacaonotapajos.wordpress.com/>). In June 2013, 140 Munduruku, Xipaya, Arara, Kayapó and Tupinambá Indians demanded a meeting in Brasilia in exchange for abandoning their occupation of the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam construction site and sat with minister of the General Secretariat of the President of the Republic Gilberto Carvalho. Minister Carvalho recognized problems with the indigenous policy and suggested a new meeting with the Munduruku. He promised that that they would be heard, but affirmed that the government would not abandon the planned hydroelectric projects in the region. This meeting never took place, and the Munduruku returned to Brasilia in December 2013 and sought an audience in the 1st Region of the Federal Court, asking for revocation of Portaria [Edict] no. 303, which allowed exploitation of water resources in indigenous lands without consultation. They also demanded the maintenance of the suspension of the license for the Teles Pires hydroelectric plant and the demarcation of The Sawre Muybu Indigenous Land. In 2014, they continued to try to resolve the situation with the National Indian Foundation, but the foundation president, who ceded to pressure from the government to not demark the Sawre Maybe indigenous land, resigned on October 17 without signing the identification and demarcation report. From this time on the Munduruku understood that they would have to confront the situation and guarantee their right to land and to the existence by their own means.

6 Since 1986, Brazilian law requires that an Environmental Impact Study and Environmental Impact Report (EIA-RIMA) be prepared for construction projects that alter the environment. This is a study conducted before construction, with phases of diagnosis and evaluation of environmental impact, mitigatory measures and programs. The Study and Report should serve as planning tools and support for decision making.

7 Lei n.º 12.678, de 25 June 2012.

With all the attempts at construction of a dialog with government, including the drafting of a protocol of consultation based on the terms of ILO Convention 169<sup>8</sup> and a series of meetings with the federal government, the Munduruku decided not to wait for the courts and government institutions to guarantee the recognition of their rights and defense of their territory.

**Map 2** – Indigenous lands occupied by the Munduruku in the Middle and Upper Tapajós. Prepared by: Mauricio Torres, Dec. 2016.



### The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement: forging identity and social organization

The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement (MMIA) began at a demonstration in Jacareacanga, in western Pará, in June 2012, which was held to demand justice for the murder of a Munduruku indigenous leader. The crime sparked revolt by the Munduruku, and the lack of an investigation and measures by authorities

8 Project conceived and developed by the federal public ministry in partnership with non-governmental organizations such as Greenpeace, FASE, FAOR, Amazon Watch, Xingu Vivo, Artigo 19, to develop a protocol for consultation, a specific regulation for the Munduruku people, related to ILO Convention 169, which establishes a need for prior consultation of an indigenous people affected by large projects. Prepared by the Munduruku in the Waro Apompu village on the Munduruku Indigenous Land, on September 24-25, 2014, and in the village of Praia do Mangue, on September 29-30, 2014, the document was approved in an extraordinary assembly in the village of Sai Cinza, of December 13-14, 2014. The protocol was issued on January 30, to the president of the republic, but until today there has been no effective prior consultation about the Tapajós Hydroelectric complex by the federal government, which continues to insist that it has “good dialog with the Munduruku”.

heightened tensions. The “action at the police station” (as the Munduruku call the event) was triggered when the responsible authorities did not respond to the murder. The Movement took over the police station where the accused were held with the objective of “doing justice according to our customs” according to a statement of Rosildo Saw Munduruku to the newspaper *Tapajós em Foco*.<sup>9</sup>

The members of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement reported that the action at the police station, where they demonstrated against the unjust death of “cousin”, “relative” and “friend” Lelo Akay was the first moment in the current articulation of men and women warriors. They say that this was an important action in which they were able to detain the police officers responsible for the case (whose investigation they found to be unsatisfactory) related to Lelo’s murder. After the removal of all the people, they burned down the police station, demanding changes in policies and legal procedures in Jacareacanga.

In this action, according to the statements of the participants, the Movement became stronger, organized itself and continued to promote “vigilance” of government projects that, as they say, “have had impacts on us. So at that time we began to create the Movement”.

According to the majority of the members of the coordination<sup>10</sup> of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, this was its founding act. The name Ipereğ Ayũ had still not been created, but since then there has been a mobilized group, that was combative and articulated, the same that, in short time, would conduct actions against the dam projects, especially against the building of dams in the Tapajós river basin.

Nevertheless, the mobilization of the Munduruku in acts of resistance, some very similar in various aspects to the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, is as old as the records of them. Unified reactions in response to aggressions of one of their own, for example, are well documented by Friar Pelino de Castrovalvas, who lived with the Munduruku from 1871 to 1875:

They defend each other as if they are from the same family. If someone is insulted or mortally wounded by an outsider, they spare no effort or blood to gain revenge; they swear to gain revenge and do not rest until they do. This is why they war and are continuously clashing with other tribes. The Munduruku who are strong and brave always attain victory (Castrovalvas 2000 [1871-1883], p. 203s).

The Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, is not the first resistance movement of the Munduruku people and was not the first against the government’s development projects, nor was it the first movement against dams on the Tapajós. This is what we can gather from the minutes of an assembly of the Munduruku people of 1987 in which they discussed the countless impacts that a hydroelectric dam in the Tapajós basin could have:

We were meeting to debate various issues of interest to us. Mainly about the dam on the Tapajós River. Because this will cause many problems for the Munduruku region. There were 47 leaders of the indigenous communities to debate the issue. This dam can bring great harm to the reserve, mainly hunting and the flooding of the forest which is of great utility to planting.

Because most of the area is composed of cleared fields, the area of the forest is small and is along the Tapajós River. So for this reason the Munduruku community does not accept the construction of this dam in this location. And for this reason we are requesting to the government that the dam not be built. We have already struggled considerably for our area to be expanded and this never happens. Where will we live if the area of the forest goes to the bottom? What will we eat, where will we raise our children and where will we work to

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <<http://tapajosemfoco.blogspot.com.br/2012/07/jacareacanga-guerreiros-munduruku-fazem.html>>. Accessed: Feb. 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Whenever we refer to the coordination of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, we are referring to the indigenous people who, at any time, were at the leadership of the front, in coordination of a meeting that they participated in that was called by Movement, without necessarily, having occupied any formal position in the coordination.

support our children? We have no where to go if we lose this area, our group is very large. How will our children and grandchildren live without this forest? We hope with great certainty that our request be granted

Documento do Povo Munduruku

Missão São Francisco, 23 December 1987

From 2012 to 2015 the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement planned and executed various actions as a function of the defense of indigenous rights guaranteed in the federal Constitution of 1988 and ILO Convention 169. The moment for demanding justice for the death of their relative Lelo Akay, in June 2012, was a seed that a Munduruku organization of confrontation would rise around what would be the name Ipereğ Ayũ.

“*Ipereğ Ayũ*” in the Munduruku language can be translated as “the people who know how to defend themselves”, or “that is not easy to fool”, “that is not easy to catch”. In its original definition, the term can be used to describe a person. Someone who is *Ipereğ Ayũ* has a strong ability and power to question and not fall into traps. This ability helps to debate and disagree on certain occasions, and even “negotiate without being intimidated” in situations of conflict. It is a person who “is lucky” and for this reason “will never be caught”.

On some occasions the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement called itself, the “Popular indigenous movement in struggle to defend territory and rights of humanity”<sup>11</sup> and, a number of times, suffered from attempts by the federal government and local opposition to criminalize the entity. Given these threats, to protect and define itself and express its legitimacy in relation to the Munduruku people, it uses the traditional form of communication in letters and communiqués:

Our movement will never end. Because we are constantly fighting against the dams. From now on our Movement will be independent of the Association. Our struggle is for the rights of the Munduruku people, for the future generation, for the forest and for the rivers. We are 118 chief who do not accept the construction of the hydroelectric dams on the Tapajós. We will never give in to the large federal government projects. (...) They want to eliminate our movement, but they could not. Because we are the majority of the villages, *caciques*, leaders and warriors who struggle for biodiversity (MMIA. Declaração sobre o Movimento Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ, Munduruku, 2013).

The social organization of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement was organized with a close connection with Munduruku cosmology, to the degree to which it mimics the group of warriors led by Karodaybi, the great Munduruku warrior, who had chosen the five most skilled warriors to protect him: Pukorao Pik Pik, Pusuru kao, Waremucu Pak Pak, Surup Surup and Wakoburũn (Loures 2017). Thus, as in the myth, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement is organized in five platoons – each one associated to one of the five warriors that compose the Karodaybi army – and each one of the groups carries the name of one of the warriors of the mythic hero, while one of them, Wakoburũn, is composed by women warriors. To accompany each group, there is a *pajé* on the front line, who “conserves the sacred force”. The importance of the *pajé* ranges from providing spiritual protection he invokes for the warriors to the use of his abilities to see beyond the material plane. *Pajés* are able to foresee what will come to be and what they can affect. And, by indicating paths, they are consulted in the various moments and contexts of the movement.

Today, the *pajés* are guardians of this cosmology and are operators of Munduruku religiosity. They have a strong relationship with the spirits of the animals, fish and plants, for which reason at times Munduruku treat them like *xi* (mothers). The *pajés* have many attributions, such as the much commented

<sup>11</sup> Declaração do Movimento Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ, August 2013.

ability to extract a *caushi* from the body of an ill person. A *caushi* is considered by the Munduruku as a spell introduced by a what they call a “*pajé bravo*” to distinguish shamans who use their practice to cure from those who use their practice to cause harm. Murphy & Murphy 1954).

In the countless meetings of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement, Karodaybi, the mythic warrior, is often mentioned. It is understandable that the resistance movement is inspired by the leader known as the “great head cutter”, a chief who had few warriors, but even so, never lost a war and whose army had the power of never being hit by arrows or spears in battle. The myths about Karodaybi registered by Murphy (1958) involve his great ability to cut off the heads of the enemies in battle and express the prodigious qualities of his few and heroic warriors, relating them to birds and species of trees. These narratives inspire the members of the movement and are used to organize reports of the actions of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement.

The demonstrations of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement are also moments for reproduction of rites and symbols of Munduruku tradition. Songs are evoked in actions of vigilance and dispute, as in the occupations of the Belo Monte dam construction site. The “Munduruku singers” are important members of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement, given that they know and sing well the Munduruku ritual songs, which have the power to weaken the enemy, and many other things. The songs are highly present in the myths, as in that of Karodaybi. When his warriors confront a much larger army, the woman warrior and singer Wakoburün sang songs that weaken and remove the courage of the enemy, and shield the body of the warriors against arrows.

Since then, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement continues with each new act to gain strength and more precise forms by placing at the center of its internal discussions the opposition to plans to build hydroelectric dams in the Tapajós river basin (although they are not limited to this agenda). The importance of the resistance to the dams stems from the fact that they represent what the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement understood as the main threat to what would be their reason for existence: the territory and rights of the Munduruku people.

The federal government’s position to not maintain a dialog – although it is always ready for a pretense of communication, through the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic (SGPR) – led the Munduruku, in 2013, to intensify their resistance. At the heart of their demands was their right to Free Previous and Informed Consultation as established by ILO Convention 169, of which Brazil is a signatory. That is, they struggled to have the federal government comply with the law.

It is important to remember that in November 2012, at the Kayabi Indigenous Land, on the Teles Pires River, the federal government triggered the polemic and tragic Eldorado Operation, which was announced as an effort to fight illegal gold mining, but which was in fact understood by the Munduruku as a form of intimidation that sought to make viable the implantation of the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex. The Eldorado Operation was conducted to comply with a federal court decision in Mato Grosso state that called for the destruction of the gold-mining drags in the Teles Pires River, inside the indigenous lands of the Munduruku and Kayabi peoples. Coordinated by the Federal Police, 150 men of the National Public Security Force, the National Indian Foundation and the Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (Ibama) conducted the action. The truculent and unexpected invasion of the Teles Pires village left 19 indigenous wounded and the killing of one leader, Adenilson Kirixi Munduruku, by the officer who led the operation.

Another emblematic fact that had strong impact on the region was the military presence, in the National Public Security Force, to guarantee the escort and monitoring of researchers of environmental studies, and to guarantee “law and order” at the construction sites of the large construction projects to avoid occupations, strikes and the organization of workers, as found at Belo Monte, even during the

Munduruku occupation. The Tapajós Operation,<sup>12</sup> for example, undertaken in March 2013 based on the Decrees nº 5.289/04<sup>13</sup> and nº 7.957/13,<sup>14</sup> discharacterized the functions and attributions of the national public security force, given that to guarantee the environmental impact studies, they conducted a operation of intimidation, particularly of the indigenous peoples and the traditional communities of the region (cf. Justiça 2013). In 2013, the direct consequence was a sharp increase in tension between the Munduruku and the troops that escorted the technicians who would conduct the studies and research of the viability of the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex. The National Public Security Forces would circle the villages and riverbank communities for days - and they felt they were afflicted by acts of violence, intimidation and strong psychological pressure.

Strategically, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement understood that it would gain greater political repercussion if it occupied the construction site of the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam in Altamira-PA. If they could stop the largest engineering project in the federal Accelerated Growth Program the Brazilian government could certainly not ignore them. In May and June 2013, in an analogy with their ancestral war expeditions, the Munduruku traveled more than 900 kilometers to the Xingu River.

They occupied the Belo Monte construction site twice; first from May 2 to 9 and then from May 27 to June 4. The occupations were peaceful, and included some 170 people of Munduruku, Juruna, Kayapó, Xipaya, Kuruaya and Arara ethnicities, as well as fishermen and people from traditional communities along the river (*ribeirinhos*). The two occupations had the same agenda, which was clearly presented in letters and statements, demonstrating that they were not there to negotiate with the companies building Belo Monte dam, or much less to present a list of requests to be met, as they highlighted in a public letter released on May 3, 2013:

We are here to dialog with the government. To protest against the construction of large projects that definitively impact our lives. To demand that the law be regulated to guarantee the realization of previous consultation - that is, before the studies and construction! Finally, and most importantly, we occupy the work site to demand that there is prior consultation about construction projects in our lands, rivers and forests. And for this reason the government must stop everything it is doing. It must suspend the work and studies of the dams. It must remove the troops and cancel the police operations on our lands. The Belo Monte worksite is occupied and paralyzed.<sup>15</sup>

After many meetings and pressure from the federal government for a small group of Munduruku go to a meeting in Brasília, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement rejected the proposal for a meeting with a small number of people and indicated that it would only accept a meeting with all of the 150 demonstrators at the Belo Monte construction site. The government accepted and sent two Brazilian Air Force planes to carry all of the demonstrators (photos 1 & 2). Once in Brasília, then minister Gilberto Carvalho, however, limited himself to saying that the government would not give up its dam projects on the Tapajós. In relation to prior consultation, he affirmed that although previous consultation should be broad and must accept suggestions, it did not establish a right to a veto. Federal appellate courts had already determined that the federal government was not properly recognizing the indigenous people's rights to prior consent<sup>16</sup>

12 Military and police operation promoted by order of the federal government in the region of the Munduruku territory.

13 The decree concerns the organization and operation of the federative cooperation program known as the National Public Security Force, determining that it would operate in activities dedicated to maintaining public order and the protection of people and property, among other measures (BRASIL, 2004).

14 The decree covers various measures. In terms of what is important to this study, it regulates the action of the armed forces for environmental protection, justifying their action in the case of "assistance to the realization of surveys and technical reports about negative environmental impact". (BRASIL, 2013)

15 This letter and other materials can be accessed at <https://ocupacaobelomonte.wordpress.com>.

16 In September 2012, the federal public ministry in Pará state filed a civil public suit requiring a process of prior consultation for the indigenous peoples threatened by the hydroelectric project of São Luiz do Tapajós. The suit also called for evaluation of the cumulative impacts along with other projects

and made it a requirement for projects on the Tapajós. Thus, the representatives of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement reaffirmed their desire to dialog, in their territory, without suffering accusations and without police force. For these reasons, they decided to return to their territory in the Tapajós basin and undertake other forms of defense.

In late June, upon returning to Brasília, once again the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement was the target of accusations from researchers conducting the licensing of the dam in Munduruku territory. This was not the first time: since at least August 2012, denunciations were made by companies conducting studies for the environmental licensing of the hydroelectric project. The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement were concerned by the charges because they understood that the studies should be preceded by prior free and informed consultation. To investigate the charges, the group conducted an expedition and found 25 researchers hired by the Concremat company conducting studies required for the licensing of the Jatobá hydroelectric project, also planned for the region.

In one of the actions of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement, the Munduruki heard from a *cacique* of the Arara people – who had lived through the tragic experience of the “cosmetic licensing” of Belo Monte on the Xingu River. The Arara chief warned that if the Munduruku wanted to stop construction of the hydroelectric dams on the Tapajós, they would have to avoid the conclusion of the environmental impact studies for the hydroelectric projects. The strategy used by the Munduruku in the Tapajós region was precisely that observed by the Arara cacique: that of not permitting entrance to the indigenous lands to conduct studies. The Munduruku heard him and decided to resist all the studies conducted without a consultation process, as they understood they had a right to.

In response, the government alleged that these researchers were outside the formal demarcation of the Munduruku Indigenous Land. The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement countered that the studies were conducted along the entire course of the Tapajós, which was part of the Munduruku territory. There was thus a conflict between different conceptions of what were the Munduruku lands and territory. While the government affirmed that their territory was limited to the land stipulated by the normative acts, the Munduruku understood their territory to be the land that they and their ancestors traditionally occupied. And in fact, according to item 2 of article 13 of ILO Convention 169, the allegation of the movement had a legal basis, because the concept of land is based on the concept of territory that “encompasses the totality of the habitat of the regions that the interested peoples occupied or used in some other way”. In this sense, the location where the researchers were found was Munduruku territory, because it was in front of a landmark known as the Cantagalo stone, where there are rock carvings that are important to the Munduruku cosmology.

Thus, the Munduruku approached the research team, confiscated their materials and held three researchers, to guarantee attention and dialog with the federal government. The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement demanded prior consultation and affirmed that after a long struggle, all of the public agencies and society should be aware that the Munduruku people would not accept dams in their territory. Two days after the capture of the researchers, representatives of the National Indian Foundation in Brasília (also speaking in name of the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic) came to Jacareacanga, publically promising the immediate suspension of studies and guaranteeing that they would only be continued after prior consultation. Under these conditions, the researchers were released.

But the precariousness of the word given by the federal government to the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement was proven, less than one month later, when the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Natural Resources ratified authorization of the studies by Concremat, thus guaranteeing arbitrary

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planned for the Tapajós river region and its tributaries. The suit gained an injunction from a federal judge that was upheld by the Federal Supreme Court (STF) in April 2013.

continuity to the studies. Concremat, returned to Tapajós, with not only researchers who conducted this type of work but also an apparatus of war to intimidate and counter the strength of the Munduruku movement. From then on, all of the research was conducted under protection of the National Public Security Forces, who accompanied each one of the researchers all of the time. As a result of the Munduruku resistance, for the first time in the history of Brazil environmental impact studies were conducted under armed guard.

**Photo 1.** With 150 warriors, on May 27 2013, the Munduruku were able to take control of the immense work site at Belo Monte, controlling all of the main gates and stopping all of the activities. Photo: Lunaé Parracho.



**Photo 2.** In Brasília, the men and women warriors of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement met in Brasilia with Minister Gilberto Carvalho and other authorities. June 4, 2013. Photo: Lunaé Parracho.



### **The Self-demarcation of the Daje Kapap Eipi Territory and the Karodaybi Government**

The Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement, in light of the delayed publication of the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation, decided to conduct a self-demarcation of the Sawre Muybu Indigenous Land as a fundamental strategy for maintenance of their traditionally occupied territory, which encompassed various sacred locations described by Munduruku mythology. The Sawre Muybu Indigenous Land includes six villages (Sawre Muybu, Dace Watpu, Karo Muybu, Daje Kapap, Sawre Aboy and Poxo Muybu) and various sacred sites. It was denominated by the Munduruku as the Daje Kapap Eipi territory, precisely because it encompassed a sacred location known as “Os Fechos”, a point at which the Tapajós River becomes narrow due to a transformation that according to myth was caused by white-lipped peccaries that escaped with the son of Karosakaybu,<sup>17</sup> as revenge for having been transformed by him from humans into pigs:

Estreito (Dajekapap) [the narrows]: is the passageway of the pigs, it is a sacred place. This place exists below the old Capuchin Bacabal Mission known as the Montanha [Mountain]. In the summer, the tracks sculpted in the rock at this location can be seen, they are the tracks of the feet of Karosakaybu, when he reached there when his son was taken to the other side of the Tapajós by the pigs and he stopped looking for his son. Another location on dry land is called Cintura Fina, [Thin Belt] which is the same phenomenon and is between km 180 and the small gold-diggers village called Vila Rabello on federal highway BR-230 of the Transamazônica.

On the right bank of the Tapajós can be seen the split rock in the shape of a trench, this is the passageway of the “pigs”, it is the path by which they descended.

Karosakaybu, displeased, was deeply saddened by the loss of his son and decided to leave a snake there so that

<sup>17</sup> Karosakaybu is the God creator for the Munduruku. He has spiritual powers of transformation of people. In the Munduruku language a being similar to the Christian god is designated as Topağa.

no one could pretend to be god. He left a surucucu snake to bite anyone who would pass there. And in this same place there is an image of a saint, and this was discovered by an explorer at the time, but he did not know that the location was sacred and was bitten by that snake and died, and until today it can be very dangerous for anyone who passes by there.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, in October 2014, the Munduruku, began the process of self-demarcation of the Sawre Muybu indigenous land located in the Middle Tapajós. The Munduruku expeditions for the Sawre Muybu indigenous lands, more than mapping and identifying the points and the limits indicated in the report from the National Indian Foundation, contributed to the recognition of their ancestral territory and to the beginning of a process of vigilance and protection of their land, which had been illegally invaded and appropriated by lumbers, gold-diggers and land grabbers.

The beginning of the self-demarcation process was an initiative to confront the threats of territorial disputes emerging in the region and the paralyzation of the administrative process with the non-publication of the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). Thus, the Munduruku decided not to wait for the courts and government institutions to guarantee recognition of their rights and the defense of their land.<sup>19</sup> The self-demarcation of their lands began in October 2014. The Munduruku expeditions through the Sawre Muybu indigenous lands (already identified in the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation) were based on the points and limits indicated in the report from the National Indian Foundation. During the process, the recognition of the ancestral territory was also important for the group that conducted the activity.

In the demarcation, various signs that were built and posted at the limits of the territory by the Munduruku indicate: “Território Daje Kapap Eipi – Governo Karodaybi”. Myths about Karodaybi, a great Munduruku warrior, have a strong presence in the Munduruku oral tradition. Also known as Daybi, Karodaybi was the person who passed on the teaching of “cutting off the head” of enemies, as told in this short portion of a story:

So Daybi began to constantly cut off heads.

We were disappearing in the forest. On the hunt we were disappearing. (Daybi) came to those who were killing coati.

[...] Daybi would remove their heads. He came to the woods. There was no one. Someone was missing. He did not arrive.

He still comes. He was hard to kill, grandpa. He always goes far – he said.

He was not hidden. It is he who knows. He was always removing people’s heads. From the mouth of night he would take the teeth from the mouth of those from whom he had removed the head. He would take their teeth.

The next day, they disappeared again.

[...] He always removed heads like that. Daybi was removing heads. So they became angry. That is all. (CABA, 1980, p. 101-119).

The issue of governance is articulated with the cosmology and to the conflicts with the whites, and to the origin myth of being a Munduruku warrior, which is key to the Ipereğ Ayū social organization. In the analyses of Pacheco de Oliveira (1988) about the Ticuna Indians, the notion of a “government of Indians” or “Our Government” “Toru Aegacu” was also used to refer to mobilizations and movements of families beyond the rubber fields and the economic and political domain of the whites. These actions were ordered by their creator heroes, through the prophets and Shamans, in movements of a messianic and salvationist

<sup>18</sup> Available at: [http://media.wix.com/ugd/c99e01\\_7dcfb3cedf6546869a9d9ac542ec73da.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/c99e01_7dcfb3cedf6546869a9d9ac542ec73da.pdf) Accessed: Feb. 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Various times, as was mentioned, government authorities announced that they would not abandon construction of the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex. “Understanding” the message, the Munduruku undertook another political act, based on the rights that are assured to them.

nature. This narrative continued to exist decades later in the struggle for the demarcation of lands, which was now linked to the indigenous movements and undertaken by the General Council of the Ikuna Tribe/CGTT (Pacheco de Oliveira, 2015, p. 228-235).

For the Munduruku, it was originally Karodaybi (at times referred to simply as Daybi) who coordinated the actions. He was a great warrior, very intelligent and brave, who knew how to protect the Munduruku and defeat the enemy. Daybi did not think only of himself, but thought of the majority. They all sought teachings and knowledge from Karodaybi. “At that time it was he who governed”, according to Jairo Saw.

Thus, the warrior Daybi also became a symbol for the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement. During the self-demarcation, he would be compared to the government of the *pariwat* [non-indigenous] and was seen to give vigor to the government. A Munduruku leader explained how it was the Munduruku government before the government of the *pariwat*: “In the past, we did not depend on the *pariwat*, we lived in our villages, but then came the people from the Indian Protection Service who tried to tame the Munduruku. Then it was the priests, who came closer to the Munduruku”.

Autonomy is currently a central issue for the Munduruku and the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement. The Karodaybi government is part of this legitimate strategy of the Munduruku people:

Karodaybi is an ancient warrior, right, in the past he lived here on our land. He is the Karodaybi warrior, a great warrior. And as a warrior everything he did was for the benefit of our people. Something that would benefit everyone, everyone followed him, his path. It is because he governed the Munduruku people. The Munduruku government functioned like that, right? These are the government leaders, the Karodaybi and others, right? Government leaders. There are the warriors, the chief, the pajés, puxadores, cantores, these are the leaders of the old Munduruku people (Valdenir Boro Munduruku, personal communication).

It is known that this process of demarcation is in direct conflict with the government projects, like that for the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex. The delay in publication of the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation is due to the omission of competent agencies concerning the finalization of the demarcation. They are under political pressure from those interested in the exploitation of natural resources in the region. Given this context, the Munduruku began a long process of self-demarcation of their territory, which involved various steps of mapping and vigilance.

There are many reasons given for the importance of the act of self-demarcation of the Daje Kapap Eipi territory.<sup>20</sup> The self-demarcation proves to some that the Munduruku are capable of marking their lands. For years, they waited for the government, which did not conduct the demarcation. So the self-demarcation shows that the Munduruku are capable of guaranteeing the integrity of their territory.

we had always been capable of protecting our land, This Earth, this world is ours, because we related with nature. There is no doubt, because we rose here on our land. We did not come from far, we arose on this land. But the government does not recognize that there are indigenous [people] here, the Munduruku. This is why we do it. We are the owners there (Maria Leusa Kaba, personal communication).

It is important to note that one of the most important landmarks of the Munduruku cosmology is within the perimeter of Sawre Muybu, and the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayū Movement affirms that sacred places should not be destroyed.

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<sup>20</sup> Each time that we mention the Daje Kapap Eipi territory, we are referring to the Sawre Muybu indigenous land, the indigenous land for which the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation is concluded, and approved by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) and is awaiting the next step, which is signature of the president of the National Indian Foundation, and publication in the federal record, the Diário Oficial da União (DOU).

The intensity and the form of resistance of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement, in response to threats to their territory and cognitive foundation, represents their form of conceiving the river and the world by relating to a territory for which they have struggled considerably and continue to struggle.

## Final Considerations

Upon analyzing the processes of resistance of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement we noted how their current political initiatives are conceived in close relation with the group's cosmology. The formation and actions of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement are permeated by symbolic and ritual elements that indicate how they relate to the projects that threaten to advance on their territory.

In 2013, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement occupied the Belo Monte construction site. With five groups of men and women warriors, the movement reaffirmed the continuity of a historic resistance through dynamically renovated forms of struggle, now employed to confront the construction of large hydroelectric dams in the Amazon.

To occupy the Belo Monte dam construction site, the Munduruku undertook an expedition that, beginning at the Tapajós Basin, travelled 900 km to the Xingu basin, to demand their right to exist, reproduce their way of life and defend the integrity of their territory of origin in the Tapajós basin. If, in the past, they had gone to Xingu to war with other indigenous peoples who lived there, this time they asked "permission for passage" and established an alliance with these peoples: the confrontation, is now with a common enemy. The Xinguano peoples suffering from what the Munduruku fear will happen to them, they systematically experience grave violations of rights due to the implementation of the Belo Monte hydroelectric project. "We came to join forces, and the government will only hear us at its largest project under the Accelerated Growth Program, we cannot let happen in Tapajós what happened at Xingu", the Munduruku said to the people of Xingu.

The revival of the Pharaonic projects – which in a way had been put on hold since the end of the military dictatorship (which lasted from 1964-1985) – took on an institutional form under the federal Accelerated Growth Program (PAC). The Viability Study for the Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex, in particular the dam at São Luiz do Tapajós, which was conducted before hearing the indigenous peoples and the traditional communities of the Tapajós, which had already declared their opposition to the projects, presented a great threat to their existence. As in other large projects in the region, these studies have served not to evaluate the true viability of a construction, but to legitimate their progress and the licensing processes needed for the operations. They studies neglect the flooding of sacred sites such as Dajekapap and the emotional significance of the territories – villages, and lands for hunting, fishing and collection – which are necessary for their physical and cultural survival.

The socio-cultural diversity of the country is subjugated, subordinated and often has its existence obliterated. At an extreme, the humanity of these groups is denied to the degree that their rationality is not recognized in comparisons to the technical and scientific discourse at the heart of the large projects. The public hearings, which are limited to fulfilling an additional cosmetic phase of the environmental licensing processes, are the privileged space of this practice. The struggle of the Munduruku people has revealed a bit of the hypocrisy of the studies conducted in the environmental licensing process.

We hope this paper has shown how the resistance of the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayü Movement to this process reveals the Munduruku's highly developed political and cultural awareness of their place in this situation. It is not by chance that one of the main demands has been prior free and informed consultation, which regardless of its effectiveness in terms of reversing the situation of exclusion in decision making, was seen by the group as an important opportunity to make itself heard.

If on one hand the government has affirmed that it will not desist from the projects in the Tapajós region, the Munduruku Ipereğ Ayũ Movement – using a variety of strategies for territorial defense in response to the movements of government and to the process of territorialization of capital – guarantees that it will continue to struggle for the river and the forest.

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Rosamaria Loures

Postgraduate Program in Natural Resources of Amazonia - Federal University of Western Pará - UFOPA, Santarém (PA), Brazil.

Contact: rosaloures@gmail.com

# Memory regimes, struggles over resources and ethnogenesis in the Brazilian Amazon

*Edviges M. Ioris*

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis/SC, Brasil

## **Abstract**

The paper focuses on the ethnogenesis processes that emerged in the late 1990s in the Brazilian Amazon region, more specifically among indigenous peoples in the lower Tapajós region, in southwestern Pará. Highlighting the case of the Munduruku, alongside the Borary and Arapium, the paper approaches these ethnogeneses as constituting a new memory regime that provides the indigenous peoples with a counter-narrative to the ways that historiography and the jurisdictions of the dominant power have not only omitted, over time, but that also negated the permanence of ethnic and cultural alterities in the region. Confronting historiographical narratives that, since the mid-nineteenth century, have confirmed their disappearance from the lower Tapajós region, the indigenous peoples arrive at the turn of the twenty-first century presenting a counter-narrative to the erasure of their existence, re-establishing their presence in history of the lower Tapajós, and asserting their demands in negotiations of power. The paper also examines the motivations (material and ideological) precipitating the emergence of these ethnogenesis processes, which have taken shape in a field of disputes strongly defined by the interests of the timber industry.

**Keywords:** ethnogenesis; memory regime; ethnic identity; Amazon/lower Tapajós River.

# Regimes de memória, conflitos sobre recursos e etnogêneses na Amazônia

## Resumo

Este texto focaliza os processos de etnogêneses que despontaram no final da década de 1990 na Amazônia, especificamente entre os grupos indígenas na região do baixo rio Tapajós, no sudoeste do estado do Pará. Ressaltando o caso dos indígenas Munduruku, ao lado dos Borary e Arapium, o texto procura pensar estas etnogêneses como constituindo um novo regime de memória, que confere aos indígenas uma contra narrativa aos modos como a historiografia e as instâncias do poder dominante têm, ao longo do tempo, não só omitido como renegado a permanência das alteridades étnicas e culturais na região. Confrontando as narrativas historiográficas que, desde meados do século XIX, afirmavam o seu desaparecimento no baixo Tapajós, os indígenas aportam na virada para o século XXI com uma contra narrativa ao do apagamento de sua existência, recolocando sua presença novamente na história do baixo Tapajós, e fazendo valer suas demandas nas negociações do poder. O texto procura ainda compreender as motivações (materiais e ideológicas), que alavancaram esses processos de etnogêneses, os quais se conformaram em um campo de disputas fortemente marcado por interesses do setor madeireiro.

**Palavras-chave:** etnogênese; regime de memória; identidades étnicas; Amazônia/baixo Tapajós.

# Memory regimes, struggles over resources and ethnogenesis in the Brazilian Amazon

Edviges M. Ioris

## I. On judges and Indians: ethnic and cultural differentiations in the lower Tapajós

Stunned, the Borary and Arapium indigenous peoples learned that on November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Judge Airton Portela of the Federal Court of Santarém in western Pará State had ruled that the report produced by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), identifying and delimiting the Maró Indigenous Territory, had no legal validity and that FUNAI should cease the demarcation procedures that were in progress. It thus revoked FUNAI's decree that recognised this indigenous territory as traditionally occupied by the Borary and Arapium, published in 2011. The judge's ruling was in response to the action brought by representatives of community associations of peasant groups residing in areas adjacent to these peoples, who said they were against the demarcation procedures for this Indigenous Territory, arguing that ties between the Indians and the respective ethnic groups that they claimed to belong to did not exist. Accepting the petition of the plaintiffs of the action, the judge ruled that the Maró Indigenous Territory demarcation process was null, judging that its inhabitants were not "Indians" but merely "*traditional riverside populations*" (p.103), and therefore not subject to Indigenous Rights.

The judge's decision generated a strong reaction on the part of the Indians, who protested in front of the Federal Public Prosecutor's offices (*Ministério Público Federal*, MPF) in Santarém, demanding that an appeal be made. The Committee for Indigenous Affairs of the Brazilian Association of Anthropology (CAI/ABA) issued a note of repudiation, together with other indigenous support organisations, denouncing it as premeditated in serving the interests of logging companies that were exploiting the forests on indigenous lands, and that, in fact, they were behind the action. The MPF of Santarém appealed the sentence, and it ended up being annulled by another judge who recognised the rights of the indigenous people.

The argumentative narrative of Judge Portela, clarified in 106 pages, offers questions of the utmost importance when considering the relationship of legal authorities with indigenous peoples in Brazil, as well as other themes that are dear to anthropology, such as ethnogenesis, miscegenation, and ethnicity, to cite the most evident aspects discussed in the argument against ethnic identification of indigenous peoples. Their problematisation also parallels the case of the Mashpee Indians in their disputes to prove to the US Supreme Court, in the 1970s, the continuity of their references and ethnicities, which were crucial to securing dominion over their territories (Clifford 1988). However, for the time being, two points should be emphasised. First, the sentence does not innovate by decreeing the nonexistence of *indigenous peoples distinct from the rest of the Amazonian and Brazilian society* in the region of the lower Tapajós River.<sup>1</sup> Such a position can be found both in historical understandings produced about the region and within the larger strategies of power that transpire to make invisible and to proscribe the existence and differentiated modes of ethnic and cultural organisation. Despite the initial descriptions, after barely two centuries of colonisation of the Tapajós valley, the existence of the numerous and ethnically diversified peoples found

<sup>1</sup> The lower Tapajós River region is located in the southwest of the state of Pará, in an area classified by the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute as the *Médio Amazonas Paraense* micro-region, more commonly known as the Lower Amazon.

at the mouth of the Tapajós valley when the first Portuguese ships arrived in the region in the seventeenth century —the Tupinambá, Tapajó, Arapium, Borary, Corarienses, Comandy, Maytapu, among others— was no longer recorded<sup>2</sup> (Santos 1999; Parker 1985; Menéndez 1992; 1981; Bates 1979 [1863]; Ribeiro 1979; Meggers 1977; Nimuendaju 1949).

Since the late eighteenth century, after the expulsion of the Jesuits who had dominated the region of the lower Tapajós for a century, when they are referenced, the native peoples are systematically described by the generic terms “Indian” or “indigenous”, without reference to their ethnicities. In his famous compendium, produced in the mid-1830s, Portuguese military man Antonio Ladislau M Baena (2004 [1839]) was the first to account for the number and racial classification of the population of the State of Grão-Pará. Despite recognising that in the Tapajós region it was the “*Indians who make up the greatest numerical strength of the population, and the only resource for the country’s work*” (p.221), he did not specify any of their ethnic groups, rather they were listed in the general tally as “*free*”, together with the “*whites*”, as opposed to “*slaves*”. The naturalistic travellers who sailed along the Tapajós River in the nineteenth century acted similarly. Although they identified the natives they encountered, and who served them, as “*Indians*”, they did not register any ethnic nominations, except for a Munduruku family on the Cupari River, and further afield on the upper Tapajós (Bates 1979 [1863]; Condreau 1977 [1897]). Later, in the twentieth century, these groups became known as part of an Amazonian peasantry and began to be referred to as “*caboclo*” or “*riverside people*”, categories whose definitions tend to severely disqualify important possible links to different ethnic or territorial affiliations (Ioris 2014; Lins e Silva 1980).

Thus, the second point of emphasis regarding the judge’s ruling is how this denial of ethnic recognition of the Borary and Arapium peoples, proscribing territorial rights, reflects (and composes) the field of disputes that has been constituted since the end of the last century, with the emergence of ethnic and territorial reaffirmation processes among several indigenous communities in the lower Tapajós region (Mota 2006; Ioris 2014, 2005; Bolanões 2008 Vaz 2010; Lima 2015; Peixoto 2017). This movement first began among the Munduruku of Taquara, who are located within the dominion of the Tapajós National Forest (Flona Tapajós), on the right bank of the Tapajós River. In 1998, representatives of the Taquara people sought the offices of the FUNAI in Itaituba, on the upper Tapajós, to inquire about their rights in relation to the demarcation of their lands, since these were under the control of the Flona Tapajós and managed by the Brazilian Institute of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA) (Ioris 2014; 2005). Attended by FUNAI technicians, who recognised the legitimacy of the demand and provided administrative measures, the Taquara Indians firmly engaged in the proposal of re-elaborating their ways of life and organisation, so that they were aware of how their origins and indigenous references were comprised, and claimed that they belonged to the Munduruku ethnic group. Inside the Flona Tapajós, the communities of Bragança and Marituba joined soon after Taquara, also affirming themselves as Munduruku, constituting what anthropology has defined as *processes of ethnogenesis* (Bartolomé 2006; Pacheco de Oliveira 1999; Sider 1976).

Influenced by the process of ethnogenesis taking shape among the Munduruku in the Flona Tapajós, several other domestic groups from various communities throughout the lower Tapajós River and Arapiuns River region also began to reaffirm belonging to ethnicities that historical literature claimed no longer existed, such as the Borary, Arapium, Tapajó, Maytapu, Tupayú, Kumaruara and Tupinambá. Together these groups, an estimated five thousand people, have engendered a process of reconstruction of their indigenous identities and ancient cultural traditions, reclaiming ritual manifestations, language,

<sup>2</sup> As an example, in one of the earliest records concerning Indians at the mouth of the Tapajós River, made by Maurício de Heriarte, a chronicler who accompanied the Pedro Teixeira expedition through the Amazon in 1628, he counted “60,000 men of war”. For a mapping of the various ethnic groups in the lower Tapajós region from the 16th to the 18th centuries, see Menéndez (1992; 1981).

body paintings, as well as demanding the demarcation of their lands and constructing forms of political organisation based on ethnicity.

In two decades of mobilisation, these indigenous peoples have won the recognition of four Indigenous Lands,<sup>3</sup> promoting a significant reconfiguration in the socio-cultural and spatial landscape of the region, and reinserting ethnic-indigenous issues within the framework of local power discussions and relationships. The socio-political context that was shaped by this ethnic movement can be understood as a *semantic field of ethnicity*, in the sense Valle (1999) also observed among the Tremembé, in which new forms of discursiveness of unequal political weight are initiated regarding the new ethnicity that has been instigated. In the valley of the lower Tapajós, the once predominantly idyllic vision of the Tapajós peoples—widely exalted in songs, dances, literature, cuisine, in local myths, archaeological sites or shards of sophisticated ceramics that abound in black soils of the so-called “Indian black earth”, bearing witness to the long, intense and elaborate indigenous occupation—had been conversely based on the firm conviction of their past condition and subsequent disappearance, which had occurred as a consequence of the colonial encounter. The emergence of the ethnic reassertion movements that arose at the turn of the twenty-first century has reconfigured and brought to the life, and to the field of local socio-political relationships, the existence of indigenous groups that are now organised and empowered to assert their rights. However, while indigenous people have been relatively successful in several spheres of power, from the municipal to the federal level, in articulating demands at the negotiating table, this has also resulted in conflicts, disputes, discursive productions (for and against Indians), strategies of political alliances and articulations, re-elaborations of historical understandings and of belonging.

Thus, I return to previous discussions on the ethnic and cultural re-elaboration movement among the indigenous people in the region of the lower Tapajós River, which I have followed from the beginning, particularly among the Munduruku in the Flona Tapajós. This text seeks to consider how these movements of ethnogenesis confer a counter-narrative to the ways that historiography and the jurisdictions of the dominant power have not only omitted, over time, but that also negated the permanence of ethnic and cultural differentiations. They contribute as a counter-narrative to the erasure, re-establishing the indigenous existence within the history of the lower Tapajós, and articulating their demands at the negotiating tables of power, from the local to the national level. This *relocation of indigenous peoples in history* can be thought of as a process of constructing a new *memory regime*, in the terms Pacheco de Oliveira (2016) presents us, so as to understand the manner these peoples are conceiving and constructing memory in contemporaneity, in which they “*are the main architects*” (p. 29), to counter the official narratives that have excluded their protagonism in the formation of Brazil. In this new *memory regime*, cultural actions and ritual performances not only constitute ways of reworking memory and rewriting history, but also empowerment and the expression of their alterity.

## II. Between idealisations and erasures: Indigenous peoples outside history

In previous discussions (Ioris 2017, 2011), I have already highlighted how historiography had terminated the presence of ethnically articulated groups in the region of the middle and lower Tapajós

<sup>3</sup> “Indigenous Land” (*Terra Indígena*) is a state reserve category designated to indigenous people in Brazil, which circumscribe an area of their historical territory. The Indigenous Lands in the lower Tapajós recognised up to now, the Munduruku-Taquara Indigenous Land and Bragança-Marituba Indigenous Land, both underwent identification and delimitation studies in 2003, followed by FUNAI ordinances in 2009, and by the Minister of Justice in 2016. The Maró Indigenous Land underwent identification and delimitation studies in 2008, followed by a FUNAI ordinance in 2011. The Cobra Grande Indigenous Land underwent identification and delimitation studies in 2008, followed by a FUNAI ordinance in 2015. In addition, identification studies were conducted for the Mundukuru, located on the right bank of the Tapajós River, on the southern border of the Tapajós-Arapiuns Extractive Reserve, but the summary of this report has never been published. Several surveys were also conducted among the indigenous peoples who live inside the Tapajós-Arapiuns Extractive Reserve.

<sup>4</sup> Amazonian Dark Earths; previously also called “*Terra Preta do Índio*” [Indian Black Earth], are strips of anthropogenic soils resulting from a long and intense process of human occupation. Every centimetre in depth is taken to indicate ten years of occupation (Moran 1990, Smith 1980, Nimuendaju 1949).

valley, without at least some measure of understanding of how this process came about. It did so with minimal understanding of who they were and what happened to the diversity of indigenous peoples that were recorded by the first colonisers when they entered the mouth of the Tapajós River at the beginning of seventeenth century, to impose their occupation and domination. Regarding the Tapajó people who, along with the Tupinambá, numerically, politically and culturally dominated the lower Tapajós region when colonisation began, Nimuendajú (1949: 98) regretted that “of the Tapajó language we only know three proper names: that of the tribe, that of the chief, Orucurá, and that of the devil: Aura”. Betty Meggers (1977), who conducted archaeological studies in the Amazon region in the 1960s, stated that all that was known about the Tapajós linguistic affiliation was that “it was not Tupi” (p.132). Nimuendajú thought that they had ceased to exist in 1723, when they accompanied the Jesuits’ transfer of the Tapajó Mission to the region of the Arapiuns River, a tributary of the Tapajós: “Thus, it seems that the Tapajó and Urucucú ceased to exist as tribes” (p. 55). He also reported that “the last time the name of the Tapajó and Urucucu tribes was found on the list of indigenous tribes of the Tapajós River [was] provided by Ricardo Franco de Almeida Serra in 1799” (p. 55). Regarding the Tupinambá, Menendez (1992: 318), in turn, reported that “thirty years after the catechesis began in the region, there was little left of the populous village at the mouth of the Tapajós, and at that time [1690] the Tupinambá were no longer spoken of as an ethnic group”. Founded in 1661, the Tapajó Mission quickly became the most important in the Province of Grão-Pará and Maranhão, bringing together diverse groups of Tapajó, Tupinambá, Arapium, Corarienses and Comandy. However, as a result of the conflicts with settlers for the control of the indigenous people, this mission was transferred to the Arapiuns River in 1723, when Nimuendaju assumed the Tapajó people vanished.

Similarly, if there is a very little knowledge concerning the indigenous peoples and their forms of socio-political and cultural organisation, then even less is known concerning the hundred years of domination of the Jesuit missions in the lower Tapajós between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Jesuit Missions were established in five different locations<sup>5</sup> along the Tapajós River, where indigenous peoples of various language families were confined (Menéndez 1992, 1981), and *Nheengatu*<sup>6</sup> became the official language. Likewise, there is very little knowledge about the extension of the Pombaline policies of the Indian Directorate that succeeded them in the mid-eighteenth century, instituted by the Governor of the Captaincy of Grão-Pará, Mendonça Furtado, who sailed the Tapajós in 1758 to demarcate borders and the establishment of new “villages” and “places” that had replaced the banned Jesuit missions. The names of villages, such as Vila de Boim and Vila Franca, are current reminders of the institution of this colonial act. However, the participation of indigenous peoples in this State policy, whose goal and strategy was the miscegenation of the native population, and its meaning for them still awaits careful research and analysis.

There is also a critical lack of knowledge regarding indigenous participation in the Cabanagem revolt, which took place most intensely from 1835 to 1838, constituting a violent field of battles that devastated the native population, during the conflicts or the subsequent repression (Bessa Freire 2011; Harris 2010; Lima 2008; Di Paolo 1990; Parker 1985; Moreira Neto 1988). Santarém, Vila Franca, Alter do Chão and Pinhél, places where the Jesuit missions had been founded, constituted important strongholds for the struggle and resistance of “*cabanos*”, the native combatants in the revolt, as did Ecuipiranga, located on the bank of the Amazon River and connected to the Tapajós by land (Vaz 2010). In Pinhél, where the Maytapu people are

5 In 1661, the Tapajó Mission was founded at the mouth of the Tapajós River, where the city of Santarém is currently located. As missionary activity spread along the Tapajós between 1722 and 1740, the Jesuits founded three more missions in the region. The first in 1722, São José dos Maitapu, located some 180 km south of Santarém, on the left bank of the Tapajós, where the village of Pinhél is located today. The Indians who live there identify themselves as Maytapú. In 1723, the Iburari, or Borary, Mission, currently Alter do Chão, was founded on the right bank of the Tapajós. For some time, this mission was merely an extension of the Tapajó Mission and it only became independent in 1723, the same year that the latter was transferred to Arapiuns. The Indians who live there identify themselves as Borary. In 1740, the Mission of Saint Ignatius, or the Tupinambaranas Mission, was founded on the left bank of the Tapajós, where Vila de Boim is now located.

6 *Nheengatu*, or General Amazonian Language (*Língua Geral Amazônica*), is the Tupi-Guarani pidgin promoted by the Jesuits.

located, there are still several spaces hollowed out in the ground, which are attributed to combat trenches built during the revolt, together with detailed narratives about confrontations and the participation of their ancestors in them<sup>7</sup>.

Even though we know that indigenous participation was significant in the lower Tapajós, and that local narratives are full of references to it, in historiographical terms, it tends to appear as the generic “Tapuia”, usually disqualified in terms of ethnic belonging or distinction, except for the Munduruku (Harris 2010, Menéndez 1992, Bates 1979 [1863]). While highlighting the massive participation of native peoples in the Cabanagem, for example, Menendez (1992: 22) describes those who fought alongside the *cabanos* as “previously detribalised Indigenous, “*descidos*” [displaced] or descended from “*descidos*”, whose original villages no longer existed. They were part of this “*Tapuia*” population interned in small groups with their tuxauas, who joined the *cabanos*” (author’s emphasis). The manner in which the author identifies the Indians who participated in the Cabanagem similarly tends to reinforce the vision about them as devoid of ethnic or cultural references, while also proclaiming a bigoted rupture between supposedly “*real*” and “*acculturated*”, “*detribalised*” indigenous people, the inexorable result of contact with the coloniser.

Despite being identified as speakers of the General Amazonian Language, *Nhengatu*, (Bessa Freire 2011), the indigenous peoples who participated in the Cabanagem have generally been indistinctly merged in the category of a “*detribalised Tapuia*”. Thus, we still do not know much about their ethnic and racial diversity, nor their respective participation in the movement, even though there is no lack of references of the involvement of numerous groups among the indigenous Amazonian ethnology (Vaz 2010; Harris 2010; Lima 2008; Tassinari 2003; Velthem 2003; Menéndez 1992; Amoroso 1992). The strong military repression that followed against the “*cabanos*” has been taken as an explanation for the final clash that had definitively annihilated indigenous existence in several regions, causing extermination and dispersion; although little is known of the manner and directions that these dispersions/migrations may have taken.

This is certainly the reality for most of the indigenous peoples who were somehow involved with the Cabanagem, notwithstanding some notable efforts at ascertaining their participation in the revolt (Harris 2010; Lima 2008). Regarding the Tapajós valley, a similar lack of studies fails to provide us with a clearer understanding of the diversity of indigenous participation, and the developments leading to the collapse of the movement. References abound indicating the involvement of many groups, whose territories bear clear signs of their struggles, and people recall rich details in their narratives, such as running away, the fears they experienced, which they attributed to the “*wars*”. Orlando, a Munduruku leader from the village of Braganza, reminded us of how his “*grandmother always told them they lived there [inside the forest] because they became afraid of the war, because there’d been war for so long. They were afraid because they saw that some people came and attacked. The whites attacked. So they preferred to run away and hide there, right, inside the forest, where no one could find them, so they wouldn’t be attacked*”. Along the same lines, Leo Tupaiú, a Tupaiú leader of the Aningalzinho community in Arapiuns, reproduced stories he had heard from his grandmother about his ancestors. According to him, his great-grandparents Jose and Joana Tupaiú “*went to live in the forest to flee the war; in there, into the forest. There, where they couldn’t make a fire, day or night, so as not to draw attention. They lived in holes. They lived in holes because they were afraid they [the Brazilian army] would come and get them to be slaves, to fight in the war. Because the army would come, catch them and take them away, to the war*”. Those who wouldn’t go were killed. The only way was to run into the forest, where they stayed, living in a hole”.

Upon listening to these narratives, it was impossible for me not to question how this image of the generic *detribalised indigenous, descidos* [displaced], *Tapuia speaker of the general language*, who had been the victims of

7 For narratives about the involvement of Pinhél in the Cabanagem revolt see the PhD thesis of Florêncio de Almeida Vaz (2010).

8 The narratives also made frequent reference to the Paraguayan war, which occurred a few years after the Cabanagem, and would also have motivated and reinforced movements to escape the conflict among the Indians.

inexorable annihilation, has obscured a clearer understanding of the involvement of different indigenous peoples in the movement and their distinct modes of participation, together with official strategies towards the indigenous peoples in pacification actions and, principally, strategies of indigenous resistance.

Despite the great historical events that have taken place in the region, from the Jesuit missions in the mid-seventeenth century, to the Indian Directorate and the Cabanagem, occurring over three centuries, knowledge produced concerning the forms of interaction between the indigenous peoples and the colonisation project, and the manner of their insertion in each of these historical situations is minimal. The indigenous presence appears very distant, diluted in a simplistic narrative that triggers the inevitable realisation that, as soon as the coloniser arrived, the native peoples succumbed immediately and inexorably, without the possibility of understanding the reasons behind it. It is as if the advent of one prevailed through the radical and immediate suppression of the other.

### III.i Flowers that die: indigenous presence in Brazilian historiography

In corroboration with these concerns about approaches that assume the depletion of the indigenous presence, which had succumbed to the relentless advance of the colonisation project, in his recently published book, João Pacheco de Oliveira (2016) presents a very urgent and necessary discussion on the importance of revising the dominant historiographical paradigm regarding indigenous participation in the formation of Brazil. First because, as he highlights, since the initial formulations on the history of Brazil in the nineteenth century to Marxist historians in the twentieth century, *“the indigenous presence in the formation of nationality is treated in a repetitive, exoticising manner, as the exclusive product of chance, minor incidents and picturesque accounts”* (p.12). In the pursuit of these formulations, he demonstrates how the historiographical narrative that was constructed concerning the formation of Brazil tended to produce an erasure of indigenous peoples and their participation with regard to the advances of the colonisation project, and later, in the nation-state project. This narrative, based on colonial categories and reifying images of an evolutionary nature, defined the place and moment in which the indigenous peoples appear within the history of Brazil: *“they are prior to Brazil. Once initiated [the colonisation], the Indians could only be conceived as dying flowers, which must be described and understood before they wither and disappear. The technological and military superiority of the colonisers, the violence and the epidemics were enough to explain their extinction”* (p.47-48).

The substantiation to which Pacheco de Oliveira draws attention is that this constructed narrative on the Indians —founded on an idyllic image, romanticised as a native symbol of the country, but prior to the formation of the Brazilian nation— was produced in the nineteenth century, and is directly associated with imaginative production of Brazil as nation building. More precisely, it was during the *“Second Empire, when the nation-state project was elaborated based on the debates concerning migration and the end of slavery, without assigning the indigenous peoples any function other than that of native symbol, that this narrative was structured. It gained an author (Varnhagen’s monumental general history) and a supporting institution (the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB) in Rio de Janeiro and, subsequently, its provincial offices), and became internalised in the thinking of the elite and popular sectors”* (p.50).

On the one hand, the author’s critique is directed at this mode of historiographical production, which obscures the indigenous peoples as producers in the economy, dissipating them in images like small reminiscences of the autochthon of the earth, exotic, past. On the other hand, it is also directed to the anthropological modes that, in their efforts to search for diversity, for difference, have devoted themselves to studying them *“as if the social organisation and cosmology of each indigenous people were isolated and autonomous systems”* (p. 13); and particularly, captured *“outside of history”*. It is in this sense that I think of the frequent ethnographies of indigenous people in the Amazon who recognise references in their narratives on the Cabanagem. However, few of them have surpassed the limits of the villages in an

attempt to find connections between these narratives, other indigenous groups, and the wider historical events that traverse colonisation in the region. I suspect that more careful attention to the references that these narratives elicit concerning these times of “wars”, of “scurrying”, of fleeing, of hiding in holes, which so many went through, and which I have heard repeatedly among indigenous peoples of the lower Tapajós (Ioris 2017; 2011), will help us to understand where many of the indigenous groups that have been described as extinct may have gone. As Pacheco de Oliveira (2016: 14) points out, this perspective isolated indigenous peoples and left out “the colonial world, within which the Indians lived, embedded in harsh relationships of domination—even though they exercised their agency whenever possible, putting into practice varied forms of resistance and of accommodation”. Thus, it also failed to “perceive the concrete ways in which indigenous collectivities were able to resist, organise and continue to update their culture in the contemporary world, including formulating future projects”.

These considerations must be the basis of the understandings of processes of ethnic and cultural re-elaboration that conform to the indigenous peoples of the lower Tapajós, of their historical processes of interaction in the colonial world, and of their gradual erasure in the historiographical narrative elaborated regarding the incorporation of the region within the national political economy. Rather than being surprised at the emergence of these processes of ethnogenesis, we should question the production of this erasure of the indigenous peoples of the region, which broadened with the consolidation of the colonisation project and the construction of the imaginary of the nation. From this past, dispersed among splintered ruins that are difficult to apprehend, we are still expected to gather the fragments, even though there is little we can infer at this time. The task is messianic; it requires awaking the dead and facing the storm of the progressive, linear narratives that have prioritised the dialectic of the victorious (Benjamin 1985). However, for more recent processes, that have occurred when we can follow them more closely, even in historical situations marked by specific processes, we continue to uncover markedly similar efforts to ensure the erasure of indigenous peoples in the region, like those expressed in Judge Portela’s opinion, who ruled there was no link between the Borary and Arapium peoples and the ethnicity they identified with.

Prior to this, similar devices to deny ethnic or cultural alterities were also observed among the Munduruku of Taquara, Bragança and Marituba, in an area under the dominion of the Flona Tapajós. Such tactics are evident since the 1970s, during the clashes that the Munduruku endured following the creation of this forest reserve and subsequent attempts to forcefully remove them from their lands. During these attempts, they were also denied territorial rights and forms of identification that established their ties and belonging to broader socio-political and cultural organisations, leading to a situation of conflict that extended for more than two decades while they sought to avoid being removed from their lands. In the following sections, I focus more directly on this situation, involving the Munduruku of Taquara, Bragança and Marituba, in their struggles to ensure a cultural distinctiveness in a field of disputes strongly marked by timber industry interests in appropriating the resources of their forests. Even though I favour the situation of this indigenous people in the Flona Tapajós, the conflicts that have befallen them are directly related to those that I highlighted among the Borary and Arapium of the Maró territory. In both contexts, the conflicts over their ethnic identifications and maintenance of their territories are issues derived from this process of promoting a forest economy based on the scientific exploration and management of tropical woods, which was already in progress in the 1970s in the Tapajós valley.

### **III. The modern forestry project and peasant territorialities**

Although the contexts and periods are distinct, the situations experienced by the Munduruku of Taquara, Bragança and Marituba, and by the Borary and Arapium, begin with the same problematisation

and are the result of policies encouraging the development of a large timber industry. In the lower Tapajós region, this industry was implemented in the 1970s, within the context of the military government's geopolitical project to insert the Amazon into the national political economy (Ioris 2014; 2005). As part of this program, technical cooperation agreements were established with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)<sup>9</sup>, aimed at an extensive survey of forest resources on each side of a 100-kilometre stretch of the Transamazon Highway. This was conducted after the Forestry Research and Development Project (PRODEPEF)<sup>10</sup> was signed in 1971 between the Brazilian government and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). These surveys supported the formulation of the forestry program included in the Second Amazon Development Plan (II PDAM), launched in 1974, which redefined goals and strategies for economic acceleration for the Amazon that were to be implemented through development poles in different microregions, known as Poloamazonia (Schmink and Wood 1992; Becker 1992). For the Tapajós region, the development of a modern timber industry was projected, to substitute the exploration of soft woods in flatland and wetland areas along the river, done in a way that was considered rudimentary and unproductive. In this proposition, the exploitation moved to areas of solid land, based on cutting-edge technologies, to serve the tropical timber export markets.

Also among the actions to promote forest development in the Tapajós valley, the Flona Tapajós was created on February 19, 1974, as a pilot project of a reserve for the exploitation of timber resources, very similar to those that had been created in the United States, through the US Forest Service. The Flona Tapajós was created on the same day, in a continuous decree, as the Amazon National Park, also along the Tapajós Valley, inaugurating the establishment of the first two environmental reserves in the Amazon. The technicians of the FAO team conducted the forest surveys in the Amazon, and elaborated the propositions for defining the limits of the Flona Tapajós. Thus, a national forest of about 600 thousand hectares was created, defined by the Tapajós River on its eastern boundary, the Santarém-Cuiabá highway (BR-163) on its the western boundary, and the Cupari River on its southern boundary, a few kilometres from the Transamazon Highway (BR-230). Thus, the boundaries of the Flona Tapajós are located precisely at the intersection between the two main highways that the military governments designed and constructed to interconnect roads that would conduct people from the north to the south (Santarém-Cuiabá), and from the east to the west (Transamazon) of the country.

The creation of the Flona Tapajós held grave and important consequences for all the peasant social groups that were on the lands that became the dominion of the reserve. At that time, located along the right bank of the Tapajós River<sup>11</sup>, were sixteen nuclei composed of peasant domestic groups articulated around extended families generally commanded by paternal leadership, and which each defined themselves as a “community”. The “community” constituted and defined dominion over a territorial space, the limits of which resulted from agreements established between the neighbouring “communities”, and boundaries renewed annually through the work of cleaning the paths that interconnected them. Developing a pattern of land occupation founded on a complex system of common resource use (Almeida 2008), the communities were also articulated around their patron saints, whose commemorative festivals created ties of alliance and reciprocity, a renewed commitment to reciprocate participation in each other's festivals. These ties between

9 In fact, in the 1950s, under the Vargas administration, a technical cooperation program had already been established with the FAO to conduct forestry surveys and find potential logging companies, and elaborated proposals for planned, systematic forest development in the Amazon. For more information see Ioris (2014, 2008, 2005).

10 The FOA was the executing agency for PRODEPEF and the Brazilian Institute of Forestry Development (IBDF) was a governmental partner agency (UNDP/FAO/IBDF/BRA-45 Project). The main objectives of the PRODEPEF were to technically and institutionally strengthen the IBDF and provide a wide range of information on forestry potential in Brazil to support national planning for forestry development (Ioris 2008; 2005).

11 Other population centres were also affected by the creation of the Flona Tapajós, like part of the municipality of Aveiro, and the São Jorge community, on the BR 163.

the communities also extended to kinship and familial relationships (godfather, godmother and similar intimate ties), as well as the collective work of clearing and cultivating of plots of land, accounts of which describe ritualised and festive encounters that extended for days.

The constitution of this territoriality, of this way of life, directly defied the creation of the Flona Tapajós, a project that formed part of the strategies of the accelerated modernisation projected for the Amazon in the 1970s, leveraged through the powerful imposition of control over national territory, both technical and political (Becker 1992; Schmink and Wood 1992). Its imposition on the Tapajós valley, however, required seizing the land from the inhabitants who were there. As a result, it created a field of disputes in which the endeavour was not only the appropriation of forest resources, but also the imposition of categories intended to disqualify any solid ties that the people might have in relation to a territoriality, a historicity of occupation, or belonging to a more complex or differentiated socio-cultural organisation. Its effects were intended to contribute to the definitive erasure of the ethnic references that continued to persist in the last 25 years of the twentieth century and, therefore, to the first efforts to seize their territories.

### III.i. From the *cleansing operation* to the *traditional populations*

Although the Flona Tapajós is inserted in a scientifically based modernisation programme aimed at accelerating the economic growth of the Amazon, promoted within the sphere of the geopolitical project of dictatorial military governments, its creation dispensed with any communication with the people from the local communities. Indeed, they only became aware of its existence when the procedures to remove them from their territory were already underway. At that time, national forest legislation did not allow permanent residents to remain within their boundaries. Thus, the officials of the Brazilian Institute of Forestry Development (IBDF),<sup>12</sup> the environmental management organ of the national forests at that time, began the process of removing people from the sixteen communities that existed along the right bank of the Tapajós River, together with the remaining population centres inside the Flona Tapajós. Filled with surprise and indignation, people from these communities reacted to attempts at forced removal, and undertook various forms of resistance to remain in their territories. This struggle lasted for more than two decades, forming an intense field of disputes, with different moments of conflict intensity and tension over time.

Measures to remove people from these sixteen communities within the boundaries of the Flona Tapajós began shortly after the signing of the founding ordinance, as is clear from official correspondence (*Ofício* no. 105/74) by the then head of the IBDF base in Santarém, Ben-Hur Borges, of June 17<sup>th</sup> 1974, four months later. The letter, addressed to the State Commissioner of the IBDF, in Belém, Para, advised him of the procedures that had been taken “to definitively regulate the Flona Tapajós”. First, it stated that public notice had been given “*by the local broadcaster explaining the purposes of this to the rural people, particularly those established within the limits of the FLONA [Tapajós], and the steps to be taken by the inhabitants*”. Second, the letter reported that land lots had already been requested from the regional coordinator of the National Institute of Colonisation and Agricultural Reform (INCRA) for a settlement project, to be implemented on the other side of the BR-163, which were destined for people who would be removed from the inside the Flona Tapajós. The document referred to these people as “settlers” [*colonos*] and the measures of expropriation as a “*cleansing operation*”. According to them, the lots would be “*for settlers who are displaced by the cleansing operation. Such lots are already reserved and simply require the identification of the settlers and their subsequent removal*”.

<sup>12</sup> The IBDF was created in 1967.

In general, Indians and non-Indians from various communities to whom I spoke in my surveys concerning how they found out about the creation of the Flona Tapajós told me that they only came to know about it when IBDF officials arrived at their homes to do surveys of their properties, and only after the officials had asked all the questions about their assets. Thus, they simultaneously learned about the creation of the Flona Tapajós, and that it entailed removing them from their lands. The reason for the official's survey was to finance the payment of indemnities that they would receive for their improvements. These IBDF actions provoked reactions in the communities, who began to articulate in defence of remaining on their lands, in a context of struggle strongly marked by the authoritarianism dictated by the military regime (Leroy 1991). The government's resolve in imposing displacement on people who resisted leaving led to a number of repressive and prohibitive measures against their sustenance and productive activities, such as banning access to timber forest resources, planting smallholdings and hunting, and included police coercion, low-flying helicopters, and other forms of intimidation.

Regardless of the differences in the historical configurations and socio-political and cultural organisations of the sixteen communities that lived in the area where the Flona Tapajós was established, most of the people were part of a long history of occupation, where they developed a territoriality based on a system of common use of land and resources. In general, they were identified as *caboclo*,<sup>13</sup> although they never referred to themselves by this denomination, since it is considered offensive. When I visited the communities for the first time in 1996, people identified themselves in various forms, such as "rural workers", "descendants of Indians", "children of the Tapajós", or, more commonly, as belonging to a particular community: "I'm from the Piquiatuba community"; "I'm from the Taquara community"; "I'm from the Acaratinga community"; and so on. At no point did I hear people identifying themselves as "caboclo" or "cabocla", except for certain community leaders, while attending meetings to discuss land possession and regularisation. In these moments they laid claim to territorial rights, justifying such claims because they were "caboclos of the land of the Tapajós" or, more frequently, because they were "children of the Tapajós".

Regarding their ancestry, people in the communities attributed this to various origins, mostly identifying themselves as descendants of indigenous peoples, although they generally did not specify an ethnic group, rather mentioning that "my grandfather" or "my grandmother was Indian". Sometimes they mentioned the place of origin of their ancestors, when the place was different to where they lived at that time: "my father was an Indian from the Arapiuns River", "Indian from Alter do Chão", and so on. Sometimes they expressed their indigenous origins by saying: "my grandmother spoke only the indigenous language". It was also common to attribute mixed origins: "my grandfather was the son of an Indian with Portuguese", "Indian with Cearense". Maria, from Piquiatuba, explained to me that "in my family we have a little of everything: Indian, Portuguese, Cearense, Paraense, all mixed together". Besides these, there are those who acknowledge that they are of indigenous origin, but do not see themselves as indigenous any longer: "It is true that we are all descendants of Indians, but it is no longer in our blood". The three indigenous communities of Taquara, Marituba and Bragança, mentioned above, only began to identify themselves and articulate politically as belonging to the Munduruku ethnic group in 1998.

In official terms, as we have seen in the above-mentioned document, they were indiscriminately identified as "settlers" who were destined to undergo a "cleansing operation" to remove them from their lands. The emphasis on "cleansing" imposed by the first land regularisation efforts of the Flona Tapajós seems to be based on practices widely applied previously in the pacification strategies of the Cabanagem revolt, commanded by Marshal Francisco José de Souza Soares d'Andrea. He emphasised that: "The Amazon

<sup>13</sup> In the Amazon region, *caboclo* is a controversial and multifaceted, social category applied to mixed societies that originated from pre-colonial Amerindian descendants and poor Europeans. Some scholars have used the term *caboclo* to refer to the typically Amazonian peasantry (Harris 1998; Nugent 1993; Parker 1985; Lins e Silva 1980; Wagley 1976).

and the entire route by water from Cametá to the mouth of this river **needs to be cleansed**, and it has to cost some lives” (emphasis added). The records show that it was not just some lives, as 40,000 were officially declared dead, equivalent to 25% of the entire population of Grão-Pará<sup>14</sup> (Bessa Freire 2011; Menéndez 1992; Parker 1985; Moreira Neto 1988). Almost 150 years later, the native groups of the Tapajós face a new version of *cleansing*, aimed at removing them from their territories to make way for the modernising project of the timber industry in the region.

The unproductive efforts to remove people from within the boundaries of the Flona Tapajós on the right bank of the Tapajós River, due to the strong resistance, led to successive demands for more information or official letters and ordinary requests regarding questions about these domestic groups in these communities, producing many documents. In these documents is where we mainly find the different ways the people were identified. After being initially referred to as “settlers”, other denominations emerge, including: *squatters*, *occasional occupants* and sometimes *intruders in the forest reserve* or *riverside caboclos*, which annul and disqualify more solid socio-cultural or territorial ties that the people may have with the land they live on.

Prior to the creation of the Flona Tapajós, the sixteen communities had few, dispersed links among them, primarily deriving from kinship ties and reciprocities in cultivation, trade, and religious or ludic festivities. The process of the creation and implementation of this forest reserve and the attempts to displace people fostered a closer, politically organised relationship among these communities, with the main articulator being the Rural Workers Union of Santarém and the support of the Catholic Church. In this process of mobilisation and struggle, the communities came to constitute a political unit with a specific interest in avoiding removal from their lands (Ioris 2014; 2005).

The clashes between these communities and government agencies to prevent their removal lasted for more than two decades, with various forms of confrontation. However, in the mid-1990s, in the context of the Pilot Program for the Protection of Brazilian Tropical Forests (PPG-7)<sup>15</sup>, a new framework of political and ideological forces mainly concerning discussion of the participation of the Amazonian peoples in environmental conservation policies, reversed the decision to remove peasant domestic groups considered “traditional populations” from inside national forests. The implementation of the PPG-7 began in the Flona Tapajós in 1995, with the objective of developing and testing models of conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in Amazonian forest reserves, with an emphasis on civil society participation. The prominence of participatory methodologies in the PPG-7 led a diverse set of actors and agencies, who were in some way related to the Flona Tapajós (representatives of the communities, grassroots social organisations, environmental NGOs, local government and national organs, and multilateral agencies like the World Bank and GTZ<sup>16</sup>), to discussions and negotiations that evinced the problematic of conflicts with communities within the reserve, which had already lasted for two decades. The conclusion of the preparatory work defined the resolution of land conflicts as a condition for the implementation of the PPG-7 in the Flona Tapajós (Fatheuer 1998).

A work plan was then agreed, which provided for procedures for conflict resolution, including studies to define an area for these communities that should be excluded from the Flona boundaries. Thus, the work with the communities was developed through a sequence of activities, involving discussion workshops and

14 In Santarém, Menendez (1992: 292) records that “the population of this village, which was 6,000 before the revolt, had fallen to 4,000 (including whites, black slaves and Indians, mainly Munduruku and Mawé)”.

15 The Pilot Program for the Protection of Tropical Forests, (PPG-7) was launched during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Eco-92, in Rio de Janeiro. The PPG-7 funding was provided by the Group of Seven (or G7) countries with the largest advanced economies in the world, and administrated by the World Bank through the Rain Forest Trust Fund Resolution. For more comprehensive analysis of PPG-7 implementation in Flona Tapajós, see Ioris (2014; 2005).

16 The German Organisation for Technical Cooperation (GTZ)

socio-political, economic and environmental surveys, which supported the elaboration of a proposed area to be assigned to them. In 1996, a Bill was passing through the Brazilian Congress to exclude the areas where populations lived inside the Flona Tapajós, including those of the communities, at that time numbering eighteen, which was expected to propose the limits that would be established (IMAFLOA/IBAMA 1996).

Representatives of the IBAMA, however, disagreed with the proposal to reduce the Flona Tapajós boundaries and began defending the permanence of the communities inside the reserve, where they would be provided an area of use, whose extension should be designated through the elaboration of the management plan. The new position taken by IBAMA technicians reflected the changes that were underway in the national forests legislation through the new version of the National System of Conservation Units (SNUC)<sup>17</sup> sanctioned in 2000. In this version of the SNUC, the text of article 17 concerning national forests expanded the concept of this category of reserve, designating it as “*sustainable multiple use of natural resources*”, and not just for timber exploration, as it had previously described. It also stated that “*traditional populations that inhabited it when it was created were allowed to remain*”, provided that they did so in accordance with the regulations and management plan of the unit. In addition to national forests, the SNUC also considered the category of ‘*traditional population*’ in two other classes of reserves: Sustainable Development Reserves (RDS) and Extractive Reserves (RESEX). In reference to Extractive Reserves, Article 18 mentions “*traditional extractive population*”.

As a result, the communities of the Flona Tapajós that had been previously identified as ‘settlers’, ‘*caboclos*’, ‘squatters’, ‘occasional occupants’ or ‘riverside communities’, were now identified as “*traditional populations*” and, thus, their permanence was ‘allowed’ within the reserve, ensuring the right to continue on their lands, even though these would be under the control and management of the state environmental agency. In this new conformation, the IBAMA made efforts to ensure that the areas of use were incorporated into the management plan of the Flona Tapajós, and managed to remove the exclusion of the area of these communities from the Bill that was under discussion in the Brazilian Congress. This change in the reserve legislation removed the threats of expropriation, but on the other hand, it frustrated the expectations of those who wanted to end IBAMA’s interference with their lands.

The majority of the people in the communities ended up conforming to the categorisation of *traditional population* and having their territories under the control of the environmental agency. However, three communities inside the boundaries of the Flona Tapajós, Taquara, Bragança and Marituba, rejected this form of identification and began designating themselves as belonging to the Munduruku ethnicity, constituting an ethnic and culturally differentiated group, with demands for the recognition of their lands as “*indigenous*”.

## VI. Indigenous peoples in the context of “Special Zones of Cultural Interest”

At the same time that the Flona Tapajós administration was making efforts to bring about changes to the incorporation of those groups that came to be recognised as ‘traditional populations’, leaders of the community of Taquara followed the course of the upper Tapajós in 1998, and sought out the offices of the Regional Administration of the FUNAI in Itaituba. During that visit they handed over a document to the regional administrator requesting clarification on the right to validate their lands as ‘*indigenous*’. A few days later, the FUNAI regional administrator visited them in Taquara and sent requests to the FUNAI Land Affairs Directorate in Brasília, advocating the formation of a working group to conduct anthropological studies, with the objective of regularising those lands. He also sent official letters to the IBAMA, the INCRA

<sup>17</sup> The National System of Conservation Units (SNUC) covers the legislation that governs the creation and implementation of environmental reserves in Brazil. Federal Law no. 9,985, of July 18th 2000.

and the Federal Public Prosecutor, informing them of the existence of these Indians and the actions being taken by the FUNAI (Almeida 2001).

This visit to the FUNAI Administration occurred soon after the death of *Pajé* Laurelino, patriarch of the largest family nucleus in Taquara and the main political-religious leadership of the community. After his death, in May 1998, the Taquara Indians began a cultural re-elaboration movement, reclaiming their ritual manifestations, their language, body paintings, and they began identifying themselves as belonging to the Munduruku ethnicity. In terms of organisation and political representation, they began articulating around the *cacique*, abandoning the previous structure based on a community 'president', which they understood as a condition imposed by the "whites". Several events marked the beginning of this process of ethnic reassertion. In October, during the celebrations of Our Lady of Aparecida, the patron saint of the community, they promoted an "Indigenous Mass", and as the New Year began (1999), the "First Indigenous Encounter". Both events were attended by guest representatives from several neighbouring communities, from NGOs, from the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), from the municipal administration and politicians (council members). In 2000, the community leaders participated in the manifestations of the 500 years of the discovery of Brazil in Porto Seguro, Bahia, and when they returned, they mobilised by creating the Tapajós-Arapiuns Indigenous Council (CITA).

In the wake of this movement for ethnic reaffirmation taking place among the Taquara Indians, people from Marituba and Bragança, who had accompanied the initial discussions and mobilisations, also began to identify themselves as belonging to the Munduruku ethnicity. In the context of the Flona Tapajós, these three communities began to form a new and distinct socio-political and ethnical unit, which was distancing itself from the remaining groups found inside the forest reserve that had come to be recognised as 'traditional populations'. Claiming that they belonged to an ethnically organised collectivity, these three communities distanced themselves from groups with whom they shared a history of struggles in defence of their territories, creating a schism between them, between *Indian* and *non-Indian*, or more precisely, between '*Indian*' and '*traditional populations*'. Thus, two culturally and politically organised groups formed within the Flona Tapajós, the schism that was established between these two social groups distinguished them and divided them with regard to their forms of identification, of socio-cultural and political organisation and, particularly, in their claims for land regularisation.

In this new situation, the Indians also broke off relationships with the administration of the Flona Tapajós, refusing to participate in any negotiations or activities promoted by the representatives of the reserve. They began claiming the regularisation of their lands from the FUNAI, which, in response, set up a technical working group in January 2001 to conduct surveys on the indigenous people in the lower Tapajós. Based on this survey, studies to identify the delimitation of the indigenous lands of Taquara, Bragança and Marituba were suggested, which were conducted in 2003, and the creation of two Indigenous Lands was proposed: the Munduruku-Taquara Indigenous Land and the Bragança-Marituba Indigenous Land (Ioris 2009). The declaratory ordinances of both indigenous territories were signed by the Minister of Justice in 2015.

In addition to these procedures for official recognition of these lands, some initiatives implemented by local authorities are worth highlighting. In the municipality of Belterra<sup>18</sup>, these attentions were reflected in the forestry planning and in the actions of its Participative Master Plan, elaborated during 2006 and sanctioned in February 2007 (Law no. 131). With the participation of indigenous representatives in the elaboration work, article 37 of the Municipal Master Plan established that the lands of the Munduruku of Bragança, Marituba and Taquara constitute "Special Areas of Cultural Interest". Soon after, the municipality

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18 The municipality of Belterra was created in 1996, partitioned from the boundaries of the municipality of Santarém.

of Belterra created the Indigenous Coordination, assigned to the Planning and Management Secretary, to deal exclusively with the interests of the Indians of the municipality. In addition, elementary schools in Bragança, Marituba and Taquara have become recognised as ‘indigenous schools’ and, in principle, provide differentiated education. In this context, the Indians also created the Munduruku Indigenous Council of Belterra (CIMB), which began functioning in December 2007, during the *Many* Festival, an event that occurs annually among the Munduruku of Taquara.

Accordingly, mobilised to reaffirm their ethnic belonging, the Munduruku of Taquara, Bragança and Marituba rejected the attribution of ‘*traditional population*’, resulting from the new legislation of the SNUC, and rejected the model of land occupation that was granted them under the condition of “traditionals allowed” to live inside a national forest boundary.

#### IV.I. Allowing the permanence of “traditional people”: relationships of dependence and unequal power

Having accompanied this process of ethnic reaffirmation from the outset, the inquiries that came to me from people in local groups, government representatives and academics regarding the motivations that instigated the movement among the Indians were not uncommon. People expressively questioned, seeking to confirm whether the indigenous people had adhered to the movement for strictly utilitarian motivations, to ensure access to “land”. Unaware of the histories of struggle of these communities, it seemed difficult for them to understand that the ethnic reaffirmation movement among these three indigenous communities in the Flona Tapajós erupted when they were apparently celebrating victory, following a long dispute to avoid expulsion from their lands, just as they were recognised as “*traditional populations*” and were allowed to remain within the boundaries of this forest reserve. In this case, it was precisely when the legislation changed and allowed these populations to remain on their lands that these groups of communities began the process of reclaiming old cultural traditions and identifying themselves as bearers of differentiated ethnic identities. It was only when the threat of expulsion from their land had been dissipated in the Flona Tapajós, when they came to be regarded as “*traditional populations*”, that these groups once again opposed an officially ascribed definition and demonstrated the character they intended for themselves and the way they envisaged being identified.

As highlighted in previous studies (Ioris 2014, 2009), understanding the emergence of this ethnic reaffirmation movement is also to bear in mind the emergence of the notion of “*traditional population*” and its formulation as a classificatory category of social groups that could benefit from the policies of creating environmental reserves. As a number of authors have presented, this notion was forged in the international environmental debate on the presence of human groups in environmental conservation areas, and especially concerning the conflicts arising therefrom (Lima 2002; Barretto 2006; 2001; Diegues 1998; Vianna 1996). For the most part, environmental reserves around the world were created in the territories of social groups that traditionally exercised forms of common resources use, which, like the communities of the Flona Tapajós, were to be displaced from their lands to make way for the reserve project. The resistance of these groups composed endless processes of conflict, such that the situations, on the one hand, do not allow them full access to the resources they previously had, and on the other, they prevent the full implementation of the environmental reserve.

Accompanying the problematic in Brazil, particularly in relation to the advent of extractive reserves in the Amazon, the adoption of the notion of ‘*traditional population*’ occurred in the 1990s, designating specific and distinct social groups that were devoid of the legal recognition that guaranteed them rights over the lands that they historically inhabited. In this sense, Barretto (2006: 109) highlights the ambivalence of the notion: “*because at the same time that it operates as a residual category in a negative sense, encompassing everything*

that is not indigenous or quilombola, or rubber tapper, it covers and comprises all these categories of social groups—and many others—whose cultural distinctiveness is better expressed in terms of specific territorialities”.

Officially, the term ‘*traditional population*’ was first used with the creation of the National Council of Traditional Populations (CNPT)<sup>19</sup> in 1992. However, its definition was only elaborated later, during the work for their incorporation into the new SNUC, approved in 2000, in order to understand and regulate the situations of population groups in areas of environmental reserves, those that were classified as ‘*sustainable use conservation units*’. Undoubtedly, the incorporation of ‘*traditional populations*’ expressed a significant change in the conception and field of action of the environmental reserves, which until then had prohibited any form of human occupation, the reason for the long conflicts with populations inside the Flona Tapajós, and all other conservation units in the Amazon.

However, the definition of ‘*traditional population*’ in the current version of the SNUC is diluted among several articles that define and regulate the respective reservations. It is not mentioned, for example, in the article referring to national forests, which has come to admit the permanence of such populations within their limits, but it is present in the article that refers to Sustainable Development Reserves (RDS). For the RDS, a ‘*traditional population*’ is defined as “*those whose existence is based on sustainable systems of exploitation of natural resources, developed over generations and adapted to local ecological conditions and which play a fundamental role in the protection of nature and the maintenance of biological diversity*”. In the article on Extractive Reserves, the definition of “*traditional extractive populations*” appears, defining them as those “*whose subsistence is based on extractivism and, additionally, on subsistence agriculture and the creation of small animals*”.

In all these definitions in the SNUC text, the notion of ‘*traditional population*’ is strongly linked to ecological criteria, to environmental sustainability, as established by its management plans, and not to socio-cultural criteria, leading to compromised forms of identification, of the organisation of spaces, and of the appropriation of resources. Thus, strongly linked to environmentalist conceptions and formulations elaborated in the modes of scientific knowledge and not of local social groups, the notion of “*traditional population*” present in the SNUC subjugates the ways in which these groups organise and relate to natural resources to parameters that are alien to their socio-cultural universe. This notion, as Barretto (2006) pointed out, conspires against the autonomy and self-determination of these peoples, since it conditions their future to a rationality of forest policy that is exogenous to them, formulated on the basis of unequal power.

Therefore, in relation to national forests, which, under the regulation of the SNUC, came to allow the presence of “*traditional populations*”, the notion as formulated tends to reinforce mechanisms that nullify the autonomy of social groups on their own lands; even when allowed to remain, they are subject to the management plans of the reserve. There is no full recognition of the rights of these populations over the lands they historically occupy, rather there is an ‘acceptance’ of their permanence, since it is conditioned to what is proposed in terms of the objectives for the reserve. So a relationship of dependence and unequal power is established *a priori*, which neutralises the legitimacy of the demands of these social groups regarding the territories and the resources they use. Moreover, insofar as this permanence occurs in “*accordance with the management plan of the reserve*”, and considering that the objectives of the national forest management plans are forest exploitation for commercial timber production, this compliance implies forms of organisation and appropriation of the resources of the said ‘*traditional populations*’ with the forms of promotion of management and logging. As Almeida (2004: 10) points out: “*the fact that the government has incorporated the expression ‘traditional populations’ in the relevant legislation and in the bureaucratic-administrative apparatuses ... does not exactly mean an absolute compliance with the claims made by*

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<sup>19</sup> The National Council of Traditional Populations (CNPT) was initially created to regulate the creation of Extractive Reserves, which were being initiated due to the demands of the rubber tappers’ movement in Acre and Rondônia.

*these social movements, therefore, it does not mean a resolution of conflicts and tensions concerning the intrinsic forms of appropriation and common use of natural resources”.*

The movement of ethnic and cultural reaffirmation that arose among the indigenous peoples in the Flona Tapajós can be understood as a reaction that rejects this form of identification as a “*traditional population*”, which was being officially adopted. Just as they reacted to the initial attempts to categorise them as “settlers”, “squatters”, “*occasional occupants*”, or “*riverside caboclos*”, the three indigenous communities also rejected this new formulation projected onto their ways of life through the notion of “*traditional population*”, which simplified a diversity of cultural situations, naturalising social groups to establish an instrumental relationship that is obliged to respond to the objectives of the environmental reserve management plans. They reacted by seeking the re-elaboration of the future they intended in the formulations and understandings of their ethnic origins and trajectories, through which they could exercise the particular way of life they have sought in all these years, by engaging in various forms of struggle, and which the categorisation of ‘traditional population’, defined in the new version of SNUC, once again tended to diminish. It is curious, however, that they reacted precisely to the more radical efforts among the categories imposed on them throughout the history of the Flona Tapajós, that is, the definitive elimination of the ethnic references that still persisted.

## **V. A new memory regime: Answering the call that comes through cassette tapes**

Understanding the emergence of the ethnic reaffirmation movement as a reaction to the category of traditional population still does not explain why the other communities located inside the Flona Tapajós did not react in the same manner as Taquara, Marituba and Bragança, since they share historical processes of occupation and the same land-use system, and some of them still share strong kinship ties. From the perspective of the Taquara people, the first to embark on this ethnic adventure, their emergence is closely related to the death of their main political and religious leader, Laurelino Floriano Cruz, head of an extended family who dedicated his life to treating and healing people, and whose gift was widely recognised throughout the lower Amazon.

Laurelino was born on the upper Arapiuns River, a tributary of the Tapajós, where the Maró Indigenous Territory is located. He identified as Kumaruara Indian and defined himself as an “*earth doctor*”. It was very common to hear statements from people in the region of the Tapajós like: “*what the medical doctor can’t handle, only Laurelino can heal*”. In addition to receiving an immense number of people in the community of Taquara, who flocked from many places to be treated, Laurelino also travelled once a month to Santarém, where dozens of people lined up in front of the boat docked at the city pier, waiting to be attended to by him.

In addition to being recognised as the last great healer of the lower Tapajós, Laurelino was also head of a large family nucleus that constituted and shaped the Taquara community, which based its entire social organisation and dynamics on his practices as a healer. It was right after his death in May 1998 that the process of ethnic reaffirmation was initiated. A few months before his death, Laurelino had recorded long interviews on cassette tapes with Florencio de Almeida Vaz, a Maytapu Indian, Franciscan priest, anthropologist and professor at the Federal University of Western Pará (UFOPA), in which he recounted his life story, his work curing people, and ended by asking their children and grandchildren not to forget their “indigenous culture”. These tapes were left with his relatives who, in the ensuing mourning after his death, spent time listening to them together. From the voice they heard telling them not to forget their “indigenous culture”, came the impulse to respond to the call not only to not forget, but to live the “indigenous culture” fully. As one of Laurelino’s sons explained to me: “*After my father’s death, we spent a long time listening to the tapes, one tape after the other. We began to wonder about various things. If our father’s wish was that we should not*

*forget our culture, that we recognise our culture, that we are really indigenous, then why do we not recognise that we are indigenous? Is it to do with shame? Then, let's put our aside our shame and be who we really are".*

The prompt attention they gave to that call, which they heard successively on the obsolete cassette tapes, demonstrated that non-forgetting, permanent remembrance, would be renewed in the lived and embodied experience of "indigenous culture". The drama experienced by Taquara people following the death of Laurelino refers to the analyses that Turner (1974) elaborated to address events that caused crises and changes that are experienced by human collectives, defined as 'social dramas': these "are units of aharmonic or disharmonic process, arising in conflict situations" (p.37). Thus, he highlighted the phase he called *redressive action*, which succeeds the stages of crisis in social organisations. He examined the transition phase, or threshold phase of the passage, and the spontaneous development of communities that share specific characteristics, which he calls "communitas". Understanding that crisis stages are "turning points or moments of danger and suspense" that affect social organisations, Turner observes that "in order to limit the spread of the crisis, certain adjustive and redressive 'mechanisms,' [...] informal or formal, institutionalized or ad hoc, are swiftly brought into operation by leading or structurally representative members of the disturbed social system" (p.39). For the author, it is precisely in this "redressive phase that both pragmatic techniques and symbolic action reach their fullest expression" (p.41), and its most complete expression certainly lies in those of the ritualisation of culture.

The perspective that Turner provides concerning the dynamics expressed in conflict situations, danger or suspense, experienced by social groups, has been instrumental in my thinking regarding the internal motivations that instigated the ethnic and cultural reaffirmation movement among the Taquara people, and which stimulated the prompt and immediate response to the call heard through repeatedly listening to those tapes. Understanding, therefore, the call that was really important to hear, even though it was not explained on the tapes, but that was answered so decisively nevertheless.

The conformation of the Taquara community was established over decades and it remained united under the leadership of Laurelino, whose shamanistic practices founded the basis of the socio-political and cultural relationships of the community, both internally and externally. In Taquara, people who were not his direct descendants were there for reasons that stemmed from his healing work. As such, his death caused an irreplaceable loss in terms of political and religious leadership, leaving an empty space in the organisation of these relationships. This space, *this aharmonic event*, can be understood as a threshold period for the community, "a threshold between more or less stable phases of the social process" (Turner 1974: 39). It was precisely at this moment, on the threshold that followed Laurelino's death, that the Taquara community began to re-establish connections with ancient indigenous traditions, in which shamanic practices and cosmologies were expressed in their most elaborate form. This direction, in the sense of asserting ethnic belonging and indigenous cultural traditions can thus be apprehended as part of these mechanisms that Turner highlights as adjustments or repairs that are put in place to overcome social crises, in this case, caused by Laurelino's absence. The emptiness caused by his death and the imminent crisis caused by the loss of his highest leadership (political-religious) were overcome by the reclamation and re-elaboration of their ethnic origins and trajectories, forms of organisation and political representations, and ritual performances.

While alive, Laurelino and his shamanic works were the embodiment of the symbolic practices and cosmologies that linked them to an indigenous past; without it, the continuity of this connection, the non-forgetfulness, depended on the entire group assuming the task of keeping them referential and active. Laurelino's call for non-forgetfulness was, in fact, a call for a new *memory regime* that would not let them forget the particularity of their histories. As Berger notes (1963: 68-69), "every rite of passage is an act of historical interpretation and every wise old man is a theorist of historical development", and "memory itself is a reiterated act of interpretation". The constancy of the memory of their indigenous culture, however, would

not be a mere exercise of abstraction, but imprinted and renewed in the experience of their daily practices, in their political organizations, as it is in their bodies. It is in these lived practices that the Indians—or rather, the Munduruku—re-inscribe themselves in the history of the lower Tapajós and in negotiations of power. The same is true of the Borary, the Tapajó, the Maytapu, the Arapium, Jaraki, Kumaruara and others who had been deleted from the official historiographical narrative.

## VI. Conclusion

Reflecting on the processes of ethnogenesis that shaped themselves among the Munduruku, as well as among the other indigenous peoples in the lower Tapajós, as constituting a *new memory regime* to confront the dominant historiographical narratives that exclude their protagonisms, allows us bring to the fore a set of questions that must be considered. First, it allows us to problematise the construction of these narratives, which, although elaborated in different memory regimes, produced an erasure of the indigenous peoples, or, as Pacheco de Oliveira (2016) would define it, imagining them as having *dissolved in the colonisation*. At the intersections of the production of these narratives and the networks of power that support them, we can understand the ways in which the indigenous peoples in the lower Tapajós were historically the object of official programs aimed at eradicating ethnic and cultural alterities, in order to transform them into a workforce and appropriate their territories (Ioris 2014; 2005). Efforts to forcefully remove people from the Flona Tapajós in the 1970s and 1980s, and Judge Portela's decision regarding the Borary of the Maró Indigenous Territory in 2014, illustrate more recent examples of the ways in which this construct has continued to operate and reproduce in diverse historical situations, by describing them as “*generic Indians*”, as “*Tapuia descidos*”, as “*caboclos*”, as “*occasional occupants*”, or “*traditional riverside dwellers*”, always of minimal relevance in the local political economy, and of minimal historiographical or anthropological interest.

However, critical for memory regimes, this perspective also makes it possible to understand the ways in which the indigenous peoples themselves have sought to construct memory today, as artisans of another memory architecture, which has opposed those that disregarded not only their protagonism, but also their very existence. Narratives that always seemed to me to be well understood by the Indians. Assis, then the vice-Cacique Munduruku of Taquara, often emphasised in our conversations that “*we never ceased to be Indians, it was the whites who stopped seeing that we were Indians*”. The ethnographic situation allows us to understand the motivations (material and ideological) internal and external, leveraging these processes of ethnic and cultural re-elaboration, instituting a *new memory regime* that emphasises and substantiates their alterity, in each of the groups. Although the various situations of ethnogenesis observed in the lower Tapajós region should be understood in their particularities, it is also necessary to consider the broader socio-political processes that affect them as a whole.

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*Edviges M Ioris*

Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC)  
Department of Anthropology  
Contact: emioris@gmail.com

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# Tapeba:

a synthesis of historical ethnography  
of ethnic territory and subjects

*Henyo T. Barretto Filho*

Universidade de Brasília, Departamento de Antropologia, Brasília/DF, Brasil

## **Abstract**

This article summarizes ingredients from previous writings to undertake an ethnography of the process of constitution of the Tapeba ethnic territory, in Caucaia, in the Greater Fortaleza Metropolitan Region, until its recent recognition as an Indigenous Land by the Brazilian government. Considering my ethnographic experience and the various forms of engagement that I have had since the mid-1980s, I describe and analyze the constitution of the Tapebas as a collective political subject and the formalization of their territory. The paper addresses the various ways through which this occurred and highlights the factors that enabled it in various scales. I consider the different regimes to which this people was subjected, their process of ethnic individuation, and their path from stigmatization to their recognition as subjects with rights, by linking with a network of actors. I also highlight the main dimensions and situations that led to this.

**Keywords:** Tapeba; Ceará; indigenous land; territorialization; ethnogenesis; indigenous rights.

# Tapeba:

## síntese de etnografia histórica de um território e sujeitos étnicos

### **Resumo**

O artigo sintetiza ingredientes de trabalhos anteriores com o objetivo de etnografar o processo de constituição do território étnico Tapeba, em Caucaia, Zona de Metropolitana de Fortaleza, até o seu recente reconhecimento como Terra Indígena (TI) pelo governo brasileiro. Considerando a minha experiência etnográfica e a multiplicidade de formas de atuação que tive desde meados dos anos 1980, descrevo e analiso o processo de constituição dos Tapebas como sujeito político coletivo e do seu território, abordando os diversos modos por meio dos quais isso ocorreu e apontando os fatores que concorreram para isso em diversas escalas. Abordo os distintos regimes a que esse povo foi submetido, o seu processo de individuação étnica, o caminho da superação do estigma ao reconhecimento como sujeitos de direitos, por meio da articulação com um emaranhado de atores. Também destaco as principais dimensões e situações que levaram a isso.

**Palavras-chave:** Tapeba; Ceará; terra indígena; territorialização; etnogênese; direitos indígenas.

# Tapeba:

## a synthesis of historical ethnography of ethnic territory and subjects

Henyo T. Barretto Filho<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction: objective and method

This article rearticulates and synthesizes ingredients from previous academic, technical-administrative and public awareness raising projects (Barretto Fº 1993a, 1993b, 1999, 2000, 2005, 2013 and 2017). My purpose is to conduct an ethnography of the constitution of the Tapeba ethnic territory in Caucaia, in the Fortaleza Metropolitan region, until its recent recognition as an Indigenous Land by the Brazilian Ministry of Justice, with 5,294 hectares (Portaria # 734/MJ, de 31/08/2017). In the past, I wrote an ethnography and some articles about the Tapeba people and their land; coordinated two technical groups (GTs) formed to identify and delimit their indigenous land at two different times;<sup>2</sup> and have accompanied from a distance both their political struggle for recognition and land, as well as the consequences of the demarcation procedure.<sup>3</sup> I am, therefore, in a relatively unique position to present this synthesis. It is by considering my ethnographic experience and the multiple forms of activity that I have undertaken since the mid 1980's, that I wish to describe and analyze the process of constitution of the Tapeba people as a collective subject and the formation of their territory. I address the various ways by which these processes took place and indicate some of the factors that have contributed to them.

In the subsequent sections, I address the effects that the various colonial regimes for the administration of indigenous peoples and the corresponding legislation for ordering land ownership have had in the configuration of the peoples and the region in which the municipality of Caucaia is now found. I will indicate how the Tapeba people can be understood as the result of a long historic process of ethnic inter-relationship and individuation of segments of, at least, four distinct original indigenous peoples, who came together there, and were living under these regimes and laws. We observe the emergence of the Tapeba people in the public scene as a subaltern and strongly stigmatized ethnic group. We also accompany their

1 The original fieldwork was conducted in research for a master's degree in different periods in the second half of the 1980s. It was financed in each moment by the following institutions, to which I am grateful: Equipe de Assessoria às Comunidades Rurais da Arquidiocese de Fortaleza; Projeto Estudo sobre Terras Indígenas no Brasil; Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social do Museu Nacional, through the "Bolsa de Auxílio à Pesquisa"; and the Programa de Dotações para Pesquisa FORD/ANPOCS of 1989. These were combined with support from CNPq and CAPES, which provided me master's grants from 1988 to 1990. The ethnography presented here incorporates data produced in other contexts of ethnographic discovery: my coordination of two technical groups for the identification of the Tapeba Indigenous Land (IT) (see footnote 2). This article benefited from critical comments made by the editor of the dossier and by two anonymous reviewers, to whom I am grateful, for they considerably contributed to improve the text and the argument. Any errors that may have remained, however, are entirely my own responsibility.

2 I coordinated the technical groups for identification and delimitation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land established by *Portarias* of the President of the National Indian Foundation, Funai #1.185 of 11/11/2002, #097 of 12/02/2003, #1226 of 01/09/2010 and #1.847 of 02/11/2010. These were two different identification studies, conducted in two different periods and published respectively in 2006 and 2015 (see Barretto Fº 2005 and 2013). I conducted the first as a consultant to UNESCO hired through a shortened selection process established by *Edital* #2002/01 to accomplish the elements of Contract #14 (Identification and Delimitation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land). When conducting the second study I received a daily stipend as a collaborator of the National Indian Foundation.

3 A form of monitoring the effects of our technical production, which can be considered one of the possible consequences of "ethnography as sharing", which marks contemporary anthropology with indigenous peoples in Brazil (Pacheco de Oliveira 2013). Certainly, for this reason, in October 2015, at a formal session of the Ceará state Legislative Assembly, I and nine other people received a plaque to honor the important support and work dedicated to the Tapeba people over 30 years of activity of the Association of the Communities of the Tapeba Indians of Caucaia - Associação das Comunidades dos Índios Tapebas de Caucaia (ACITA).

path to overcoming this prejudice and towards their recognition as subjects with rights, by means of their networking with a variety of actors (segments of the local population, the church, missionaries, unions, public agencies, academics, civil society organizations and social movements).

In this process, I will highlight the main social, political, legal and administrative dimensions that have led to recognition of the territorial rights of the Tapeba people and their strategies for retaking and occupying their territory. I do this by analyzing the connections of these strategies with the way they live their ancestry and traditions, and with the configuration of the interethnic relations – considering the local forms of intervention of various agencies, including those of the state. I pay attention to the formation of indigenous associations and to the political mobilizations led by the indigenous peoples, and I seek to describe and analyze projects the Tapebas have developed for their future. These projects appear to be based on an effort to strengthen their identity through education and citizenship (by participating in party politics) and to share horizons with other peoples and communities of Ceará.

Before moving on, two observations are necessary, one methodological and another theoretical.

As I have mentioned, this article connects data produced by different methods: empiric investigation based on direct and participant observation with the Tapeba people, in which the oral traditions are an important source; and document research of the historiography available about the region under consideration, which revealed a variety of records produced in different contexts and spheres. I led this research for both strictly academic purposes and during the procedure for demarcation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land. It is important to note that the official, accessible historiography and documentation express the cultural concepts and future projects of dominant sectors of society, which as a rule have been responsible for the subordination – if not the annihilation – of the indigenous peoples and for the expropriation of their territories and resources that support their socio-cultural reproduction. It can be expected, therefore, that the ethnographic and historical knowledge about the indigenous peoples of Ceará produced in the colonial and imperial periods and in a good part of the Republican period, are scarce and confused – particularly those found in recognized and authorized records, which often present ambiguous data, conflicting information and gaps. More than categorical sources about the truth of the indigenous presence in Ceará, the historic documents and studies referred to here are considered first as an expression of the different regimes of visibility of the indigenous peoples over time.

I deploy with a certain freedom – but also with some grounding – the notion of historical ethnography to characterize this synthesis. I have in mind a broad set of contributions that consider the places of ethnography and history in anthropology as mutually complementary modes for reflecting about oneself and the other. For Comaroff and Comaroff (2010), for example, ethnography and history are forms of connecting fragments to which we have access in empiric research to broader historically and culturally determined contexts, which confers meaning to them. Sahlins (1993), in turn, by commenting on various works that sought to synthesize the experience of field work in a community with the study of their archival past – as I highlighted above for the methodological dimension of this article – identifies a different type of ethnographic prose. It is a type of ethnohistory, a specific anthropological project and genre that he calls historical ethnography. According to Sahlins, works like that of the Comaroff couple in South Africa, and others, raised in a conscientious way the argument that ethnographies that consider time and transformation provide a distinct form of knowing the anthropological subject. For Sahlins, the purpose of a historical ethnography is not to provide lessons of cultural continuity, but to synthesize structure and variation, as a significant social process that leads to a specific cultural order. In Brazil, for some time now Pacheco de Oliveira has been undertaking a historical anthropology to consider indigenous societies and cultures in Brazil. For Pacheco de Oliveira, an understanding of these societies and cultures “cannot be conducted without a critical reflection and retrieval of their historical dimension” – understood

as the “space-time axes” through which the indigenous act as “full historic subjects” (Pacheco de Oliveira 1999a: 8). These are the inspirations that guide this exercise.

### Following some leads: toponyms, nicknames and ethnonyms

Tapeba is originally a toponym. It is the name of a lake and of a periodic stream that in the winter carries waters from the Coité and Juá Mountains, and the Porcos lake, and flows into the Juá River, close to the Barra Nova lake. Both, the lake and the stream are located in a rural portion of the municipality of Caucaia, and indigenous families live close by, in a region where they form the majority of the population. In 1721, the toponym Tapeba lake was registered – as well as the Capuan Lake – in a land concession known in Portuguese as “*data* and *sesmaria*” (Souza 1933: 204, vol. 6).<sup>4</sup> Tapeba is a word in the Tupi language,<sup>5</sup> according to various authors, and is a phonetic variation of *itapeva* (from *tálitá*, which means “stone” and *peva*, which means “plane” or “flat”), and thus signifies “plane stone”, “flat stone” or “polished stone”. Caucaia, the name of the municipality, is also of Tupi origin, although there is controversy about its meaning.

This toponym helps us to understand the use of the terms “Caucaia Indians”, “Caucaios” or “Indians of the general language known as Caucaios” that are found in many historic documents to refer to the Indians of the village of the same name (see the next section; cf. Machado 1902: 198). The same logic explains the use of the name and or nickname of an ancestor to single out the group, by reference to this common ancestor. Menezes, for example, refers to the “Indians of the Algodão nation”, “founders [of] Caucaya” (Menezes 1871: 262). This seems to be an allusion to “chief Tapuyo *Amanay* or Algodão” with whom the Jesuits Francisco Pinto and Luís Figueira, in a pioneering phase of colonization, had become friends during their passage through the region of Mucuripe. With Algodão’s help they had founded the villages of Caucaia, Parangaba, Paupina and Pitaguary, where they had gathered the Potiguaras they met who were on the expedition of Pero Coelho (Brigido 1879: 12).

More recently, we have “Pernas-de-Pau” (wooden legs) and “Tapebanos”, which serve as ethnonyms in the local social landscape. The first refers to the nickname of an ancestor – José “Zé Zabel” Alves dos Reis – who lived at a location called Paumirim, to which a segment of the Tapebas – the “Zabel” family – commonly refer when tracing their genealogy (cf. Almeida, G. 1988). The second functions as an adjectival phrase for “from Tapeba”, “native of Tapeba”, “child of Tapeba”, “resident of Tapeba” or others, as if they were defining a “district ethnicity” (Ahmed 1984), in reference to the location of origin, residence and or birth.

Thus, it should not come as a surprise that the term Tapeba does not appear in colonial documents linked to a specific indigenous people. The colonizers referred to the Indians who lived in Caucaia by the name of a Potiguara chief (“the Algodão” nation), or by the name of the village itself (“Caucaio” Indians). The toponym Tapeba also appears to have been used to designate the inheritors of the indigenous peoples found there, and who, by a set of circumstances that will be described below, came to reside around the lake and stream of the same name.

It is important to note that the toponyms speak a living language and result from the process by which one language is imposed upon and dominates another, thus expressing a given knowledge about the territory. The persistence of these Tupi toponyms over time appears to express, on one hand, the dominant presence of the Potiguara people who resided in this region since the first half of the seventeenth century (see below), and on the other, the continuity of the indigenous presence in Caucaia. Social anthropology

4 “*Data*” and “*sesmaria*” are terms related to the regime for the concession of rights to landed property upon which the appropriation of land ownership in Brazil was based until its abolition in 1822. “*Data*” is the document that grants rights to the land itself, known as the “*sesmaria*”.

5 As nearly all local toponyms: Capuan, Capoeira, Jenipabu, Icaraí, Iparana, Jandaiguaba, Pabussu, Paumirim, Tabapuá, etc.

recognizes that geographic references are often central to the constitution of ethnic groups, given that they are appropriated to report common origins and ancestries, marking the belonging to a group that regards a given territory as ancestral (Pacheco de Oliveira 1999b)<sup>6</sup>.

### **The colonial machinery for crushing and producing peoples: a historiographical synthesis**

The available sources reveal that the history of the region where the Tapeba people now live in the municipality of Caucaia is intertwined with the history of conquest and peopling by Europeans – the French, Dutch and Portuguese – of the region that is now the state of Ceará. This history is closely related to the movement of the aboriginal peoples that lived there before the arrival of the first colonizers (Almeida 1986; Cordeiro 1989; Gomes 1985a, 1985b; Porto Alegre 1992a). According to evidence gathered in various studies, what is now the municipality of Caucaia originated in what was the village of Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres.<sup>7</sup>

There are various hints in the historiography about the pre-colonial indigenous presence in what today is the Ceará coast, in particular the origin of the indigenous contingent initially found in the village of Caucaia: the Potiguaras that were already found there trading with the French at the time of the arrival of the expedition of Pero Coelho, in 1603; the Potiguaras that came with his army; the Potiguaras and Tabajaras that Father Luís Figueira compelled to accompany him on his return from the first mission to the Ibiapaba mountain range; and or all of these options simultaneously. The *Mapa Etno-Histórico de Curt Nimuendaju* [Curt Nimuendaju's Ethno-Historic Map], in turn, registers the presence of Potiguaras in the seventeenth and eighteenth century on the coast close to Fortaleza and to its northeast.

There are also different accounts of the number and location of the villages established on Ceará's coast by the Jesuits, in that which Serafim Leite considers the pioneering phase of the missionary activity of this religious order in the territory that now corresponds to Ceará – a phase that was marked by “transitory exploration and catechism”. The Jesuit missionary activity in Ceará encompassed a period of nearly a century and a half (*apud* Gomes 1985a: 4-5). Despite a dissonant narrative about the first stable colonial settlements in this region, the sources appear to agree that the settlements already existed in 1694, four of which (Caucaia, Parangaba, Paupina and Parnamirim) were of Tupi Indians and two others of Jaguaribaras – “all [...] *intensely inhabited*, as can be seen in the letter of Morais Navarro, dated July 1694, and written in Bahia” (Studart F<sup>o</sup> 1963: 175-176; emphasis mine).

The period of Dutch dominion inevitably influenced the indigenous and non-indigenous demographic dynamic in what is now Brazil's Northeast, promoting movements of various kinds. The sources show that the Indians were active political subjects, capable of making choices and defining the alliances that seemed preferential and beneficial to them, suggesting an admirable capacity to adapt to new and adverse circumstances imposed by the dispute between the colonial powers. This was demonstrated in 1644, when the Potiguaras who had come to work in the salt works<sup>8</sup> of the West Indies Company, revolted once again

6 In this way, the Tapeba are similar to countless other peoples considered by the vast ethnological literature, which we can broadly cite here: the relationship between the Kambiwá and Pipipã with the Serra Negra (Barbosa 2001); the Atikum and the Serra do Umã (Grünwald 2004); the Pataxó and Monte Pascoal (Carvalho 2009); the Xukuru and the Serra do Ororubá (Fialho 1998); the peoples of the lower Oiapoque and the Curipi, Urucaú and Uaçá rivers (Tassinari 1999).

7 Almeida distinguishes *aldeia* [village], “in an allusion to the traditional indigenous dwellings”, from *aldeamento* [a constructed settlement], “which refers specifically to constructions made by the colonizers to settle the Indians”, opting for the second term (1986: 7). We maintain “aldeia” [village] as it appears in the available historiography and in the reports from that time, because we understand it as a historic category that denotes a certain mode/model of land appropriation, as made explicit by Faulhaber: “the indigenous *aldeia* constitutes a historically rooted category and appears in the discourse of the first travelers, associated to the strategic formation of population groupings, and is linked to the missionary practice of enslavement and Baptism, in which the Tuxauas and indigenous heads themselves participated” (1989: 2).

8 The reference to the salt works in this region is important. The activity was probably favored by the estuaries of the Ceará and Cocó rivers, and the indigenous work at them. This is because there is data, for the twentieth century, of Tapeba Indians working at salt works on the Santa Rita farm, which

against the same oppressive, cruel and dishonest treatment they received from the Portuguese, and the lack of payment of the promised salaries. They took the small Dutch fort and murdered everyone they found.

In 1654, when Portuguese rule was re-established by the definitive expulsion of the Dutch and delivery of the Captaincy of Ceará to the Portuguese, the Jesuits resumed the work of indoctrinating the Indians. This took place under the aegis of the Regiment of 09/04/1655, which established the independence of the missions in the *sertão* [as the semi-arid interior is known] in relation to the governing officials and to the local civil authorities (Beozzo 1983: 38). Since then, there has been a pendular movement typical of the legislation concerning the administration of indigenous peoples in colonial Brazil, which extended until the mid-nineteenth century: at one moment it would favor the religious orders, and at another the civil secular settlers and administrators and their demands for indigenous labor.

This process took place in parallel to the beginning of the sharing of the land effectively conquered by the Portuguese Crown by means of the land concessions, the *datas* and *sesmarias*. Struggling among each other for the lands, due to confusions in their distribution and boundary disputes, the settlers frequently used the Indians as their soldiers – requesting them from the village administrations, from the captains – and hundreds of Indians died. The development of husbandry in the interior, mainly in the Jaguaribe Valley, intensified the continuous struggle between settlers and Indians, who were hunted, killed, enslaved or expelled. The “fazendas de criar” [cattle farms], according to Cordeiro, were the characteristic form of the colonial enterprise in Ceará and one of the “structural supports of the colonizing model”: a “mark of occupation and possession of land legalized by the *sesmarias* regime” (Cordeiro 1989: 35). The opposition was so strong, that the civil authority was required to turn to the Paulistas, who had troops experienced in suppressing indigenous resistance (cf. Cordeiro 1989).

In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, *sesmarias* came to be granted by the Portuguese Crown to the Potiguara villages on the Ceará coast. This probably took place as a retribution for the collaboration of this people in the suppression of the revolts, or even as a result of the expansion and consolidation of the temporal and spiritual administration of the villages under the direction of the religious missionaries. On 23 November 1700, a writ, that became law on July 4, 1703, granted to each mission “a square league of land to support Indians and respective missionaries with the declaration that each village must be composed of at least one hundred couples” (*apud* Dantas et al. 1992: 444). The Indians of Caucaia were contemplated by the *data* of *sesmaria* issued on March 31, 1723, which conceded to the indigenous leader of the Caucaia village and other officials and Indians, for their use and that of their heirs, an area of three leagues of land, one league wide, and half a league to each side, running along the spring known as Taboca (Dantas 1925: 47).

We thus have, at the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, a situation in which the villages of the Tupi Indians on the Ceará coast had a territorial heritage upon which they based their activities and whose administration – in particular of the indigenous labor – was disputed among civil and religious authorities. To this was added the confusion and countless conflicting demands about the limits of the *datas* for *sesmarias*, which were widely issued by the *Capitães-mores*, the top officials. This is a period about which there is more frequent information about the villages and their composition.

The “settlement prospered” (IBGE, 1959: 151) when in August 1758 the *Diretório Pombalino*<sup>9</sup> was applied to the state of Brazil. The villages of Ibiapaba (Vila Viçosa Real), Caucaia (Vila de Soure), Parangaba (Vila Nova de Arronches) and Paupina (Vila de Messejana) were raised to the status of *vila* [town]. The village of Caucaia, when it was raised to the category of Vila Nova de Soure, “was a Potiguara village, with Tremembé Indians on the outskirts, missioned by the Jesuits” (Braga 1967: 349).

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encompassed a large area of the mangrove swamps at the estuary of the Ceará River.

9 The *Diretório Pombalino* determined a major shift in the administration of indigenous peoples and lands in colonial Brazil, which resulted in the secularization of this administration, the expulsion of the Jesuits, the change of settlement names to Portuguese and a series of other actions with far-reaching consequences.

The information about the ethnic composition of the Indian *vilas* close to the coast and located around Fortaleza was invariably linked to the news about the abuses and atrocities committed by the Directors (the new local administrators). These Directors regularly complied with requests by the local population to supply Indians to do outdoor work and were responsible for regulating the distribution of the Indians among the residents. The Indians in Ceará suffered constantly from the abusive and violent regime of the civil directors of the *vilas* and from the policy at the time that allowed appropriation of Indian lands. Nevertheless, Vila de Soure, like others, is referred to as an “Indian *vila*”, in both official documents and in reports produced by travelers, and legal and religious authorities, since its creation until the first quarter of the nineteenth century – as synthesized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1** – Demographic Changes at Vila de Soure, according to various sources

Year	Population	Sources and Observations
1759	600 Indians	Leite 1943
1777	1,388 inhab.: mostly “settled indigenous population”. Soure was an average size Indian <i>vila</i> .	Porto Alegre 1992b
1808	767 hab.: 546 “Indians” (260 men and 286 women; 71%), 33 “mulattos”, 55 “blacks” and 33 “whites”	Menezes 1871
1811	816 hab. Soure was one of the smaller population centers of Ceará.	Menezes 1871 IBGE 1959
1816	1,050 residents	Paulet 1898
1821	1,200 residents – “All Indians”	Braga 1967

It is probably during this period that the understanding was developed that the territorial patrimony of the Vila de Soure was the property of the Saint (Our Lady of Prazeres – the Virgin Mary) – an understanding that is expressed in the current territorial concepts of the Tapebas about the “square league” of the “Saint’s land” (see below). An example of this is the deed for the donation of lands of 11/08/1816, by means of which Mr. Francisco Barroso de Souza and his wife donated an area to “Our Lady of Prazeres of this Regal Villa de Soure”. The deed mentions the “lands of the *vila*” and “the Indian owners of this *vila*” within the boundaries of the donated area (Gomes 1985b: 13; Studart 1896: 499).

The voluminous official correspondence between government authorities at various levels is valuable because it reveals multiple dimensions of the life of the Vila de Soure’s Indians. It refers to: slave and hired labor of indigenous men and women; distribution of this labor among private parties; chastisement and punishments for Indians who fled or refused to obey orders; economic activities that were promoted and given incentives, such as planting cotton, cassava and other food crops, and fishing and sale of crabs, oysters and mussels;<sup>10</sup> forced recruitment of indigenous contingents to fight against and in autonomist political movements; successive nominations of various officials, like *capitães-mores* and *sargentos-mores* (higher captains and higher sergeants) to oversee the Indians of Soure; relocation of indigenous populations among *vilas* of Indians, Soure included; statistical control of the indigenous population; and the imprisonment of Indians. The documents both confirm the expressive indigenous presence in Soure until the first third of the nineteenth century, and show how the Indians’ lifestyle was shaped by the repressive and disciplinary mold of the colonial power.

Considered altogether, the references show that the *Diretório*, in an authoritarian and violent manner, transferred and resettled indigenous populations among the *vilas*, mostly from the interior to those close to the coast and the capital. This practice probably sought to avoid the dispersal and reorganization

<sup>10</sup> An economic activity that is maintained by the Tapeba until today in the Rio Ceará estuary.

of the Indians in terms that threatened the availability of labor for the services of the colony, or that would stimulate the eruption of forms of resistance. Thus, considering the information registered by the colonizers' pens, everything leads to the conclusion that the indigenous contingent of the Vila de Soure had a diversified ethnic composition. There are indications that at least four indigenous peoples were joined there: the original Potiguara, the Tremembé from the surroundings, the Kariri and the transferred Jucá. According to oral witnesses, they were joined by free and or escaped enslaved blacks and those fleeing from the drought of the "three eights" (1888). Given the varied ethnic composition of the indigenous population of Aldeia de Caucaia/Vila de Soure, one can say that the Tapebas emerged from a historic process of ethnic individuation of these distinct sections, living under a violent regime of slavery and disciplinarization of their lives.

After the enactment of the 1845 Regulation and the promulgation of the "Land Law" (Law # 601, of 09/18/1850), which sought to regulate land ownership in the country, official documentation about the Indians of Ceará became scarce and changed its tone. The provincial government came to emphasize issues involving the goods and territorial assets of the Indians. The lands of the Indians (*aldeias* [villages] and *vilas* [towns]) were included in the Plan of the Land Law and the Decree of 1854 as areas to be demarcated and regularized. In case the lands of the villages were no longer "occupied" by the Indians – according to government evaluation and criteria – it would consider them "national property". If they were occupied, however, the lands would remain in the possession and use by the Indians, even if the villages were extinct. This is why Ceará was "the first province to deny the existence of identifiable Indians in the villages and to want to appropriate their lands (10/21/1850)" (Cunha 1992: 145).

On Oct. 9, 1863, at the time of the installation of the Provincial Legislative Assembly, the then President of Ceará Province declared that there were no more Indians, either settled or in the wild, in the province of Ceará and that the territorial assets of the villages would be incorporated to the Treasury by imperial order. This declaration is ambiguous because it also: (i) proclaimed that 120 land possessions of Indians of the old *sesmarias* of Messejana and Maranguape were legitimated; (ii) referred to "possessions of some Indians" that were respected; and (iii) reported that they were "waiting for detailed information", requested at the time, concerning the possibility that there were survivors of the invasions, exterminations and diseases, who may have migrated to regions where they were allowed to remain. It became a common measure at that time to declare the inexistence of Indians in areas of economic interest, characterizing them as *terras devolutas* (supposedly unoccupied and unused public land), under the terms of the Land Law of 1850. Among the most common forms of usurpation allowed since the 1845 Regulation were: movement and concentration of Indigenous groups; and the settlement of "wild hoards" in their original territories - with the ensuing reduction of their occupation - that authorities tried to declare to be village lands. By doing so, they allowed the rental and leasing of lands that were supposedly reserved, but which in fact were immemorial lands, allowing tenants and settlers to pressure the government to obtain Indians' lands.

Evidence thus suggest that the villages were extinct and their lands liquidated, without the formal donation of their lands to the Indians, as established by the series of regulations. The same registers – which are ambivalent and biased – indicate the possibility that some indigenous peoples had remained in possession of parcels of their lands, that is: that some possessions were respected, despite the fact that the lands as a whole had been incorporated to the provincial treasury and then leased by the town governments.

## The “Saint’s Land”, marginalization and stigma: oral traditions and witnesses

The data from the historiography referred to previously indicate an unstable situation, in the nineteenth century, in terms of the destination of the lands of the extinct indigenous villages. The situation of the Tapebas can thus be characterized as the product of two different historical paths, generally found in regions of early colonization, such as the Brazilian Northeast: (1) the disaggregation of territorial domains belonging to the church, where forms of common use had come to prevail, for which reason the “Saint” (Our Lady of Prazeres) appears as the owner; and (2) the loss of possession of any titled domains that may have been formally issued to indigenous leaders and their descendants as a donation, or in retribution for services provided to the State. The notion of the “Saint’s land” appears repeatedly in references to the past recounted by the Tapebas, in personal statements and oral testimonies produced in different field situations. It maintains a strong coherence with the historic registers about the *Aldeia/Vila* and with the territorial concessions made to the indigenous leaders and their descendants, and with what happened to this territorial patrimony. Oral narratives also indicate that since the beginning of the twentieth century the ethnic ascriptions Tapeba, Tapebano and Perna-de-Pau were used to refer to segments of the population to which indigenous origin was recognized and to a peculiar lifestyle and forms of behavior.

Oral testimonies, field observations and some official technical documents provide us an approximate idea of what might have been the square league of land of the former Indians’ *Aldeia de Caucaia/Vila de Soure*: it would form a quadrilateral, its limits encircling what is now the urban perimeter of the central region of Caucaia. The referents of the testimonies produced during fieldwork also agree with some of the landmarks of the limits of the “square league of land in the Soure township” described in the document “*Terra do Patrimônio da Câmara da Extinta Villa de Soure*” [Land of the Patrimony of the Town Hall of the Extinct Vila de Soure]. There is explicit mention of the “league of land of the Virgin Mary”, with clear references to the landmarks: Sargento-Mór, Rio Ceará, the Tapeba stream and the “bar of the Ceará River”. The Tapebas are not mistaken, when they say that “all of Caucaia is indigenous”.

This is somehow expressed in the use that both the Tapebas and the regional residents currently make of the toponym Tapeba. It is more frequently used to refer to an inclusive, generic area with vaguely defined limits, embracing the lake and the stream of the same name, incorporating the Porcos lake to the south, the Santa Terezinha quarry, Cutia and the Bestas Lake to the west, the settlement of Capuan to the north and the Ceará River to the east. These sites are often all encompassed by the toponym Tapeba, giving the observer the idea that, as they used to say: “It is all one place. It is all one land”.

Whatever had been the precise territorial patrimony of the Saint, it was handed on to the administration of the city council, which in turn, came to grant leases to parcels of land. The statements produced in different fieldwork periods refer to this phenomenon, even if generically, by indicating that the league of land mentioned was being progressively occupied by people of greater wealth. These statements show both the consistency of the oral tradition about the right of the Tapebas to the “Saint’s land”, and reveal that various forms of land appropriation developed over time. These modalities are the fruit of the different historical solutions that sectors of the Tapebas engendered in relation to the disaggregation, whether of the patrimony “of the saint”, or of any titled lands. They include:

- The condition of “residents” of parcels of lands belonging to third parties, with a relative consent to use the land and its natural resources, based either on informal agreements, or on fictitious kinship ties (compaternity), or on the payment for the land with a portion of agricultural production;
- The condition of free and individual control of land and of basic resources exercised by one or another domestic group – which was found until recently in some cases; and

- Systems of common use in some specific situations, in which various domestic groups, which compose a given social unit – as is the case of some unrestricted bilateral descent groups – exercise the control of the basic resources of a given area, according to specific rules consensually agreed to in the meanders of social relations established among them.<sup>11</sup>

The Tapebas were not able to fully guarantee the domain over their lands, generation after generation, due to mechanisms of unequal exchange to which they were continuously submitted. The history of the current Tapeba villages is related to relatively recent changes in the forms of land appropriation previously found in the Tapeba and Paumirim – which, as far as their genealogical memory extends, are the locations they recognize as their traditional dwellings.

Since 1910, with the beginning of the construction of the Baturité railway line, one of the branches of the Cearense Railway System, and later with federal highway BR-222, the appropriation of these areas by the Indians took a distinct character with the expansion of access routes to the region. Since the second third of the twentieth century, the rising real estate values in the metropolitan zones near the state capital caused the expulsion and dispersion of a large number of indigenous families, who came to form the currently existing villages. The families from Tapeba and Paumirim were led to occupy marginal areas and federal government lands: the mangrove swamps and the margins of the Ceará River, which are federal lands in tidal areas (where, since the colonial period, Indians fished and sold crustaceans); the strips of the rights of way of the highways and railways opened at that time; and the peri-urban zone of the city, having witnessed the neighborhoods of the urban perimeter encapsulate their old settlements. This partly elucidates their distribution around the urban perimeter of Caucaia.

It was in this situation that the Tapebas were rediscovered by journalists and academics in the second half of the 1960s. José Rangel Cavalcante and Rodolfo Espíndola, who were respectively correspondents for the newspapers *Jornal do Brasil* [from Rio de Janeiro] and *O Estado de São Paulo*, wrote long articles about the Tapeba. The piece, “Indígena no Ceará não é Cidadão” [Indigenous in Ceará is not a Citizen], by Cavalcante, was published on April 7, 1968 in the *Jornal do Brasil*; and “O triste fim dos índios cearenses” [The Sad End of the Cearense Indians], by Espíndola, was published on July 6, 1969 in the *O Estado de São Paulo*. Evidence of the repercussion of these articles among the local intellectual community were the transcription of Cavalcante’s complete text in the *Revista do Instituto do Ceará* in 1968 and an op-ed entitled “Índios Cearenses”, in the edition of July 12, 1969 of the *Correio do Ceará*, about Espíndola’s article. Espíndola wrote again about the Tapebas in the mid-1970s and early 1980s: on August 1, 1976, the *O Povo* newspaper published a special section by Espíndola entitled “Tapeba: o índio que esqueceu as origens” [Tapeba: the Indian who forgot his origins] (p. 31); and on May 2, 1982, the *O Estado de São Paulo* once again published an article entitled “Os últimos Tapebas na miséria” [The last Tapeba in poverty].

The tone of these articles – which highlighted misery, cultural disintegration, and imminent demise – reflects the stigma that weighed on the Tapeba and their ways of life when I met them in 1986, still in the situation of a subaltern and vulnerable group. This stigma, which until today hangs over the Tapeba, results from the progressive cultural and territorial marginalization mentioned. It appears to have functioned for a long time as a social and ideological barrier to interaction with the regional population, limiting the possibilities of relationships outside the “family” – in the sense that they attribute to this term – and intensifying the connectivity of the network of relatives, neighbors and work partners.

For decades, expectations of disreputable behavior shaped interactions of the Tapebas with non-Indians, contributing to the consolidation of the ethnic adscription and to their circumscription as a

<sup>11</sup> The Tapebas are trying to reconstitute these systems in a proactive and gradual manner through “retomadas” [retakings] (see below).

distinct group of people based on references to their manners. The term Tapeba continues to spark a reference to a certain *ethos* and disreputable standards of behavior, such as: excess drinking of *cachaça* (if not alcoholism); eating spoiled red meat or carrion (a practice that, like the previous one, they recognize that some ancestors practiced); a lack of hygiene and basic care (filthiness); resort to incestuous relations (the pejorative meaning of the term “mixture”, when used by non-Indians); robbing and conducting illicit productive activities, or those not considered as work in the conventional sense of the term (usually extractive activities). The Tapeba ethnic ascription, therefore, incorporates symbols of stigma and constitutes, on its own, a symbol of stigma – or “discrimination”, as a number of them said – operating even as a disparagement in certain circumstances. This is why testimonies and statements refer to the “revolt” and violent reaction – the “fighting” – that took place when Tapeba was used to address or call with explicit intentions to “esculhambar”, “se desfazer” and “rebaixar” (humiliate, denigrate and degrade) the Indians.

Add to that the ubiquitous use of the term “family” by the Indians in relation to the Tapeba ascription, forming expressions such as “Tapeba family” or “family of/from Tapeba”, which refers to the intimate social ties of this group and to the affective and traditional subjective feeling of constituting a whole. The territorial reference is umbilically linked to the recognition of the descent of the families that lived in the Tapeba – understood in the broad sense (see above) – and in Paumirim. The possibility – and even the deliberate effort – of one person or domestic group to acknowledge and have acknowledged their origin with reference to areas considered to be the dwelling places of the Tapeba in the recent past, constitutes a referent of the ethnic ascription. As we see, there is a close tie between the ethnonym and the toponym, establishing an ascription based on the mutual recognition of common origin as a basic fact, which is tied to a series of discrediting attributes. The Tapeba also often say that the families “Zabel” (Alves dos Reis, Alves Teixeira), “Coco” (Alves de Matos, Teixeira de Matos), Jacinto, Jerônimo do Nascimento (“Grande”), “Milunga”, “Carnaúba”, “Guimarães,” and Paiva (“Macaco”), are Tapebas, or of/from the Tapeba. These “families” from the “Tapeba family” comprise unrestricted groups of bilateral descent by means of which it is possible to acknowledge the genealogy of a person as Tapeba.

### **From stigma to recognition: Indians as subjects with territorial rights**

This process began to change in 1984, when the Equipe de Assessoria às Comunidades Rurais [Rural Communities Advisory Team] (EACR) of the Archdiocese of Fortaleza started working with the families living in risk areas (subject to flooding) along the mangrove swamps of the Ceará River – without knowing, at first, that they were working with sections of an indigenous people. The Archbishop at that time was Dom Aloisio Cardeal Lorscheider, who had previously been archbishop of Aparecida – the site of the basilica of Brazil’s patron saint – and a former president of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB), which granted important symbolic weight to the action of the local social pastoral entities. The results of this work were many, which at times diverted into social assistance activities of a charitable nature. Some, however, are worth mentioning because of the long-lasting effects that they had on reversing the expectations and self-esteem of the Tapeba themselves.

Based on an initial incentive from the EACR, the Association of Communities of the the Ceará River (ACRC) was created in August 1985 as a private, not-for-profit civil society entity, based in the Rio Ceará community, at the location called Pontes, in the municipality of Caucaia. The Association of Communities had duplicated Board of Directors and Fiscal Board, with equal occupation of the same positions and functions by Tapebas and non-Indians. Its objective was to “unite and organize the affiliated communities, lead integrated programs aimed at physical and spiritual growth of its members, defend human rights, collaborate with public and private entities to defend the mangrove swamps, rivers and other natural

assets for their ecological preservation and equilibrium, and collaborate with the Federação dos Indígenas Tapebas” [Tapeba Indians Federation] (by-laws of the association published in the *Diário Oficial do Estado do Ceará* on Aug. 27, 1985). It was initially formed by 14 “indigenous communities and nuclei”: Vila Nova, Vila São José, Pista, Ilha, Ponte 1, Ponte 2, Capoeira 1, Capoeira 2, Lado do Daniel, Cigana, Trilho, Lagoa dos Tapebas, Barra Nova and Açude – and was soon joined by Mestre Antônio, Malícias, Itambé and Grilo.

At first, the Association’s dynamics comprised meetings each Wednesday at Ponte 1, the association’s central space, and each Sunday rotated to one of the 17 “communities”. Sebastião André da Conceição, the Sebastião “Crente”, who at the time was a sociocultural promoter of the NGO World Vision, former “white” president of the Association and previous director of Caucaia’s Rural Workers Union, stated in an interview that the Tapeba issue was key to instigating agrarian reform in Caucaia.

The Rural Workers Union had previously been an important actor in the initial process of political organization and struggle for land. A decade before the church began to work through the EACR and the ACRC, the union mediated one of the main experiences for recognition of the Tapebas’ rights to land – in the context of the progressive expropriation of their ancestral territory presented before. It involved a precarious concession of plots of land that gave origin to the Vila dos Tamancões, a nucleus of the Lagoa do Tapeba 1 village. Gilberto Rocha Miranda, having inherited part of the land of his father, Alfredo Miranda, coerced the Tapeba families who resided there to leave the land where they lived as “residents” for generations. Because they felt it was an injustice and judged that Gilberto did not have the right to “expel them without the right to anything”, the chiefs of the displaced families turned to the union. In March 1976, the union was able to have declarations issued for each head of family, assuring permission to build houses and improvements on very small lots, promising them at a future date a deed for the transfer of rights to possession – which never took place.

Another accomplishment of the EACR was the production in 1985 of the documentary film *Tapeba: resgate e memória de uma tribo*<sup>12</sup> [Tapeba: revival and memory of a tribe] and of the *Survey of the Tapeba Indians*, completed between March and September 1986, which found 914 people in 185 families living in the communities recognized at the time. Part of the responsibility for having the Tapeba leave the “swamp” – that is, the land within the mangrove swamp of the Ceará River – was also due to the work of the EACR, which had brick houses built for the Tapeba at Pontes.<sup>13</sup>

After countless transformations in their composition, definition of purpose and forms of engagement, the Association of Communities of the Ceará River became the Association of Communities of the Tapeba Indians of Caucaia (ACITA). Recognizing its genesis in that period, on Oct. 14, 2015, in a plenary session of the Ceará state legislative assembly, ACITA, with support from allied politicians, promoted a “solemn session in homage of the 30 years of our association, which marks the history of struggle of our people in support of the demarcation of our lands and the struggle for rights”. They invited “all indigenous relatives, partners and supporters”. It would have been unthinkable to promote a session like this in the mid-1980s, in the political context of the military dictatorship, when the Tapebas’ association was still incipient.

Another attempt to establish a principle of unification and a milestone of support for the mobilization was the declaration of October 3, the eve of Saint Francis Day, as the Day of the Tapeba. This is because on Oct. 3, 1984, the man considered the last indigenous chief, “Cabo” Vítor, a son-in-law of Perna-de-Pau, died of a heart attack. With this “date for a festival, a mass and a march of the communities to the cemetery”,

<sup>12</sup> The documentary is 40 minutes long and based on a study by sociologist José Cordeiro (who was then coordinator of the Rural Communities Assistance Staff). It was produced by Hoje - Assessoria em Educação [Educational Assistance] (in which Cordeiro also worked) with resources from the Dutch Embassy and from four other religious organizations, and directed by Eusélio Oliveira. The documentary was very important, at the time, to give visibility to the Tapeba, and is available on Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxwxHx3T1Gs>).

<sup>13</sup> When in Caucaia for the first time, in November 1986, I had the opportunity to register the precarious and temporary housing where the Tapeba lived for a long time “in the mud”, “in the swamp”.

the EACR sought to strengthen “community” ties, thus giving shape to the Tapeba’s sense of constituting a whole. The testimonies report that Victor’s burial was a mobilizing event, involving family members from all the villages. A demonstration left Pontes village for the cemetery at the center of the municipality, where he was buried in a small plot of land donated by the owner of a funeral company. In 1986, Archbishop Dom Aloísio Cardeal Lorscheider held a mass on October 2 that mobilized the religious authorities of the municipality. During the service he presented a letter to the Tapeba and the Ceará communities that was widely distributed. This earned broad coverage in the local press with front page headlines. Since then, the Tapeba hold an annual march through the center of Caucaia on Oct. 3, together with other celebrations that they reworked (see next section).

This was also a period with many public demonstrations supported by segments of civil society. On July 19, 1987 the “Surpreendamental Parada Voadora a Caminho do Infinito” [The Astonishing Flying Parade on the Path to the Infinite] was held in Fortaleza. The march began at 4 pm, from the Circo Voador (The Flying Circus, a prominent cultural center at the time), passing along the Beira-Mar Avenue, with 160 indigenous people, joined by various civil society entities that composed the Pro-Tapeba Committee. The march was set for this date because it marked the end of a 30-day eviction notice issued in favor of a food corporation against five of the 64 families who lived in Vila Nova. On the previous morning, Dom Aloísio had visited some communities in the company of Cardinal Simonis, Bishop of Utrecht. On that same week, before the visit of the Cardinals, two representatives from the northeastern branch of the Indigenist Missionary Council (CIMI) were in the region, as well as the coordinator of the Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI) for the Brazilian Northeast, Apolônio Xokó. The three presented letters and declarations to the press about the situation of the Tapeba. The “Parade” ended with a show from the popular musician Fagner at the Circo Voador, and not only did it demoralize the legal eviction order issued for the TBA company (the specific focus of the demonstration), but decisively contributed to strengthening the performative discourse in the struggle to have the Tapeba acknowledged as an indigenous people.

Here we are in the domain of the “strategy of the demonstration” and of the “dialectics of the demonstration”, which has a determinant place in the imposition of perceptions and categories of perception that are at play in struggles for identity (cf. Bourdieu 1989: 117-118). The visibility that the Tapeba attained locally, regionally and nationally, the strengthening of their political organization, and the relative recognition of citizenship that they achieved since the mid 1980s, and over more than three decades of struggle, have contributed to the recovery of their self-esteem as is expressed in the use of the term “recognition” in their statements. It is not that the Tapeba were not recognized in the sociological sense of the term, because, as Bourdieu observes (1989: 117), “identity [is] this perceived being that exists fundamentally by the recognition of others”. They were, but in a stigmatized way by the regional population: “they did not have a name”, “they were dogs”, “they were not people” – as they themselves admit. When they spoke of “recognition”, they expressed a change in the attribution of status that was imbued in ethnic ascription: they were no longer perceived as inhuman, and assumed protagonism as subjects with collective rights. The change from being stigmatized to the relative recognition of their citizenship as subjects with collective rights, affected their perception by regional society and their self-image.

On the part of regional society, in addition to the already mentioned demonstrations organized by the church and civil society organizations, we see this recognition formalized in various legal and administrative diplomas, since the mid-1980s. Some of these even highlighted the close link between the Tapebas and the ecosystems that they inhabited, particularly the mangrove of the Ceará River. The Secretariat of Administration and Finances of Caucaia had the opportunity to declare to the Serviço de Patrimônio da União [Federal Patrimony Service], on August 21, 1985, that the Tapebas had lived on the Ceará River for more than 50 years. On the next day, it sanctioned Municipal Law # 416, of August 22,

1985, declaring the mangrove swamps of the Ceará river basin as an area of environmental protection and authorizing the Tapeba to monitor and zeal for compliance with this law.<sup>14</sup> In 1989, the state of Ceará, in an unprecedented manner, recognized in the state constitution, the rights, assistance to and the physical and cultural preservation of the Indians in its territory.<sup>15</sup> The following year, Caucaia's Municipal Charter, approved by the city council, included respect for the indigenous peoples, as one of its "fundamental principles", thus reiterating the recognition of the Tapeba as a distinct indigenous people.<sup>16</sup>

On the part of the Tapebas, as regards the stigma, all of this led to reconsidering the permanently tense connection between continuity and change in relation to the elders, the old people, denoted by expressions such as "tronco velho" [old trunk], "raiz do pau" [root of the tree], "da gema" [from the yolk] and "ponta de rama" [tip of the branch] – which express their concepts of time and social organization. At times, the Tapeba use disparaging stereotypes to refer to themselves, even the most pejorative ones. By doing this, they reinforce the collective recognition that they are distinguished from the whites by some of this behavior, even because they "were torn from the old trunks". But if we thus have an assertion of continuity in relation to disreputable behavior - "sure I like to have a shot" – we also note an emphasis on the changes in relation to the customs of the most elderly – "they are now more tame". The tension between the "old trunks" and "the tips of the branch" must be understood in terms of their current recognition as citizens, who are subjects with rights, an experience that is radically distinct from that of the period in which "they lived cast aside", "had no name", "were dogs" and "were not people".

It is important to emphasize that all this took place in the historic, political and institutional context of democratic transition in Brazil. The mid 1980s was a period in which Funai was still used for implementing national security guidelines (under strong pressure from the military government), but also of intense mobilization by indigenous peoples and their partners for the recognition of their rights during the National Constituent Assembly. Indigenous associations and civil society organizations – which at the time were recently established – as well as progressive sectors of the church, linked to Liberation Theology, formed a quite active indigenist political field. This explains the already mentioned political influence of the Northeastern branches of CIMI and UNI, in Fortaleza and Caucaia, in 1987, in support of the Tapeba, alongside Dom Aloísio Cardeal Lorscheider, as well as the formation of the Pro-Tapeba Committee and the political action of religious and lay people who were engaged locally.<sup>17</sup>

In part, this also helps to understand the favorable attitudes of the state and municipal governments towards the Tapebas at the time. The effects of the enactment of the Federal Constitution of 1988 with a set of rights acknowledged in a chapter entitled "On the Indians", were echoed in the attitudes and resolutions taken by the state and municipality immediately after 1988. Finally, some of the favorable municipal government positions coincided with the first mandate of Mayor Domingos José Brasileiro Pontes, who

14 "Article 7. Sole paragraph – The participation of the citizen, of the Association of the Ceará River Communities, of the Tapeba Indians' Community and of preservationist entities in the monitoring that this legal measure calls for is guaranteed" (emphasis added).

15 "Article 287 – The state will respect and insure respect for the rights, material goods, beliefs, traditions and guarantees acknowledged to the Indians by the Constitution of the Republic § 1º. The Public Ministry will designate one of its members to provide permanent legal and court assistance to the Indians of the state, their communities and organizations, in the terms of article 232 of the Constitution of the Republic. § 2º. The state will provide to the Indians of its territory, when solicited by their communities and organizations, and without interfering in their habits, beliefs and customs, technical assistance and means of survival and physical and cultural preservation".

16 "Article 1º. The municipality of Caucaia [...] adopts, in the exercise of its autonomy and as a definition of its existence, the following fundamental principles: [...] III - Absolute respect for the indigenous peoples and/or their remnants with guarantee of support to the peoples, preservation of their cultures and recognition of their social values as part (and shapers) of municipal, state and national public patrimony, and identical recognition to the normal contribution of the black race; IV – the Municipality will provide to the Tapeba people who are fixed in its territory, if solicited by their communities or organizations, without interference in their habits, beliefs and customs, technical assistance and means for their survival and physical and cultural preservation" (emphasis added).

17 The importance of this conjuncture in the recent history of Brazil turned it into an object of a vast analytical literature in various fields of knowledge. It would be burdensome to refer to all of this literature, which focuses on the conformation of the broader political field and the indigenist field in particular. I will mention only a few titles that condense some of the important dimensions of the transformations experienced at the time, as expressed in their titles: "crisis of indigenism" (Cardoso de Oliveira 1988), "essays in indigenous citizenship" (Pacheco de Oliveira & Freire 2006), "tutelage and participation", "indigenous peoples and forms of governance" (Souza Lima 2015) and some chapters from the collection by Pacheco de Oliveira (1999a).

returned to govern Caucaia again from 2000 to 2004 (at the time of the second identification study for the demarcation of the Indigenous Land). Domingão, as he was known, was a popular, charismatic and folkloric political leader – known at times as the mayor who “drinks but works”. He owned a medium-size firm in the export sector of carnaúba wax and cashew nuts (extractive activities in which many Tapebas worked), without real estate interests in the municipality.

### **The demarcation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land, the policies of recognition and the “retakings”**

The political demonstrations aforementioned, and the official declarations and legal rules produced since 1985 by different actors, made possible various institutional linkages based on the recognition of the Tapeba as an indigenous people. Of these, the main one was that which led to the recognition of their territorial rights by means of the administrative procedure for the demarcation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land. Since its initiation in 1985,<sup>18</sup> this procedure was led in parallel to the recognition of the Tapeba by Brazilian society and the state – at its various levels (federal, state and municipal) – given the progressive accumulation of evidence in this direction. One can say that the Tapeba won the symbolic struggle for recognition, with very few now questioning their ancestry.<sup>19</sup> If today they are political subjects in their own right, and are served by the policies of indigenous school education and differentiated indigenous healthcare, the struggle for demarcation of the indigenous land was the backbone of this entire process and continues until today.

The Tapeba Indigenous Land was the object of three identification studies. Since its first identification, in 1986, it passed through all the vicissitudes of the various changes in the administrative procedure for demarcation of indigenous lands, surviving all of them. During this period, the Indigenous Land changed in perimeter and area, although fundamental territorial elements have been conserved over time. Given the limits of this article, I will only refer to the most significant aspects.

Considering 1984 as a reference year, because it was when the EACR began its work in Caucaia, the official recognition of the Tapebas and their land by the federal government, at this first moment, was relatively agile. Everything took place in about four years at a time when Funai was not even present in Ceará. Funai included the Tapeba Indigenous Land in the operating program of the Identification Division in 1985; the first identification study was concluded in October 1986; the land survey was conducted in September 1987; and the process was reviewed by the Interministerial Working Group (GTI) created by Decree n° 94.945/87 in July 1988. All of this took place before the enactment of the Federal Constitution of 1988. The GTI decided that the procedure be dropped for reasons that cannot be detailed here. This decision triggered a generalized reaction from the Tapebas, social movements, the Archdiocese, the state government, CIMI Northeast, the Federal Attorney General’s Office and the state legislature of Ceará, as well as countless other civil society organizations, and the local press gave broad coverage to these responses.

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<sup>18</sup> When it was included in the operational program of Funai’s Identification Division (DID). The original document of the Funai Process/BSB/1986/85 is a petition from 70 Tapebas, dated May 20, 1985, which was filed simultaneously in three different locations: the office of the Presidency of the Republic, the office of the Ministry of the Treasury and the office of the President of Funai. To the latter, the 70 Tapeba signatories requested “land for us to live on and plant” and “a medical clinic and school for the Indians”. In April 1985, a month before this petition was submitted, another process began in another division of Funai: the Assessoria de Estudos e Pesquisas [The Study and Research Advisory Board] (AESP) – for reasons that cannot be explained here given the limits of this article.

<sup>19</sup> The opponents and detractors of the Tapebas, however, did not disappear. They may not be as impetuous as they had been, but their presence cannot be underestimated, given the erratic and multifaceted nature of political situations. In November 2016, for example, I participated as a witness in a public instructional hearing, called by a federal judge of the Third Court of the Judicial Branch of Ceará, as part of a public civil suit filed by the federal public ministry against the federal government and Funai (Process # 0005825-39.2013.4.05.8100). The hearing was held in the auditorium of that judicial branch, in Fortaleza. The lawyer for a number of non-Indian occupants of the Tapeba Indigenous Land, Dr. Djalro Dutra, was there and repeated the affirmation that the Tapebas are not Indians.

The land survey done at the time of this first identification study was an extremely conflictive process marked by death threats to the Tapebas and members of the EACR. Rural property owners resisted inspections of their land. Many sold their properties, others subdivided them, and others undertook construction to strengthen their tenure claims. The change in the local rural landscape was noticed in the fencing of ponds, lakes and springs of common use for the Tapebas and regional residents; in the renewal and expansion of the fences; and in the progressive growth of subdivisions and leasing of lands – preferably to non-indigenous people.

After countless administrative and judicial procedures, some of which were related to regulatory changes – from the new constitution to new rules for the demarcation procedure – the Tapeba Indigenous Land was declared a permanent possession of the Indians by Edict # 967, of 24/09/1997, of the Ministry of Justice, with an area of 4,658 ha. and a perimeter of 77 km. The edict, however, was judicially challenged shortly afterwards by the municipal government of Caucaia (PMC) in the Superior Court of Justice (STJ) in suit # 5.505/DF (97/0085188-5), filed on 11/19/1997. The municipal government alleged, among other things, that Funai had not complied with the decision of the Ministry of Justice, by failing to re-examine the limits of the area by including a representative of the municipality in the identification working group. In May 1998, the First Section of the Superior Court decided “to annul Edict # 967/97 and all the acts practiced in the administrative process up to and including the publication, and [that] it proceed to the publication in the manner required by Decree # 1.775/96”.

The appeals from the Tapeba were rejected by the First Section of the STJ on Dec. 9, 1998. One year later, on Dec. 30, 1999, Marcelo Luís C. Rodopiano de Oliveira (OAB 5.294/DF) undersigned a communiqué of Funai’s general attorney (Informação nº 867), expressing his understanding (after reading the agreement and vote of the minister rapporteur of the suit), that Funai must establish a new working group, according to Decree # 1.775/96. Only in January 2001 was the Tapeba Indigenous Land included once again on the list of lands for identification. Another year passed until Funai would determine, in Edict # 1185/PRES/2002, the establishment of a working group to lead new studies of identification and delimitation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land, under the terms of Decree # 1775/96 – a working group that I coordinated.

Note that after the unprecedented agility observed in the mid 1980s, the demarcation procedure of the Tapeba Indigenous Land entered the standard bureaucratic and political morass typical of the Brazilian state.

The summary of the Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation (RCID) of the second identification study was published in the *Diário Oficial da União* (DOU) on April 20, 2004, delimiting the Tapeba Indigenous Land with an area of 4,767 ha. and a perimeter of 81 km. The procedure, however, was once again invalidated in court. The municipal government filed Complaint # 2.651-DF alleging that the identification procedure of the Tapeba Indigenous Land had not respected the previous STJ decision in response to the suit the municipality had filed in November 1997, given that the second working group for identification did not include a representative of the municipality. The STJ ruled in favor of the municipality’s complaint on June 11, 2008.

Note that until 2010, when the final ruling of the Superior Court was published, there was no law calling for the participation of states and municipalities in the demarcation of indigenous lands. It was only with Edict # 2.498 of the Ministry of Justice of Oct. 31, 2011, that participation of the federative entities became mandatory in the administrative procedure for demarcation of Indigenous Lands. In a previous article (Barretto Fº 2017), I detailed all of these recent comings and goings of the demarcation procedure of the Tapeba Indigenous Land, and observed how it served as a trial balloon for heterodox innovations in this procedure. Some of the new requirements – such as the participation of representatives of states

and municipalities and the realization of “dialog sessions” prior to administrative decisions – signaled the growing subordination of the demarcation of the indigenous lands to markedly political influence, making the recognition of territorial rights more vulnerable.

Schooled by the administrative and judicial manipulations, and wanting to assure greater knowledge and control over the demarcation procedure, the Tapebas matured in this process, always demanding greater participation in the identification studies. The creation of the first technical group for identification was preceded by an understanding between the institutions and organizations related to the issue, in order to keep Funai informed about the situation of the Tapebas and to demand the presence of an indigenous representative in the process. Thus, the working group established at the time included a representative of the EACR in its formal composition. It was not possible to have a formally recognized indigenous representative participate in the second working group for identification. Nevertheless, the Tapebas sent two of their most important leaders to accompany all the work. Still dissatisfied with the way information about the studies was disseminated at that time, in September 2010 the Tapebas formed a “Permanent Commission to Accompany and Integrate the Activities of the Working Group” to directly monitor the third study – in which the working group included participation of formally designated representatives of the municipality and the state. Comprised of 23 indigenous people representing the 11 main villages, the Commission traveled by van, monitoring the field work of the working group, which was undertaken in three different periods: September and December 2010, and May to June of 2011. In the two most recent studies – which I coordinated – we sought to fully comply with Decree 1.775/96 – that ascertains the participation of the indigenous group concerned, represented in its own ways, at all stages of the demarcation procedure.

The most recent Substantiated Report of Identification and Delimitation for the Tapeba Indigenous Land was completed in 2013, and was approved on May 23, 2013, through Technical Report # 18/CGID/2013. The publication of its summary in the *Diário Oficial da União (DOU)*, however, was delayed three months after approval, because of maneuvering that indicated the subordination of the procedure to political issues. These movements were strongly condemned by the indigenous movement, as I describe and analyze in Barretto F<sup>o</sup> (2017). In parallel, in the judicial sphere, still in 2013, a new suit was filed in the Federal Regional Court (TRF) of the 5<sup>th</sup> Region – this time by private groups – with the objective of annulling the Tapeba Indigenous Land demarcation procedure (Restraining Order (MC) # 0801865-92.2013.4.05.000). The estate of Emmanuel de Oliveira de Arruda Coelho alleged that he had been denied the right to challenge the administrative procedure during its due course and that his property, known as Soledade Farm, which partially coincides with the delimited indigenous land, had been economically exploited by his family since the early twentieth century. Although there is no legal requirement to notify private parties who hold land deeds within indigenous lands studied by Funai and although the proponent of the suit had already filed administrative questionings in different steps of the demarcation procedure, the argument was accepted and the process suspended once again.

Instead of appealing the decision, Funai – based on what it considered to be the Tapeba people’s right to exercise their free, informed and sovereign will, although acknowledging that part of the group was in a situation of vulnerability – articulated with them a judicial agreement to overcome this impasse. Celebrated between the Tapebas, representatives of the Arruda family, the state and municipal governments, Funai and the Ministry of Justice, the settlement agreement was judicially approved on April 19, 2016 and called for the removal of areas from the Tapeba Indigenous Land, as it had been demarcated in August 2013 with an area of 5,838 ha. and a perimeter of 100 km for an estimated population of 6,559 inhabitants. It thus excluded a part of the Soledade Farm owned by the Arruda family and two other areas of interest to the municipal government of Caucaia. In compensation, two other parts of the Soledad farm remained within

the delimited indigenous land, one of which went beyond its limits, but which would be incorporated to it under the terms of the agreement. The Arruda family dropped its suit to annul the demarcation process of the indigenous land. The other participants in the agreement, within their attributions, undertook to implement a set of actions with clear deadlines.

The main action was the issuing of the declaratory Edict by the Ministry of Justice, which took place on Sept. 4, 2017, through Edict # 734, of August 31, 2017, which declared the Tapeba Indigenous Land to be a permanent possession of the indigenous people, with an area of 5.294 ha. – therefore, smaller than the area demarcated in August 2013.

Presented in this manner, it appears that the entire procedure took place at a merely administrative level, when in fact, the Tapebas were protagonists of struggles, conquests and resistance that have kept the process alive until today. Two elements central to the mobilization of the Tapeba that drove the recognition of their territorial rights were the struggle for differentiated indigenous school education and the actions to retake portions of their territory – which in turn, are related to the strong demographic expansion that they experienced in the past 20 years.

There is a close connection between the processes of reconquering land, which intensified since the late 1990s, and the indigenous schools. Nine of the eleven indigenous schools existing in the Tapeba Indigenous Land in 2012 were in peri-urban and rural zones – an indicator of the importance of the indigenous presence in these zones – and all of them in areas retaken by the Tapebas (Nascimento 2009b: 146; Tófoli 2010). Schools are central to Tapeba culture, identity and politics and this is evident in their struggle to expand the provision of education, as well as its qualification and investments and improvements in public facilities. Between 2001 – when the process of differentiated indigenous teacher training began – and 2004 – when the first class graduated from this course – the number of indigenous schools rose from three to nine, with a sharp rise in the number of teachers and students (Tófoli 2010: 66). In 2012, nearly 25% of the Tapeba indigenous population was matriculated at some level of schooling. From a situation where schools functioned with precarious infrastructure and indigenous teachers worked voluntarily, without specific teaching materials, most often outdoors or in precarious buildings (see photos in Nascimento 2009b: 141-144), schools became a target of investments by the state government in the construction of new facilities.

This is also reflected in the pedagogical practices of the indigenous Tapeba teachers, which, as Nascimento observed, constitute “a form of ritualization of ethnic resistance”. The types of “responses and ways of coping with situations of prejudice”, thus contributed to consolidating “the image of the differentiated school as ‘the place of culture’” (Nascimento 2009a: 112 and 157). An expression of this is the connection of the celebration of Tapeba Indian Day (each October 3), with the “Carnaúba Festival”, the “Indigenous Games” and the “Indigenous Cultural Fair”. This fair is promoted yearly in October by teachers and students of the indigenous schools, by the Tapeba Indigenous Teachers Association (APROINT) with support from ACITA, Funai, the state secretariat of education, the Education Council of Ceará and the municipal secretariats of education and culture of Caucaia. The Indigenous Culture Fair lasts for three days, during which there are exhibitions of products, presentations by students and, on the last night, the “Carnaúba Festival”. This festival is usually held in October, between Saint Francis day and Brazil’s Patron Saint day, October 12, in the sacred yard of the *paus-brancos* (white woods), to the south of the Tapeba lake, to celebrate the value of the carnaubeira (*Copernicia prunifera*) and its derivatives in the Tapeba economy.<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile, although in a broad sense land retakings are not a novelty among the Tapebas, they did

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20 It is not by chance that the Tapeba call it the “tree of life”. This is the title of an 18-minute documentary film they produced themselves during the “Workshops in Education, Reporting and Creating in Community Journalism” (specifically the workshop in Indigenous environmental cinema) of the Program in Social Communication with the Tapeba and Anacé Communities of the “Basic Environmental Plan (PBA) - Tapeba and Anacé Indigenous Component” of the Project to Increase the Capacity and Improve the BR-222/CE federal highway. The documentary can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbRFkkIvzXc>.

intensify in the late 1990s (see table with general data in Tófoli 2010: 148) in a synergic relationship with the demarcation of the Tapeba Indigenous Land. We recall that the first declaratory edict of the Indigenous Land was in 1997. Tófoli (2010) – who was an assistant to the working group that led the third identification study – historically and ethnographically describes, and presents georeferenced data for 16 retakings of land related to ten Tapeba local groups over nearly 20 years. She alludes to the motivations and presents the uses of the spaces thus appropriated in each retaking, while comparing them to the result of the identification studies of the Tapeba Indigenous Land. In doing so, Tófoli defines the retakings as “geographically referenced political actions that impact [the] sociability of individuals”. They emerged “mainly due to the decrease in spaces available in the territory that they traditionally used, and to the historic relationship of domination of the local farmers over the indigenous population, which constantly forced them to change their residence”. To this was added, since the second half of the twentieth century, the “dynamic of occupation of spaces imposed by the logic of capital, perceived in the construction and expansion of highways that cut through the territory, the growing urbanization and industrialization, which accentuated the strangulation of the accessible spaces” (Tófoli 2010: 88-9).

Tófoli’s study reveals the close connection of the land retaking processes with the provision of space for housing and schools. It also addresses the importance of access to resources needed for social reproduction and economic and cultural well-being (water and land for cultivation) which complement the also important aspect of sociability and social interaction (football). The issues are closely related to the installation of public facilities: the schools themselves, football fields, health clinics and cultural centers. These are ways to consolidate the occupation of these areas and efforts to overcome the persistent instability and the mood of permanent threat of eviction that weigh on the Tapeba settlements until today. It is thus not surprising that nearly all of these land retakings have involved conflicts with occupants and the police.

The land retakings therefore represent both an authentic anthropogeographic movement and an autonomous political movement. They are anthropogeographic because the Tapebas, on one hand, are experiencing accentuated demographic growth that the insignificant parcels of land where they live today are not able to sustain. On the other hand, the Tapeba attempt to adapt their geographic volume – the areas that they effectively occupy and through which they move daily – to their mental volume – the territory recognized as theirs through their oral traditions. The issues are political because they involve performative acts by which the Tapebas attempt to express, through effective actions, their demands and the understanding that they have of the situation in which they live today. Even if they do not directly and intentionally question the procedures for demarcation of the Indigenous Land, the retakings interact with them by reckoning the significance of the opportunities created and by expressing the Tapeba anthropogeography.

## **Final considerations**

A toponym, a referent of common ancestry and an allusion to a specific way of being, Tapeba has been configured as an ethnic subject and territory during a long historic process in which a varied and changing set of agents and institutions have interacted. Fruits of hybridization and individuation of segments of distinct indigenous peoples submitted to mutant regimes of administration of indigenous peoples and corresponding laws for ordering land ownership, they have emerged and constituted themselves as a group and a territory by means of various forms of accommodation and resistance to mechanisms of control, domination and discipline that have sought to repress, annihilate or assimilate them.

Contemporarily, their political-identity project has focused on the conquest of demarcation of their land, whether through political engagement in the administrative sphere, or through retakings of land;

and in securing access to formal education, in which the differentiated school is seen as an important place of culture. The Tapeba demographic expansion of the past 20 years should be understood within the framework of the feedback effects on the ethnic dynamic of public policies of differentiated attention and access to indigenous healthcare and education. These policies have been established and consolidated since the mid 1990s, and have favored the Tapeba, even if precariously. Because of the positive discrimination prompted by these policies, many Tapeba are no longer ashamed of their condition as Indians. Overcoming the stigma that still weighs against them, they came to recognize themselves as indigenous. Moreover, there has been an expansion of literacy among the Tapeba, sparked by differentiated and intercultural education (and all that goes along with this), an improvement of their sanitary conditions and an expansion of their coverage by vaccines.

It is not necessary to think far ahead to calculate the consequences of these processes - whether in terms of recovery of self-esteem, or in terms of the (re)valuation of the history and ancestry of the group - for the demographic dynamics and the ethnic frontier. The Tapeba today live in permanent and intense contact with the regional population: they are engaged in local productive activities; there are interethnic marriages, which are more frequent in certain local groups than in others; they maintain relations of social proximity, through the constitution of fictitious kinship relations; and in certain cases maintain a relative cordiality in neighborly relations. The growing awareness of their rights as an indigenous people and the effects of the policies they have pursued over the past two decades mean that the estimate of the Tapeba demography is not completed and the generous identity mesh that binds the group together is open ended - which helps us understand the enduring expansion of their vital space.

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*Henyo T. Barretto Filho*

Department of Anthropology/University of Brasília

Contact: henyo@unb.br

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# Kaingang ethnic territories

*Prof. Dr. Ricardo Cid Fernandes*

*MSc. Paulo Roberto Homem de Góes*

Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba/PR, Brasil

## **Abstract**

This article presents an overview of Kaingang ethnic territorialization processes in Southern Brazil. Based on historical and ethnographic data, this article analyzes tensions found in the agencyings of territories, emphasizing the resistance of the Kaingang in face of impositions from colonization. The analysis focuses on the different periods of colonial expansion, highlighting the processes of territorial expropriation, conflicts, struggles and negotiations between the Kaingang and different agents of the state. The main objective is to broaden the debates about the importance of the ethnic territories in southern Brazil, based on an appreciation of the perspective of the Kaingang about the processes of territorial confinement and their “retakings” of territories in the past forty years.

**Keywords:** territories, colonization, indigenous policy, retaking, Kaingang.

# Territórios étnicos kaingang

## Resumo

Este artigo apresenta um panorama dos processos de territorialização étnica nos estados do Sul do Brasil. Com base em dados históricos e etnográficos este artigo apresenta um panorama para a análise da tensão nos agenciamentos de seus territórios, enfatizando a resistência dos Kaingang em face às imposições da colonização. As análises desenvolvidas enfocam os diferentes períodos da expansão colonial, destacando os processos de expropriação territorial, conflitos, lutas e negociações entre os Kaingang e diferentes agentes do Estado. O principal objetivo é ampliar os debates sobre a importância dos territórios étnicos no sul do Brasil a partir da valorização da perspectiva dos Kaingang sobre os processos de confinamento territorial e sobre os processos de retomadas de territórios empreendidos nos últimos quarenta anos.

**Palavras-chave:** territórios, colonização, indigenismo, retomada, Kaingang.

# Kaingang ethnic territories

Ricardo Cid Fernandes

Paulo Roberto Homem de Góes

## Introduction

The Kaingang live in Southern Brazil in areas officially recognized by the Brazilian state. There are 38 Indigenous Lands that have been approved or are in the process of official recognition which, combined, encompass just over 250 thousand hectares. Other locations are undergoing an identification process yet others have had no official measures taken.<sup>1</sup> There are also Kaingang who live in unofficial areas: encampments in improvised conditions on roadsides or in remote rural areas. Some live in cities in the interior, on rural properties, in state capitals, in urban villages or mixed in with the tumultuous routines of Brazilian cities. They are part of the territory and the population, at least 40 thousand people, one of the most populous indigenous groups in Brazil.

Any generalization about the presence of the Kaingang in Southern Brazil would be limited. The historic analyses, the archeological hypotheses and the ethnographic efforts are not capable of completely encompassing the complexities of the conflicts, the struggles, negotiations and meanings of land to the Kaingang. Nevertheless, in this article we present an overview to analyze tensions in the agencyings of territories, emphasizing the resistance of the Kaingang in response to the impositions of colonization. We risk analyzing the strategies and results attained in processes of long duration, which involve interlinking discourses, institutions, political movements, frontiers and agencies. By definition the study is incomplete, as it is a theme under construction.

The discussion in this article about ethnic territories in Southern Brazil at times gets lost in details and at times is satisfied with generalities. The theme is vast, but focuses on a common point: the Kaingang, and their constant effort to construct their territories. The theoretical perspective adopted follows the notion of the “territorialization process”, which operates as a central focus for understanding the historic and contemporary experience of the Kaingang. As carefully developed by João Pacheco de Oliveira (1998), the concept of the territorialization process lends itself to the analysis of the articulation between two distinct orders of phenomenon. On one hand are the political-administrative formulations that mark the action of the nation-state on a defined object such as indigenous communities, which were typically a combination of land and people specific to colonial states.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand are the identity constructions, which with greater or lesser flexibility refer to the arrangement around ethnicity and its cultural forms. To support the analysis of ethnic territories, this theoretical perspective has the merit of placing side by side categories of the Kaingang and categories of the *fóg* (the whites or non-Indians, as they say), categories of state and categories opposed to the state.

Conquest – Colonization – Confinement – Retakings; is the series of phases of the Kaingang’s territorialization process that will be discussed in this article – although it does not exhaust the issue. In general lines, each phase corresponds to a period: Conquest and Colonization to the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries; confinement concerns the twentieth century and retakings the late twentieth and

<sup>1</sup> For detailed information about the legal situation of each Kaingang land consult the Instituto Socioambiental which has a regularly updated data base open to public access about the situation of all the indigenous lands in Brazil found at: [www.socioambiental.org](http://www.socioambiental.org).

<sup>2</sup> As the author emphasizes, this classification is the conceptual basis used by different colonial traditions in definitions such as: “indigenous community”, autochthon peoples”, “first nations” and others.

twenty-first century. They are generalizations used for the sole purpose of offering a broad frame of reference that can contextualize discussions about the ethnic territories of the South. In this sense, the historic and ethnographic data are presented according to the division of the three states that now compose Southern Brazil: Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul.

The considerations about each phase were based on specific theoretical references that contribute to the discussion about the pressures on the Kaingang and their territories.<sup>3</sup> The analysis of the Conquest and Colonization phase overlaps the results of archeological studies with studies of the “new indigenous history”<sup>4</sup> or ethno-history.<sup>5</sup> The analysis about the Confinement phase consists fundamentally in the theoretical-ethnographic approximation to the tensions between the tutelary power of the state<sup>6</sup> and the indigenous political organization, notably, constructed around the chiefs, or the *Pã’í Mág* as the Kaingang call them. The analysis of the retakings is based on recent ethnographies that focus on the Kaingang’s strategies for resistance, confrontation and political articulation in the production of new ethnic rights and territories.

### **Jê Territories in the South: plateaus and pine trees**

The Kaingang presence in Southern Brazil dates back approximately three thousand years before the present when, through migratory processes still poorly understood, there was a movement of Jê groups from Brazil’s Central Plateau to the plateaus of the South (Urban, 1992). Contemporaneously, the Kaingang, along with the Xokleng,<sup>7</sup> constitute the southern branch of the Jê linguistic family, which pertains to the Macro-Jê linguistic trunk. According to linguistic studies, the historic distribution of the Jê languages began from a Proto-Jê nucleus that subdivided into Jê of the North (northern and central) and Jê of the South, composed of the Kaingang and Xokleng languages. In keeping with this classification, archeological studies demonstrate that the geographic distribution of the Jê of the South has some ecological and morphological similarities with the other Jê peoples (a preference for regions of plains and the headwaters of rivers, the establishment of central and peripheral settlements and the presence of mortuary structures organized in pairs). This is a complex theme that awaits advances in the integration of archeological and ethnological research.<sup>8</sup>

The evidence of the presence of the Jê groups among the first occupants of the meridional territories are related to the occurrence of subterranean houses distributed in agglomerations, funeral complexes and ceremonial centers (Iriarte, 2013; Noelli & Souza, 2017) that involve sophisticated land engineering techniques. Recent archeological studies demonstrate that the southern Jê occupied these residential

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3 There is an impressive bibliographic production about the Kaingang. According to archeologist Francisco Noelli (1998), by the 1990s there were 1,127 publications about the Kaingang, addressing themes such as archeology, history, linguistics, anthropology, education, law and others. Twenty-eight years after this archeologist’s cataloging efforts the publications have multiplied. It is now reasonable to suppose that there are more than 1,500 published works. Considering this vast production, the bibliographic references cited in this article seek to refer to productions of different generations of researchers, with different institutional affiliations and theoretical perspectives. Inevitably, due to the scope of this article, some important studies will not be cited.

4 As John Monteiro (2001) affirms, “the new indigenous history” encompasses studies, which in Brazil since the late 1970’s, combine issues of history and anthropology in the analysis of themes that emerge from the indigenous movement, above all issues related to historic and territorial rights.

5 As Mota and Novak highlight (2013), ethno-history is defined not only by the themes that it addresses, but by a methodology that combines documental sources, oral history and ethnography. Anthropologist Marta Amoroso, who does not define herself as an ethno-historian, upon studying the Kaingang of the nineteenth century, calls attention to the contribution that the concepts of ethnology offer to the ethno-historical analyses (Amoroso, 1998).

6 The development of theory about the tutelary power of the state, developed mainly in the studies of Antônio Carlos de Souza Lima, explores the ways that the state creates a bureaucracy that is ideologically linked to the notion of “pacification” to exercise control over indigenous territories, politics, economies and ways of life.

7 The Xokleng, who in the past were classified as Aweikoma-Kaingang (Métraux, 1946) live mostly in the Ibirama (SC) Indigenous Land. They now call themselves La Klanõ. About the classification of the Jê languages, see D’Angelis 2002.

8 We use “ethnology” to denominate the group of methods (archeological, linguistic, ethnohistoric and ethnographic) used to advance scientific knowledge about a given ethnic group.

and ceremonial structures uninterrupted for long periods.<sup>9</sup> It is significant that while the archeological evidence confirms the long term occupation in the upper portions of the plateau, historical and ethnographic analyses demonstrate that all of the current Kaingang indigenous lands are located to the west of the main archeological complexes studied. The conquest and colonialization forced the abandonment of the underground and ceremonial structures on the mountain plateau of Santa Catarina and the first Plateau of Paraná. This movement to the west, probably placed pressure on other Jê groups that were already established in the plains of the interior, on the courses of the Uruguay, Iguazu, Ivaí, Piquiri, Tibagi and Paranapanema Rivers.

The archeological studies prove not only the long duration of the presence of Jê groups on the plateaus, but also provide indications that for centuries the Kaingang groups and their ancestors led processes of cultural construction of the landscapes of Brazil's South. The *araucária angustifolia* (Paraná pine) is a living expression of this culturalized landscape. It is possible to consider, as do ethnoecology studies<sup>10</sup> about the role of human groups on the formation of the Amazon forest, that the Kaingang ancestors were also responsible for the formation of the araucária forest in the highlands of the South.<sup>11</sup> The *Fág* (the term for pine in the Kaingang language) is simultaneously the central element of the diet,<sup>12</sup> and a marker of territories<sup>13</sup> and the main object (*konkei*) of the *kiki*<sup>14</sup> ritual - considered the most important Kaingang ritual.

Not by chance, during colonization, the araucária, which is found on the state flag of Paraná, was transformed into a symbol of the “nature” of southern Brazil. As in other regions, to establish a symbolic control of territory, the state sought to dissolve the identities that created obstacles to the construction of the “demographic void”, a key concept that legitimates the colonizing project.<sup>15</sup> The conquest and colonization in the South was the result of successive practices of transformations of cultural landscapes, suppression of ethnic territories and political control over peoples and persons.

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9 Studies at a large underground house (18 meters in diameter) confirm with radiocarbon dating that there was continuous occupation on the Catarinense Plateau from 1395 d.C to 1650 d.C (Souza J.G. et al. 2016). The same archeological data demonstrate that the abandonment of the large houses only occurred with the consolidation of the “troop trail” in the eighteenth century.

10 Among the researchers who study indigenous groups in Brazil from the ethno-ecology perspective stand out the publications of William Ballée. He explores the importance of botanic species introduced and the formation of anthropogenic forests based on his studies with the Ka'apor Indians and the *cabocla* communities of the Amazon (Ballée 1994 and 2013)

11 On the process of construction of landscapes on the highlands of Southern Brazil, see Cardenas *et al* 2015, and the publications of the Jê Landscapes of Southern Brazil project.

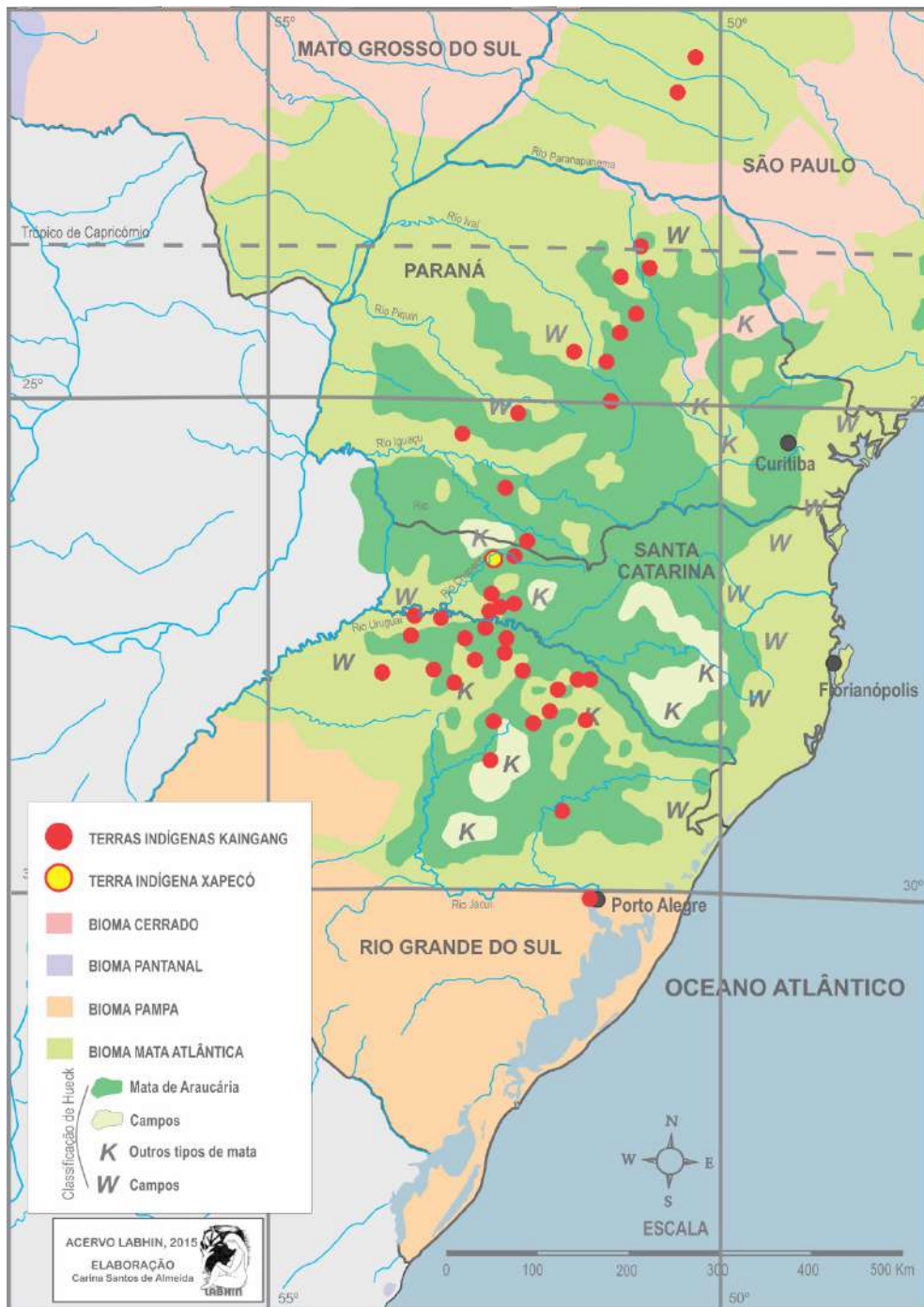
12 From the araucária the Kaingang eat the nut, the pinecone, raw, cooked or roasted. They also eat the *fág tó ga* - the small larva that grows in the tree, which is considered a delicacy. Corteletti (2016) confirms, with archeological studies, that the *pinhão* [pine “nut”] is part of the Kaingang diet since the occupation of the underground houses.

13 Segundo Becker (1976) the araucária forests were considered to be markers of territory among the Kaingang chiefs in Rio Grande do Sul in the nineteenth century.

14 As Créepau (1997) and others report, the trunk of the araucária is used as a *cocho* (trough) in which mead is fermented, which is served on the last night of the *kiki* ritual, the cult to the Kaingang dead.

15 The concept of ‘demographic void’ as used in the historiography of Southern Brazil was criticized in detail and deconstructed with the studies and publications of ethnohistorian Lúcio Tadeu Mota.

**Figure 01:** Location of the current Kaingang Indigenous Lands in the Atlantic Forest biome and in the context of the Araucária Forest (Almeida 2015:77)<sup>16</sup>. Subtitles: Kaingang Indigenous Lands, Xaçepó Indigenous Land, Cerrado Biome, Pantanal Biome, Pampa Biome, Atlantic Forest Biome, Araucária Forest, Plains, K Other types of forest, W Plai



### Conquest and Colonization: hostility and “suspension of the effects of humanity”

The first centuries of colonization were marked by the disputes between the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns and by the Jesuit Mission project. In the early seventeenth century, in the region of the Paraná River, a large colonial and civilizatory frontier was implanted that would include the Ciudad Real del Guaira and the Jesuit Missions. In this region, which is now formed by the countries of Paraguay, Argentina and

<sup>16</sup> Source: Prepared by Carina S. de Almeida based on the Mapa de Biomas/IBGE (2004) and Hueck (2015).

Brazil, missionaries from the Companhia de Jesus dedicated themselves to the catechism and civilizing of the Guarani groups. According to Mota & Novak (2013), on the margins of the Tibagi, Ivaí, Piqueri and Iguaçu Rivers dozens of Missions were implanted. Also in the early seventeenth century, in the name of the Portuguese Crown and in search of indigenous slaves, *bandeirantes* from São Paulo destroyed Guaíra and the Reduções. To resist the predators from São Paulo, many “*fled to the jungle*”, others went to the south, together with the priests, to found the Sete Povos das Missões [Seven Peoples of the Missions]<sup>17</sup> (Mota 1994:70).

In this period arose the first documents that registered a variety of information about the ancestors of the Kaingang. They were identified as groups very hostile to contact. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were recognized by various denominations, including: Gualachos, Guaianá, Guañanas, Goianás, Guaianas, Kamé, Coroado, Pé-largo, Dorins and Jac-fé. Occupying the fields and forests of the meridional plateau, the Kaingang rejected the policy that sought to attract them to the Missions and to the military encampments. In the first half of the eighteenth century the Guaranítica Wars led to an end of the Jesuit project. The border disputes between Spain and Portugal, as well as the hostility of the Kaingang, caused the region of the southern plateau region, towards the Paraná river basin, to remain “wild” and denationalized until the early nineteenth century.

The axis of Portuguese colonization on the Kaingang territory developed from the east. On the first plateau, close to the coast, in 1704 the Estrada Real [The Royal Road] was constructed, which was initially formed by the land connection between Nossa Senhora da Ponte de Sorocaba and Nossa Senhora da Luz dos Pinhais de Curitiba. Since then, this road has been used as a regular commercial route.<sup>18</sup> Between 1728 and 1731 this route was prolonged to Viamão (now in Rio Grande do Sul state) forming the Caminho de Tropas [Troop Trail].<sup>19</sup> Beginning from the Estrada Real and the Caminho de Tropas new trails were opened towards the interior, accompanying the course of the main rivers. Pressured by the advance of the mule trains, some of the Kaingang moved to the west, leaving their territories in the plains regions known as the Campos Gerais, the Campos de Curitiba and the Campos de Lages.

This was the context of the conquest of the Campos de Guarapuava (the *Coranbang-Rê*<sup>20</sup>) the purpose of which was to “*expand the Domains of S.Mage. through the backwoods of this Brazil to the Plata River - using, to do so, the means of winning through industry the time lost*” (Franco 1943:41). The discovery of these plains, at the interior of what is now Paraná, occurred with the expeditions of Lieutenant Coronel Afonso Botelho, between 1768 and 1774. The cartography and iconography of those expeditions present a wealth of details that reveal the interest of the colonizers in controlling the lands and peoples of the region.

17 The Sete Povos das Missões, installed in 1682 in the northeast corner of what is now Rio Grande do Sul state, was attacked and destroyed by *bandeirantes* in 1756. This period is generally known as that of the ‘guerras guaraníticas’.

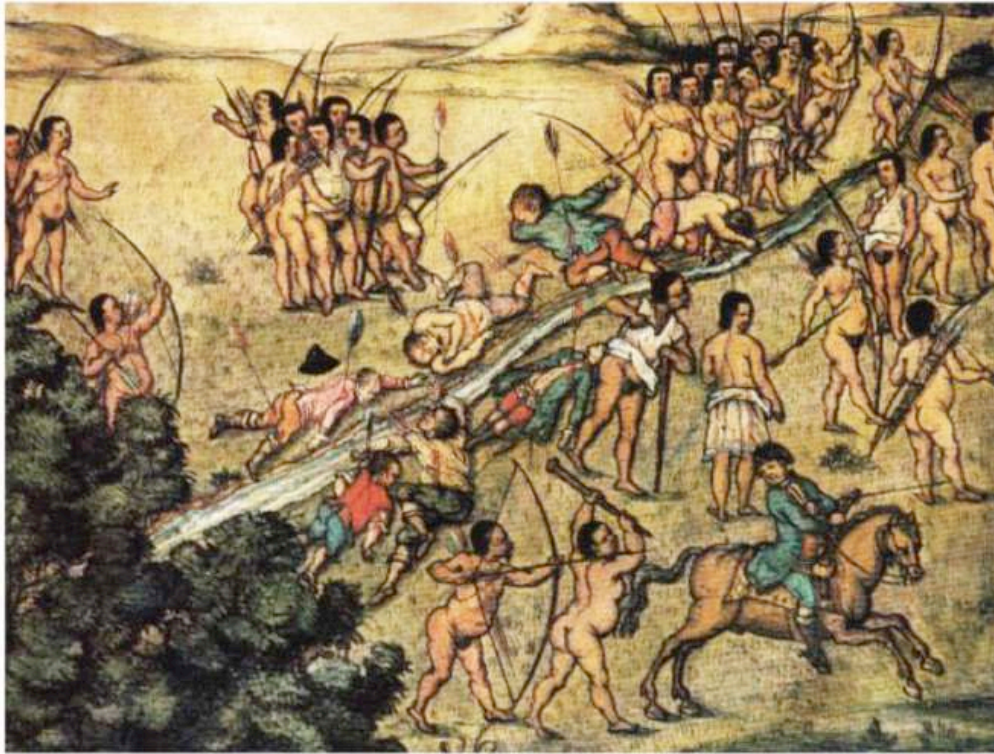
18 Although there is no direct equivalence, it is pertinent to consider that the troop trails correspond to the main highways that currently link Brazil’s Southern and Southeastern regions over the plateau (part of federal highway BR 116 and state highway PR 151).

19 The caminho de Tropas [troop trail] linked the cities of Viamão (Rio Grande do Sul) and Sorocaba (São Paulo), it was mainly used to transport cattle and goods, including slaves. Along this trail the encampments and starting points of the mule teams were transformed into ranches and cities that until today are points of reference in the southern region. In addition to the consolidation of the commercial route, the mule teams are at the base of a way of life that is highly valued regionally, associated to animal husbandry, especially horses and to a certain ethos that approximates the personalities of the pioneer, the *bandoleiro* [bandit] and the merchant.

20 According to the translation by Borba (1908) *Coranbang-Rê* corresponds to the ‘campo da grande clareira’ [plain with the large clearing], see also Weisemann 2011.



**Figure 03** Print 36: Conquest of the Guarapuava plains (Amoroso et al., 2003)



**Figure 04** Print 38: Conquest of the Guarapuava plains (Amoroso et al., 2003)



The expeditions of Afonso Botelho did not guarantee the permanence of the colonizers in the region. The troops were expelled by the Kaingang.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, the recognition of these territories was decisive for subsequent colonial initiatives. To the north of Guarapuava, there were constant movements of

<sup>23</sup> The violence of the encounter was portrayed in three canvases. Prints 36 and 38 depict indigenous shooting arrows against wounded and dead soldiers. Print 39 was not recovered, but its caption says: “” (Aoki, 2013:32).

expansion over the Kaingang territories. Since the 1720's, people from São Paulo living in the Curitiba plains requested lands on the plains to the right of the Tibagi River. The colonization of this region, however, took place only after 1780 through the actions of José Felix da Silva and the establishment of the Fortaleza farm, located on the right bank of the Tibagi River. In 1820, French naturalist Saint-Hilaire, on a visit to the farm, described the context of the conflicts in the late eighteenth century:

Fortaleza was, at the time of my trip, the farm that was found more deeply encrusted in the lands occupied by the savages. They frequently caused disorder, they were chased, they killed some men, imprisoned women and children. The blacks of José Felix da Silva would never work on the plantations without being armed. The Indians neighboring Fortaleza belonged, as did those of Jaguariaíba, to the Coroados tribe (Saint-Hilaire, 1995 [1851]: 60).

At the time of the visit, José Felix was the owner of the Fortaleza and of four other areas that, according to Saint-Hilaire, totaled, 80,000 *alqueires* (approximately 200,000 hectares). Part of his wealth was obtained from the Portuguese Crown in recognition of the territorial conquests from the savages. In 1796 José Félix coordinated an act of revenge against the Kaingang – the “Tibagi massacre”.

José Felix, together with his militiamen and slaves, chased and massacred wild Indians, coming to decimate hundreds of Cainguangue families (...) he reports that there was so much blood (...) that the nearby stream was dyed red and came to be called the River of Death” (Coraiola, 2003:28)

The location of the massacre, denominated “Mortandade” [death or slaughter in Portuguese], near the Tibagi River, is the current center of the pulp companies in the municipality of Telêmaco Borba. It does not fail to be tragically ironic that the place known in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as “Mortandade” was renamed, in 1941, by the family that owned the pulp companies, as “Harmonia”.

In the early nineteenth century, forty years after the expeditions of Afonso Botelho to the Guarapuava Plains, and amid the massacres that marked the opening of the troop trails, the occupation of the Portuguese settlers of the Kaingang territory gained significant impulse: the coming of the Royal Family to Brazil. In 1808, the year of their arrival, Dom João VI drafted the Carta Régia to order his subjects.

Being aware of the near total abandonment, in which are found the general plains of Curitiba and Guarapuava, as well as all the lands that flow into the Paraná and form on the other side the headwaters of the Uruguay, all within the limits of this *Capitania* and infested by the Indians known as *Bugres*, who cruelly kill all the farmers and landowners [...] under the fair and human laws that guide my people, and even demonstrating the experience of how useless is the defensive war system: I am served by these and other just reasons that suspend the effects of the humanity which I had determined they be treated, I order you: First, as soon as you receive this my Carta Regia, you should consider to be initiated the war against these Indian barbarians: that you should organize in bodies those militiamen of Curitiba and of the rest of the *Capitania* of S. Paulo who voluntarily want to take arms against them [...] which you will have understood and execute as you are ordered herein.

Written in the Palace of Rio de Janeiro November 5, 1808. PRINCE

The orders to “suspend the effects of the humanity” towards the Kaingang and to “consider to be initiated the war against these Indian barbarians” synthesizes the determination with which the Portuguese Crown treated the colonization of the region. The Kaingang territories, the plateaus and pine trees, which had marked a field of hostilities to the missions, *bandeirantes* and troopers, was, by the act of the Crown, transformed into a territory of war to guarantee the conquest and colonization.

In 1809 the expedition of Lieutenant Coronel Diogo Pinto de Azevedo Portugal began from São Paulo and headed towards the Guarapuava Plains, where the Atalaya Fort would be mounted. Among

the more than dozens of soldiers in the expedition (Mota 1994:128) was the priest Chagas Lima. The *chaplain of the expedition* was concerned with the polygamy and potions of the indigenous peoples. His impressions are registered in the *Memórias sobre o Descobrimento e Colônia de Guarapuava* (1976 [1842]) which discusses the “hoards”, “corporations”, “tribes” and “Nations” of “Votorões”, “Cayeres”, “Camés”, “Xokrens” and “Dorins”.<sup>24</sup> His comments are replete with information about the massacres and resistance of the indigenous peoples who, together with their chiefs, either joined the colonizers and accepted the *catechese*, or fled to the *Sertoens* [backwoods] and attacked the Fort. For Chagas Lima, the most important and influential chief was the indigenous baptized with the name of Antônio José Pahy. The *Memória* de Chagas Lima offers our time impressions about the ancestors of the Kaingang and about the power that they had over the plains and forests of the region. The description of the landscapes and of the routes along which the priest lived for more than twenty years is accompanied by descriptions of *dos gentios* [Gentiles]: their names, manners and character. Chagas Lima *discovered* and described an ethnic territory.

In the late 1830's, with the *Descobrimento e Colônia de Guarapuava* [Discovery and Colonization of Guarapuava] already consolidated, there was a new expansion of colonization to the north and west. Under orders of the Barão de Antonina, a safe route was open in the direction of Mato Grosso, over the natural courses of the Tibagi, Paranapanema, Ivinhema and Brilhante Rivers. In 1851, the Military Colony of Jataí was created in the *sertão* of Tibagi and then the villages of São Pedro de Alcântara (1855)<sup>25</sup> and São Jerônimo (1859). For the Barão de Antonina the relationship between the Military Colony and the village presupposed mutual cooperation, aimed at security through pacification of the Kaingang who lived in the region's forests.<sup>26</sup>

The expansion to the south, begun in 1840, also involved the creation of military colonies, located at the margins of the rivers and at the proximities with Kaingang groups.<sup>27</sup> One of their objectives was to dominate the routes to the Missões region, to control the borders and definitively nationalize the meridional territories. The Kaingang groups from Guarapuava served as guides, interpreters and mediators in the colonization processes of the Palmas and Nonoai plains.<sup>28</sup> In this process were created the first villages for the Kaingang in the province of São Pedro do Rio Grande: Nonoai (Nonoai Plains), Guarita (Campo Novo) and Ligeiro (Campo do Meio). In 1856, the limits of the Indian Lands in Nonoai were defined, which totaled “10 léguas em quadrado” [ten square leagues] (Becker, 1976:61) – the equivalent of 428 thousand hectares, the first official numbers of the process of ethnic Kaingang territorialization.

As part of the colonization and nationalization plan for the territories in Southern Brazil,<sup>29</sup> in the second half of the nineteenth century the land policy of the Imperial government officially defined the first

24 The name Kaingang had only been used since the late nineteenth century, with the writings of Telêmaco Borba (1882). During the nineteenth and early twentieth century the name Coroado was widely used. The term refers to the haircut in the form of a crown [coroa in Portuguese] (Mabilde, 1983).

25 The village of São Pedro de Alcântara functioned from 1855 until the death of Frei Timótheo de Castellново. Telêmaco Borba was the administrator between 1863 and 1873 (Amoroso, 1998).

26 In 1847, before the creation of the military colony, the Barão de Antonina brought dozens of Kaiowá families from the Ivinhema and Iguatemi Rivers to the village, initiating the establishment of the Kaiowá in the region (Amoroso, 1998).

27 Colônia Militar do Chopim and Colônia Militar do Chapecó [Military colonies], respectively, close to the current indigenous lands of Mangueirinha (PR) and Xaçupé (SC).

28 The best known mediator was the Indian Vitorino Condá who, upon leaving Guarapuava, was hired in 1847 by the government of the province of Rio Grande do Sul to act in the settling of the Kaingang who were spread through the Nonoai Plains. To do so, “in addition to the food and clothes offered, it was also agreed that “a monthly gratification of 50\$000 reis would be granted as soon as the village reached 500 souls.” (Relatório do presidente da Província em 05/10/1847 apud Laroque 2000: 112). Condá was a member of the ‘Companhia dos Pedestres’ – a police force charged with keeping the Indians within the limits of the village of Nonoai and “having them [the Indians] see that those people [the directors of the village] are there to protect and help and at the same time to chase them through the forests, when they try to escape” (Nonnenmacher 2000:20).

29 It is important to remember that the borders between Portugal and Spain in the *América Platina* were marked by the Treaty of Madrid (1750) and the Treaty of Santo Ildefonso (1777) and that because of imprecision in the cartography, the definition of the southern frontier was defined by rivers that do not meet, that is the Iguaçú and Uruguay rivers. This imprecision is at the origin of the dispute between the colonial metropolises and later between independent Brazil and Argentina. The solution for the “Questão de Palmas”, as the problem of the Brazil-Argentine border was known, was only determined in 1895.

areas reserved for the indigenous, all of them for the Kaingang. This was a state policy aimed at the ethnic Kaingang territory. It is important to highlight that in this period there was no policy to reserve lands for other ethnic groups who, although in smaller numbers, also lived in Southern Brazil, such as the Jê do Sul (Xokleng, who now live in Santa Catarina), the Guarani (who were associated to the Spanish colonies and now live in the south, southeast and midwest of Brazil and also in the neighboring countries of Argentina, Paraguay and Bolívia), the Xetá (who were definitively contacted only in the 1950s, in northern Paraná) and the Charrua and Minuano (who are associated to the Plata River region and to the south of Rio Grande do Sul state). For the Kaingang, the nineteenth century policy of reserving lands established rights while it simultaneously imposed severe limits to the traditional forms of occupation and circulation through their traditional territory. For the state, the policy sought to free land for colonization. This process was not declared a *Guerra Justa* [Just War] and did not involve the *suspension of the effects of humanity*. The legal and institutional framework was the Land Law (1850) and the Regulation of the Missions<sup>30</sup> (1845), mechanisms of the national state to implement control over the indigenous communities, a political-administrative object that synthesized the combination of the land and the people.

In Southern Brazil, the official recognition of indigenous areas in the second half of the nineteenth century is the mark of the policy for territorial confinement. For the Kaingang, this was a critical period of conflicts and wars in all regions. Many historic documents from this period register the action of the Kaingang chiefs, the *Pã'í Mág*, in their negotiations with different colonial agents (directors of the Indians, missionaries, engineers and naturalists).<sup>31</sup> The power of mediation of these *Pã'í Mág* in the defense of the Kaingang territories is interpreted with all the ambiguities of the colonial historiography. As in other parts of Brazil, some indigenous leaders were classified as collaborators and allies, others as aloof, hostile and fierce.<sup>32</sup> In all cases, in all the records, the Kaingang chiefs appear at the center of the disputes, discussions and agreements about the reserved lands. In the nineteenth century, and until today, the strengthening of their political power is the Kaingang response to the territorial confinement policy.

### **Confinement: the delimitations and reductions of the areas reserved for the Kaingang**

In the early twentieth century, in the first years of the Republic, still before the creation of the Indian Protection Service,<sup>33</sup> the state governments of Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul issued decrees regulating the reserve of lands for the indigenous.<sup>34</sup> In Paraná, between the years 1900 and 1915, decrees were promulgated reserving lands for the Kaingang in the regions of the Ivaí, Chapecó<sup>35</sup>, Iguaçú and Tibagi Rivers.<sup>36</sup>

30 The "Regulation about the Missions of Catechism and Civilization of the Indians" (Decree N.º. 426, of 24/07/1845), the main indigenous legislation of the nineteenth century, establishes guidelines that were more administrative than political for governing the Indians on reserves. (Carneiro da Cunha, 1992:138)

31 About the action of the Kaingang leaders in the nineteenth century the studies of historian Luis Fernando da Silva Laroque should be mentioned. He identified each *Pã'í Mág*, their territory of action, alliances and conflicts based on documental sources of state governments of São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul. For an ethnological analysis of the Kaingang *Pã'í Mág* see Fernandes 2003 and 2006.

32 As John Monteiro (1992) affirmed, the classification in allies and aloof, tame and fierce, Tupis and Tapuias, which accompanied the historic records are used in the construction of the discourse about Brazil's national identity.

33 In 1910 the Indian Protection Services and Location of the National Worker, it was renamed in 1918 as the Indian Protection Service (SPI), a nomenclature that would last until 1967, when the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) was created.

34 Because of the limits of this article, the presence of the Kaingang who now live in São Paulo state, on the Vanuire and Icatu Indigenous Lands, together with the Terena and Krenak Indians, will not be examined. These cases involve equivalent processes that also involve the institutional action of the Indian Protection Service in the regional context of the interior of São Paulo state.

35 Until 1916, the territory of the current state of Paraná included what is now the western portion of Santa Catarina, a region where the indigenous lands are located. The dispute for the control of these lands was one of the reasons for the conflict known as the War of the Contestado, between 1912 and 1916.

36 The indigenous land of Mococa was not the object of state decree. In this case, the regularization was conducted through the granting of title in the name of Captain Timóteo, chief of the tribes of the Coroados (Mota & Novak 2013:98).

	Year	Area	Location
Decree N° 6	1900	Apucarana	Rio Tibagi
Decree N° 8	1901	Faxinal and Ivaí	Rio Ivaí
Decree N° 6	1901	Rio das Cobras	Iguaçu
Decree N° 7	1902	Xapecó	Rio Chapecó
Decree N° 64	1903	Mangueirinha	Rio Iguaçu
	1903	Mococa <sup>36</sup>	Rio Tibagi
Decree SPI 8.941	1911	São Jerônimo	Rio Tibagi
Decree N° 591	1915	Queimadas	Rio Tibagi/Ivaí

The first Decrees referred directly to the chiefs, the territorial limits, to the *terras devolutas* [unused public lands] and to the rights of third parties:

To settle the indigenous Coroado tribe, under the leadership of *Paulino Arak-xó* and Pedro dos Santos and other tribes, the *terras devolutas* located between between the Peixe or Ubásinho River, will be reserved from its headwaters to its mouth at the Ivahy River, from this river until the mouth of the Jacaré river, from this to its headwaters and to the peak of the mountains of Apucarana in the municipality of Guarapuava. (Decree nº 8 09/09/1901). [The current Faxinal and Ivaí Indigenous Lands]. *Emphasis ours*.

To settle the indigenous Coroado tribe under the leadership of *Chief Vaincrê*, respecting *the rights of third parties*, an area of land with the following limits will be reserved: from the Chapecó River, from the road that runs to the south, to the pass of the Chapecozinho River, and from these two rivers until where they form a bank.” (Decree n.7 of 18/06/1902) [The current Xapecó and Toldo Imbu Indigenous Lands]. *Emphasis ours*.

To settle the indigenous tribes the lands occupied by the *cabildas* of chief *Cretã*n will be reserved with the following borders: from the headwaters of the Lageado Grande River to the headwaters of the Palmeirinha River and from these two rivers down to the Iguassú, which will be the northern border, respecting the rights of third parties (Decreto nº 64 de 02 de março de 1903). [Current Mangueirinha Indigenous Land]. *Emphasis ours*.

With these decrees, the state recognized territorial rights that are explicitly related to the chiefs. The action of the leaders deserves attention, not only because they were leaders in wars and negotiations, but also, because among the Kaingang there is a long lasting association between certain surnames and lands: the Cretã in Mangueirinha; the Vegmo and Ferreira in Queimadas; the Cândido in São Jerônimo; the Pereira in Mococa; the Viri and Mendes in Palmas, the Braga in Ligeiro. A Kaingang version, which conflicts with the determinations of the tutelary power of the state, imposes a definition that is culturally specific to the pairing of land and people that is at the center of the territorialization process. The Kaingang surnames are used until today. They are part of their criteria of territorial belonging and political legitimacy.

The recurrence of the surnames associated to certain lands refers to a suggestion of Curt Nimuendaju about the class of *paí* leaders:

*Outside the Canella I have encountered nothing at all suggestive of this hamrén institution except among the Kaingang in the Rio Ivahy district (state of Parana). Here there are at least three classes (p. 82-) paí, votóro, and péniye, the first ranking highest (cf. Guarani : paí, a person of prestige) and comprising the chiefs. It enjoys ceremonial prerogatives, such as sitting on a white caraguata blanket; and is credited with a peculiar sensitivity to harmful influences. For that reason, the chief **Vegmo** told me, he had bestowed on his naturally feeble son a péniye rather than a paí name (Nimuendaju 1946:98).*

Many contemporary Kaingaing indigenous lands originated from initiatives of these leaders, who beyond being mentioned in the text of the decrees, represented before the state the honor of the ancestors.

This was the expression used by the chief of Manguairinha Ângelo Cretã, when in 1975 he explained to anthropologist Maria Lígia Moura Pires about the origin of the right to land. He said: *Then this land was purchased. The government did not give it to us. In those times, my grandparents earned this with honor. This was not given to us a present, no. My grandparents sweated and suffered to earn this* (Castro 2011:51). The indigenous narratives that attest that the current Indigenous Lands were not “donated” or “recognized” but “purchased” from the government are in fact, common among the Kaingang.

Capitão Ozório, speaking about the expedition of a committee of the Indian Protection Service, in 1910, through the villages in the region of Tibagi (Mota & Novak, 2013) made clear that even as a representative of a recently created agency, he was pressured by Kaingang leaders to assume responsibility for the invasions of the indigenous lands. Ozório registered the harsh statements of the Kaingang leaders against the theft of lands. Four years after their first passage through the villages of Faxinalzinho and Faxinal do Cambará the government of Paraná state issued Decree 59, of 1915, “*which reserves an area of land for the settlement of the Kaingang Indians*”. This decree corresponds to the origin of the current Queimadas Indigenous Land.

With the decrees of the state governments, the lands of the southern plateau came to be mapped to serve the territorial order of the state. The Kaingang cultural landscape, its rivers, plains, mountain peaks and forests were irremediably affected by the colonization. The reference to *terras devolutas* confirmed that for the state, this was not an ethnic territory or a cultural landscape to be protected, but unoccupied areas to be colonized. The demographic void and nomadism of the indigenous peoples were, and still are, theses that, although notoriously false, are strongly defended by the land policy of Southern Brazil.

The right of third parties, referred to in the Land Law (1850), was also invoked to reduce the dimensions of the lands reserved to the Kaingang. In the case of the lands for the indigenous, *under the leadership of Chief Vainkre*, the current Xaçecó Indigenous Land, Decree N<sup>o</sup> 07, of 1902, reserved more than 50,000 hectares bordered by the Chapecó and Chapecozinho Rivers and by the telegraph line. However, in the following years, because of recourses to third party rights, these borders were changed, reducing the size to approximately 14 thousand hectares.<sup>37</sup>

With the lands officially recognized, the process began for systematic control over the Kaingang policy. Through the Indian Protection Service (SPI), by means of the 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Inspectorate, located in Curitiba, and the action of the *Indian Delegates*, the tutelary power of the state was organized. Politically and administratively, as defined by Antônio Carlos de Souza Lima, the Indian Protection Service implemented *A Grand Encirclement of Peace*.<sup>38</sup> In name of Indian protection and seeking to transform the Kaingang into national workers, the tutelary power was exercised through their concentration in settlements and villages, a weakening of the political power of the *Pã'í Mág*, by control over the work and economy of the families and through the prohibition and persecution of ritual and religious practices.<sup>39</sup>

The tutelary policy of pacification, as in other contexts in Brazil, deeply affected the Kaingang. Its results are seen in the historic registers of the state governments, in the reports of the Indian Protection Service and also in ethnographies conducted at the time. Anthropologists such as Herbert Baldus and

37 Precisely, 13,772 hectares remain, according to a study by Almeida (2015), who located the document “Terreno Reservado para os Índios, no município de Chapecó, Estado de Santa Catarina, Ministério do Trabalho, Indústria e Comércio, Serviço de Proteção aos Índios em 1934, Microfilme 379. Fundo SPI, Museu do Índio/FUNAI, Rio de Janeiro. Acervo LA”.

38 Until today the names of the Indian delegates are known by the Kaingang in Paraná. There are reasons to believe that they have been people with a strong presence in the lives of the indigenous people. To understand this approximation it is interesting to pay attention to the analysis of the indigenist bureaucracy presented by Souza Lima, for whom the position of the delegate was a “type of administrative title that granted an unpaid individual power to act under the command of the service without resources to act” (Souza Lima 1992:164).

39 As many researchers have reported, the Kaingang shamans and healers, known as *kuiã*, were harshly persecuted to the degree to which the implantation of the system of the Indian Protection Service advanced. Many had their homes burned and were expelled from their lands. According to anthropologist Kimiye Tommasino “the *kuiã* were tied to the trunk and physically punished, or ‘whipped’ as they usually say” (Tommasino 1995:168).

Lévi-Strauss were among the Kaingang in Paraná in the 1930s and described the critical conditions in which these communities lived.

Baldus, who in 1933 was among the Kaingang of Palmas, in southwestern Paraná, where he analyzed the cult to the dead and registered in amazement the effects that the global economic crisis of 1929 had on the indigenous economy:

the Kaingang of Palmas survived mainly by gathering *erva-mate*. Mate is no longer exported from their region. It was uniquely surprising to hear the Indians use the word *crisis*” (Baldus 1979 [1937]:15).

Lévi-Strauss was in northern Paraná in 1935. This was the beginning of the settlement of the region that is now one of Brazil’s most important centers of agribusiness. Lévi-Strauss’ impressions were published in *Tristes Tropiques*, and did not spare criticisms of the “ephemeral experience of civilization” imposed on the indigenous by the project for integration to “modern life”.

There was at the hamlet of São Jerônimo, which was my base, a metalworking shop, a sawmill, a school, a pharmacy. The post regularly received tools: axes, knives, nails and distributed clothes and blankets. Twenty years later these efforts were abandoned. Leaving the Indians to their own luck, the Protection Service demonstrated the indifference of which it was the object by the part of government (it would later regain a certain authority) (Lévi-Strauss, 1957, p. 159).

His comments also include a sad finding about the territory and population:

The reserve at São Jerônimo encompassed approximately 100,000 hectares, inhabited by 450 indigenous [people] grouped in 5 or 6 villages. Before leaving, the statistics of the post allowed me to gauge the destruction caused by malaria, tuberculosis and alcoholism. Ten years ago the total births did not exceed 170, while infant mortality alone reached 140 individuals (Lévi-Strauss, 1957, p. 163).

The words of Lévi-Strauss and Baldus present a general idea of the results of the territorial confinement and of the political and administrative “pacification” constructed upon the tutelary power of the state. In this context, the indigenous areas officially marked were officially reduced.

In the 1940’s, the reduction in the indigenous areas was part of state and federal policy. In 1945, under Decreto nº 7.692, the government of President Getúlio Vargas began a drastic process of reduction of the areas reserved to the Kaingang in the Tibagi river basin. The São Jerônimo reserve dropped from 34,000 to 5,000 hectares, and was divided into two distinct areas, the current São Jerônimo Indigenous Land and the Barão de Antonina Indigenous Land. In 1949, the state government of Moysés Lupion signed an agreement with the federal government seeking to regularize all of the indigenous areas in Paraná. Anthropologist Kimiye Tommasino (2002) demonstrated that, based on the argument for the need to make viable lands for colonization, the Indians lost an average of 90% of their lands. The area of Apucarana dropped from 54,000 to 6,300 hectares and Queimadas from 26,000 to 1,700 ha (although later expanded to 3,771 ha). The criteria that supported this official reduction was explained in the text of the Agreement of 1949:

Considering the indigenous population that now exists in each one of these Posts and adopting as a basic criteria for the respective sizes an area of 100 (one hundred) hectares per indigenous family of 5 (five) people and another 500 (five hundred) hectares for the location of the Indigenous Post and its facilities, the state of Paraná will definitively concede, for the complete ownership of the tribe, the following areas encompassed in the limits of the current reserves: 6,300 (six thousand three hundred) hectares in the region of Apucarana; 1,700 (one thousand and seven hundred) hectares in the region of Queimadas; 7,200 (seven thousand and two hundred) hectares in the region of Ivaí, 2,000 (two thousand) hectares in the region of Faxinal; 3,870 (three thousand and

eight hundred and seventy) hectares in the region of Rio das Cobras and 2,560 (two thousand five hundred and sixty) hectares in the region of Mangueirinha (Novak2014:1750).

The Agreement of 1949 confirmed the colonial project for population concentration and territorial restriction of the indigenous peoples of Paraná. Living on reduced portions of their lands, the Kaingang continued to confront the dramatic impositions of official indigenous policy. At all the indigenous lands, Indigenous Posts of the Indigenous Protection Service were installed. Beginning with the concentration at the “Central Villages” or “Villages at the Post” the process of “institutionalization of dependency” was consolidated (Tommasino, 2002). With the reduced areas and the indigenous concentrated around the “Post”, the Kaingang chiefs, the *Pã'í Mág*, were submitted to the authority of the “Chief of the Post”. In this period, the person with the most important political position of the Kaingang came to negotiate and be controlled by the lesser of the authorities of the Indigenous Protection Service. This involved, as João Pacheco de Oliveira (1988) found for the Ticuna ethnographic context, an imbalance in the dynamic of the relationships between the policy among the indigenous peoples and the indigenous policy of the Brazilian state.

With the control over Kaingang policy, the *Fág*, the *araucária angustifolia*, was definitively transformed into the *Pinheiro do Paraná* [Paraná pine] at the sawmills installed by the Indigenous Protection Service (SPI). In the memory of the Kaingang, the time of the SPI was the time of the *Panelão* [big pot] labor system, when the indigenous people worked in collective harvests administered by the chief of the post and on work days only received food served at the *Panelão*. The episodes of this cruel exploitation live in the memory of many, such as Dona Jurema of the Mangueirinha Indigenous Land:

I remember, I also worked, I suffered a lot. We did not even have clothes. I would go with only one outfit to work, and I would leave with the same clothes to any place I wanted to go. Working only for the lieutenant, clearing land with a hoe. We did not have any more clothes. Clearing, planting rice, husking rice, we had no rest breaks (...) we cleared six *alqueires* to plant rice, we did not rest. The *panelão* only fed us corn meal, at times with pork fat and at times without. We had to eat, we were working. Those who were our bosses are no longer living, there was the now deceased Marcelino Oliveira, and the deceased José Hiláudio, known as Jeca. They were our bosses. Those three, God forbid, we could not stop for one minute, we could not rest. [...] Those of us who were weaker, the boss would shout at us, and we obeyed. My father, José Ferreira, he was sick, had a cough and also went to work, he was sick and he would work sick.<sup>40</sup> (Castro 2011:44).

In Rio Grande do Sul the indigenous lands were also the object of state government action before the creation of the Indian Protection Service. In 1909, the agency responsible for the Directory of Lands and Colonization created the Fraternal Protection Service of Indians of Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>41</sup> With the *Fraternal Protection* linked to the *Secretariat of Public Work Business* the state government, from 1911 to 1918, demarked eleven areas for the Kaingang, eleven *toldos*<sup>42</sup>: Inhacorá, Guarita, Nonoai, Serrinha, Votouro, Erechim Ventarra, Lagoão, Ligeiro,<sup>43</sup> Carretero, Fachinal and Caseros. These *toldos* were located in the northern part of the state in the Uruguay River basin. The demarcations were part of the land policy of the agency responsible for the demarcation of the lots, villages and rural infrastructure for the population of immigrant farmers. The territorial confinement of the Kaingang was therefore an integral part of state policy.

The demarcations in Rio Grande do Sul did not make a direct reference to the chiefs or indigenous authorities as in Paraná. But the Kaingang leaders frequented the capital of the state at the beginning of the

40 Interview granted to anthropologist Paulo Afonso de Souza Castro in 2011 (Castro, 2011).

41 The concept of *fraternal* protection to the indigenous was aligned with the positivism of the government of the Republican Party of Rio Grande do Sul and with the perspective of integration for the work defended by the Service for Indian Protection and Location of the National Worker (SPILT/N).

42 *Toldo*: this is a generic term that comes from the Spanish word *tolderia*. It was widely used in Rio Grande do Sul in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century to refer to indigenous encampments.

43 The Ligeiro Indigenous Land was the only area in Rio Grande do Sul reserved by action of SPI.

century, where they were received in audiences with authorities to “file complaints against the persecutions of which they were constantly victims by the intrusions that sought to dislodge them from their lands” (Bringmann 2015:78). The complaints did not change the direction of the ethnic confinement policy as made clear in the text of the report of the Secretariat of the Directory of Lands (1929):

Nomad and instable by nature it is not the nature of the savage to colonize their land as does the immigrant and much less is it their custom to provide themselves with clothing and food. On the reserves on *terras devolutas* which were respected for the exclusive use of the Indians, various *toldos* are formed in S. Rosa, Palmeira, Erechim and Lagôa Vermelha; on them the state government maintains guardians who should provide all their needs; nevertheless there are frequent incursions of entire groups that go to the offices of the Commissions to seek clothing, blankets, food and tools. Within the budget resources annually voted, the respective assistance has been made, but apparently there is a lack of better inspection and even of a certain catechism, which has the objective, of at least avoiding that these remnants of the original races of the state be decimated by disease and alcoholism. As the *toldos* are reduced year by year, their joining in one or two in each Commission is indicated, where all the material, moral and better social assistance would be provided (Bringmann 2015: 89).

In addition to the confinement policy, the Kaingang territoriality in the north of the state was pressured by the political disputes of the 1920's. As registered in the report of the Fraternal Protection Service of 1925: “the last seditious movements of 1923 and 1924, also disturbed this service considerably, because they found the *toldos* of our Indigenous located in the northern zone, which was one of the hardest hit by the sad consequences of the spirit of disorder” (Fernandes 2005:38). Many Kaingang reported the loss of their lands in these events.

*They were expelled in the revolt of the Chimangos and the Maragatos. They told the now deceased grandfather that they must leave, because they would meet for war. They offered dried meat for the Indians to leave. One group went to Lageado. Another went to Tico-tico. Meanwhile, the poor fóg (whites) took advantage and entered here. They also had nothing. [TI Votouro]*<sup>44</sup>

In 1941 the Fraternal Protection Service was terminated and the administration of the areas reserved to the indigenous came under the control of the federal Indigenous Protection Service (SPI). As in the Agreement between the SPI and the Paraná state government, in 1949, the Rio Grande do Sul state government reduced the lands reserved to the indigenous, designating areas for the creation of forest reserves.<sup>45</sup> In the early 1960s, the areas reserved to the Kaingang were, once again, deeply affected by the state land policy through the popularly known *Agrarian Reform of Brizola*. All of the areas officially reserved to the indigenous by the state between 1911 and 1918 were affected by this process. Some were completely subdivided and disappeared from the territorial ordering of Rio Grande do Sul and the Indigenous Protection Service (this is the case of the current Indigenous Lands of Ventarra, Serrinha and Monte Caseros). Others were drastically reduced, with their populations concentrated in the villages around the indigenous posts. For what remained of the reserved lands, the indigenous policy of the Indigenous Protection Service took responsibility for implanting sawmills and controlling the work and production of the Kaingang under the *Panelão* system. The reports about those times are in the memories and narratives of the indigenous and also occupy an important part of the research and ethnographies.

In the Kaingang village of Inhacorá (RS) the oldest reported that one of the Indians, dressed in an army uniform and on a camouflaged jeep, watched the indigenous workers, armed with a shotgun. They mainly planted

<sup>44</sup> Narratives with indigenous people interviewed and published in the territorial identification studies for the Votouro-Kandoia Indigenous Land (Fernandes, 2005).

<sup>45</sup> Decree nº 658 de 10/03/1949 destined twenty-six thousand (26,000) hectares for the creation of forest reserves on the lands of the Toldos Nonoai and Serrinha.

wheat, which was sown and reaped by hand, but also corn and beans. There was a time to begin the work and a time to end. And at lunch, they had to get on line to earn a portion of food based on beans and flour. Meat was served only once a week, in insufficient quantity (Veiga 2006:5).

In Santa Catarina the only area reserved for the Kaingang at the beginning of the twentieth century was the current Indigenous Land of Xaçepó. With its limits reduced in name of *third party rights*, these Kaingang confronted the same violence inflicted in the neighboring states. In 1941, the Indian Protection Service created the Xaçepó Indigenous Post. As part of the territorial concentration policy, in 1948 the Kaingang who lived in the Toldo Imbu were removed by force from their homes and taken to the Indigenous Post of Xaçepó. The presence and action of the Xaçepó Indigenous Post provoked changes that affected the social organization and insertion of the Kaingang in the regional context. Anthropologist Sílvio Coelho dos Santos described the period that followed the installation of the Indigenous Post:

A few years after the installation, the Indigenous Post already moved towards a corporate organization, exploring the *erva maté* on the reserve and conducting an annual harvest. (...) The post was engaged in a market economy, especially the cultivation of wheat and corn (...) the benefit that the Indians received, however, was minimal, and on most occasions it was not solicited by them or used, because they rarely practiced their own agricultural activity (...) Since 1948 they began to locate on the reserve various settlers, especially Italians (...) the Indigenous granted the local settlers the lands they traditionally occupied (...) the presence of the settlers who leased in the area created new opportunities for the use of indigenous labor (...) In its “situation as a company” the Indigenous Post was dedicated to exploration of forest resources in the indigenous area, particularly the pine trees. The Post came to install its own sawmill (...) The devastation of the forest reserves of the indigenous area was practically total. The regional lumber companies, which for a long time were resentful of the scarcity of raw material, came to work 24 hours a day. Sixty thousand pine trees, approximately, were cut down on the indigenous reserve (Santos 1970: 63-66).

The detailed and broad anthropological perspective of this researcher who is one of the most important references for indigenous studies in Southern Brazil, leaves no doubt that in those years the confinement project attained its most dramatic point. All the indigenous reports about this period attest that this population was subordinated to a state of slavery, in which they worked in agriculture and extraction of lumber from what was their own lands, in exchange for food and clothes: the ‘*panelão system*’.<sup>46</sup> ‘In keeping with the *Indigenous Income*<sup>47</sup> policy, the employees of the Indian Protection Service authorized and at times encouraged the extraction of lumber by private parties and introduced lease contracts. The economic exploration of the natural resources and of the labor force of indigenous families, administered by representatives of the indigenous agency at the cost of physical punishment and threats, drastically degraded the quality of the lands of the indigenous areas at the same time that it made viable and institutionalized the occupation and sub-division of significant parts of the lands officially reserved to the Kaingang. The Kaingang were confined around the indigenous posts.

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46 About the *panelão* system and the economic exploitation of the indigenous lands it is important to consult recent studies conducted by researchers from the Laboratory of Indigenous History (PPGH/UFSC), coordinated by professor Ana Lucia Nötzold. Among other important contributions, these studies have revealed that at the archives of the Museu do Índio, SPI receipts and contracts are filed that made official the practice of leasing and sale of lumber on Kaingang lands.

47 The focus of the policies of the Indian Protection Service in the 1950s and 1960's was above all “the search for increased extraction of indigenous income, i.e., resources generated from the indigenous assets the centralized control of which the SPI would seek to expand (Souza Lima1995:293).

## Retakings: the cleansing of indigenous lands

In the mid 1970s, the Kaingang began the process of retaking their lands. This is an extremely complex phase of the process of ethnic territorialization in southern Brazil. On one hand the restructuring of official indigenous policy was underway in the context of the military government's modernization and internationalization project. On the other, episodes of insubordination arose to contest the Kaingang's weakened political power, in association with social movements.

Bureaucratically inefficient, from the perspective of indigenous income, since the 1950's the Indian Protection Service was the target of charges of corruption and deviation of resources. In name of investigating irregularities, in the first years of the military government, the Ministry of the Interior established the Investigative Commission of the Indian Protection Service (portaria 239/1967). The results of the Commission have only recently been analyzed in depth,<sup>48</sup> documenting the cruelty of the SPI agents. In relation to the Kaingang, the Commission identified the following violations of rights practiced by the Indigenous Posts: beatings, torture, incarceration, slave labor, illegal lumbering, land leasing and deviation of funds.<sup>49</sup> Despite the work of the Commission, in the context of the time, the extinction of the Indian Protection Service was not treated as a consequence of the investigation. It was perceived as a demand of the state bureaucracy, in light of the international context, which sought to modernize the relationship of the Brazilian state with indigenous peoples. In 1973, this process led to the promulgation of the Statute of the Indian, Law 6001.<sup>50</sup>

In parallel to the reorganization of official indigenous policy, social movements rose in Brazil that defended the indigenous peoples. Organizations, at first linked to the Catholic Church, such as Operation Anchieta (OPAN),<sup>51</sup> created in 1969, and The Indigenist Missionary Council (CIMI),<sup>52</sup> created in 1972, began to work directly with the indigenous communities. Aligned with the terms of the Barbados Declaration of 1971,<sup>53</sup> the agenda of the social movements was, and still is, the self-determination of the indigenous peoples. Thus, the social movements held various assemblies with indigenous leaders throughout the country, and sought to approximate other political sectors and universities. In Southern Brazil, after the indigenous assemblies, in 1977 in the state legislative assembly in the capital of Rio Grande do Sul was held the seminar "The Surviving Indians of the South". As anthropologist Silvio Coelho dos Santos affirmed:

It was the first time that, during the military regime, an expressive number of anthropologists, lawyers, religious people, indigenists and indigenous and civil leaders joined to express and defend the rights of the minority peoples. From this seminar resulted the founding of the National Association of Support for the Indian (ANAI) [and] the Pró-Índio of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Santos 2005:73).

While the social movements recruited intellectuals and politicians to support the "Surviving Indians of the South" the Kaingang, reacting to the situation of hardship and exploitation within their lands, began

48 This commission was led by federal prosecutor Jäder Figueiredo Correia, who produced the Relatório Figueiredo [Figueiredo Report] which only recently came to be analyzed under the realm of the National Truth Commission, created in 2011. The exception is the study entitled "Vítimas do Milagre" [Victims of the Miracle], by anthropologist Shelton Davis who in 1978 made the Relatório Figueiredo an important source in his analyses about the relations between development, modernization of the state and indigenist policy in Brazil (Azola 2017).

49 The analyses of the reports of this commission are still very recent but already have stunning results, as demonstrated by the data and analyses published in an article by Fabiano Azola (2017), entitled "Relatório Figueiredo e os Índios no Sul do Brasil" [The Figueiredo Report and the Indians in Southern Brazil].

50 The extinction of the Indian Protection Service and the rise of the National Indian Foundation (Funai) in 1967, even if it also met a need to confer, on the international plane, positive visibility to the apparatuses of state power in Brazil – a result of the importance of outside financing for the transformations that they sought to implement – must be understood as part of a more general movement of redefinition of the state bureaucracy (Souza Lima, 1995: 298).

51 Currently entitled Operação Amazônia Nativa [Native Amazon Operation]

52 Linked to the National Confederation of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB)

53 The Barbados Declaration was signed by anthropologists from Latin American countries governed by military dictatorships. The terms of this declaration emphasize the responsibilities of the state, the religious missions and anthropology to support the self-determination of indigenous peoples. The sole Brazilian to sign the declaration was Darcy Ribeiro.

their uprisings. The assemblies of leaders and the indigenist mobilizations transformed the local demands into the most important cycle of the struggle for territorial rights in Southern Brazil. The initial mark of this process was the expulsion of three thousand small farmers from the Indigenous Reserve of Nonoai, in Rio Grande do Sul. As the Kaingang report, in a period of five days, the Indians of Nonoai, with the support of relatives from other lands, burned the rural schools and, armed with clubs, bows and arrows and some guns, evicted the farmers who occupied their lands.<sup>54</sup> With the retaking of their lands the Kaingang rehabilitated the power of their *Pã'í Mág*, their political leaders, their chiefs. The strengthening of the political power was, once again, the Kaingang response to the territorial confinement policy. The social movements certainly had an important role, but the Kaingang themselves were definitively the protagonists of the retakings. In the words of the chief of the Nonoai, Nelson Xangrê, “*They are people who taught the leaders of 1978 a lot. But I always had my thoughts about how to lead the struggle. They did not make the war, we did*”.<sup>55</sup>

**Figure 05** Photo by Assis Hoffman, 1978. Source: Instituto Socioambiental, identified as one of the moments of the retaking of Nonoai.



In this context the statements of the Kaingang leaders are impressive. In 1979 the documentary film “*Terra de Índios*” [Land of the Indians], by Zelito Vianna, registered the determination with which the indigenous peoples undertook the retaking movement. The statement by Ângelo Cretã, chief of the Mangueirinha at the time, emphasizes that the Kaingang were united and dedicated to recovering their lands.

Since we began that and won, we went all the way, why not clear other areas? We went to Nelson [Xangrê] to help take the intruders from there. The situation there is difficult, but if we win at Rio das Cobras, we win

54 There is a still little studied connection between the retaking of the Nonoai Indigenous Land and the rise of the *Movimento Sem Terra* [Landless Farmworkers Movement]. Under supervision of professor Silvio Coelho dos Santos, Serrano (1994) wrote a final course project about this issue. According to Serrano the peasants expelled “inaugurated the struggle of the landless in Rio Grande do Sul. Camped out at the Nonoai indigenous land, at the location that became known as the ‘Encruzilhada Natalino’, they underwent a process of political awareness, also recognizing themselves as victims of a perverse land ownership system. Some were resettled in Rio Grande do Sul, others in Mato Grosso and a few in the Amazon, in failed Agro-Village projects. Those who remained at the Encruzilhada Natalino, five years later occupied the Fazenda Anoni, in a paradigmatic action of the Landless Movement” (Serrano 1994:50).

55 Interview with the newspaper Zero Hora (Porto Alegre) in 20/08/2008 *apud* Castro 2011:122.

here [at Mangueirinha], and at Chapecó and Nonoai. Even if someone dies, many people will remain. We will attack hard and clear the indigenous lands (Ângelo Cretã *apud* Castro 2011:112).

In this documentary, the statement by Nelson Xangrê, the chief who led the removal of the peasants at Nonoai, confirmed the intensity of this first large retaking movement:

The thing is if we want to resolve the case of the whites, we must act, form a group and remove the whites from the area. To expel them from the area (...). The major problem that we have is the invader, the people are concerned, first it was the SPI that leased our lands and after this came the invasion (...). The Indians never had guns and the whites came armed. (...) There were a lot of pine trees in this region and now there are just remnants, I even blame the authorities, they are authorizing the cutting of timber. (Nelson Xangrê, *apud* Castro 2011:113).

The sizes of the retakings vary, but it is common to hear from the Kaingang that in 1978, seven hundred farmers were expelled from the Xaçecó Indigenous Land (SC) and five hundred were expelled from Mangueirinha (PR). Since then, in the past forty years, the retakings have become constant, reinserting ethnic territorialization into discussions about the ordering of landownership in southern Brazil. In all regions, voices emerged that were amplified by the power of the indigenous movement condemning the cruelty of the processes of confinement and exploitation.

In Rio Grande do Sul, since 1986, after the recognition of the Rio da Várzea and Iraí Indigenous Lands, there was a sequence of retaking processes initially involving the Indigenous Lands of Cacique Doble (1991), Carreteiro (1991), Ligeiro (1991), Guarita (1992), Inhacorá (1991), Monte Caseros (1994), Ventarra (1994) Votouro (1997) and Serrinha (1997). In Santa Catarina, where until 1986 the state only recognized the Xaçecó Indigenous Land for the Kaingang, various lands were recognized: Toldo Chimbanguê (1986), Toldo Pinhal (1996), Toldo Imbu (1999) and Aldeia Condá (2001). In Paraná, beyond the expulsion that took place in the indigenous land of Mangueirinha in 1978, the pressure from the Kaingang resulted in the regularization of the existing indigenous lands of Rio das Cobras (1984), Marrecas (1984), Barão de Antonina (1985), São Jerônimo da Serra (1985) and Queimadas (1996). An analysis of each one of these processes demonstrates the intensity of the mobilizations and the diversity of methods that the Kaingang have used to retake their lands and recover their ability to influence decisions about the ethnic territories in the three states of southern Brazil.

In northern Paraná, in 1979, the Kaingang mobilized to remove settlers from the Indigenous Land of Barão de Antonina (Tommasino, 1994). In this period, the indigenous families were living on less than 72 hectares, the equivalent of less than 2% of the total area of the indigenous reserve – recalling that the area reserved to the indigenous had already been reduced by about 85% by the Agreement of 1949, when it dropped from 34,000 to 5,000 hectares. The retaking of this land took place in two steps: the first in 1979, with the removal of the intruders from the so-called Gleba I; and the second in 1985 with the retaking of Cedro.

João Maria Rodrigues, known as Tapixi, chief at the time of the retaking of Cedro, narrated details of the strategy that was developed to retake the area.

After the people retook Gleba I we saw that it was possible to have the lands again. I spent two years thinking about how we could retake Cedro. For two years I did not tell anyone! Then one day I asked my nephew who knew how to draw very well. I called him and had him make a drawing of an Indian with a bow and arrow. It was to be a very large illustration that I would use on a sign. He still did not know what I would do. When it was ready we put it on the road to Cedro and we wrote a message that said that the squatters had to leave by a given day. There was the message and the design with the Indian with a bow and arrow. Time passed and nothing happened...Then they tore down the sign. So we made another and set another deadline. But Funai said it would hold a meeting to deal with us. They brought people from Incra and other authorities to negotiate another deadline. We gave another deadline, but when it was about to expire they called another meeting. But then I

had already thought about what to do. Two days before the day set I warned the relatives from Apucarantina, Laranjinha and São Jerônimo to come give support. We could not ask much time before so that no one would release the information. Then came the day of the meeting, people from Funai came with that discussion of delaying the deadline again, I said that I agreed, but that I couldn't hold back the community. I had thought that the relatives from the other communities had abandoned us, but then people began to arrive. They came and circled the people from Funai and Incra. We held them and told the newspapers. The bosses of these workers came and the retaking of Cedro took place with no one getting hurt!<sup>56</sup>

As in Nonoai (RS), the community of Barão de Antonina mobilized a process among the villages, and with the weight of this mobilization, was able to recover its lands, clear two lands, as chief Cretã said. These examples also illustrate the two lines of action used by the Kaingang: open confrontation and seizing of state employees.

Even today in Paraná, the indigenous movement does not question the territorial reductions imposed by the Agreement of 1949. The demands of the Kaingang focused on the re-establishment of their officially recognized territories and on access to benefits from public policies. In the Tibagi River basin the indigenous mobilization was, and still is, involved with guaranteeing territorial rights related to the implantation of hydroelectric projects. The federal public ministry filed a public civil suit in 2006 so that all of the territory in this river basin be considered as traditional indigenous territory. In 2011, the federal court issued a favorable decision. This decision, by recognizing the historic and traditional dimension of the territory, brought important implications for the implantation of development projects that would be required to consider the presence of the Kaingang as a group with specific rights linked to the Tibagi River basin.<sup>57</sup> A practical and immediate consequence is that the impacts of these projects will have to be considered beyond the limits of the officially demarcated indigenous lands – an ethnic dimension of territory that goes beyond that of the confinement policy.

In Rio Grande do Sul, Kaingang retakings led to the state creating a working group to discuss the indigenous question. In 1997, the reports of this working group included a comparative chart with detailed information: an official tabulation of the expropriation of the indigenous lands demarcated at the beginning of the twentieth century XX.<sup>58</sup>

<b>Indigenous Land</b>	<b>1918</b>	<b>1996</b>
Carreteiro	600,72 ha	600,72 ha
Ligeiro	4.517,86 ha	4.517,86 ha
Guarita	23.183,00 ha	23.183,00 ha
Votouro Guarani	741,00 ha	280,00 ha
Votouro Kaingang	3.104,00 ha	1.440,00 ha
Nonoai	34.908,00 ha	14.910,00 ha
Faxinal Cacique Doble	5.576,33 ha	4.349,53 ha
Inhacorá	5.859,00 ha	1.054,62 ha
Ventarra	753,00 ha	0,00 ha
Monte Caseiros	1.003,74 ha	0,00 ha
Serrinha	11.950,00 ha	00,00 ha
Total	92.196,65 ha	50.335,73 ha

56 Personal communication to anthropologist Paulo Góes. São Jerônimo da Serra Indigenous Land. 2011.

57 In addition to the Mauá hydroelectric dam there are four hydroelectric dams to be installed on the Tibagi River; railroad lines are being built, electrical transmission lines. Two pulp factories are in operation.

58 Concluding Report of the Working Group, created by Decreto nº 37.118 of December 30, 1996 (Silva 2014: 2101).

The state government concluded that after more than twenty years of demands, the Kaingang lands in Rio Grande do Sul remain significantly smaller than the lands demarcated by the state between 1911 and 1918. The government recognized that the indigenous lands had been settled by state initiatives and determined that indemnifications should thus be paid to the settlers who, after all, had purchased their lands in good faith. In this context of conflict and negotiation, the State Indian Council<sup>59</sup> was created. Initially formed by representatives of five government secretariats and two indigenous representatives (one Kaingang and one Guarani) the council was transformed in 1999 into the State Council of Indigenous Peoples of Rio Grande do Sul (CEPI), and came to have twenty council members from the government and forty two indigenous (20 Kaingang, 20 Guarani and 2 Charrua)<sup>60</sup>. In the plan for political representation of the Council, the indigenous, in fact recovered an influential position, which altered the discussions about the Kaingang's territorial rights in the state.

With the mobilizations of the indigenous movement and with the discussions of the state council within the structure of the state, the indigenous question in Rio Grande do Sul transcended the limits of the retakings, coming to involve territorial rights in light of the living conditions within the officially demarcated lands. With a constantly growing population, living in reduced areas demarcated by the confinement policy, the Kaingang in Rio Grande do Sul have called for the demarcation of new areas through encampments outside the areas demarcated in the early twentieth century. There are now more than twenty Kaingang encampments, which pressure the National Indian Foundation to execute the processes of territorial identification and delimitation. Leading each encampment is a Kaingang leader who maintains contacts with social movements and state agencies. The relationship between the leaders of the encampments and the leaders of the indigenous lands is marked by contradictions. At times they are allies and at times opponents. The political tensions raised by the encampments in Rio Grande do Sul place on the agenda the challenges the state faces in the process of Kaingang ethnic territorialization.

In Santa Catarina the Kaingang indigenous lands are concentrated in the western region. The processes of land retakings began on the Xaçepó Indigenous Land in the late 1970s with the expulsion of seven hundred settlers.<sup>61</sup> The struggle for the retaking of the Xaçepó Indigenous Land highlighted the precarious situation in which the other communities lived in the state: the Kaingang at the margins of the Irani River (Toldo Chimbanguê and Toldo Pinhal), the Chapecó River (Toldo Imbu) and in the city of Chapecó itself (the Condá village).

On the margins of the Irani River, the Toldo Chimbanguê and Toldo Pinhal, were not officially recognized in the early twentieth century. Nevertheless, there are Indigenous Protection Service records that confirm that the Irani Toldo was attended at different periods of official indigenous policy. The absence of the state in the protection of the territorial rights of the Kaingang on the right bank of the Irani River (Toldo Chimbanguê) was denounced by the studies of anthropologist Silvio Coelho dos Santos. In 1979 his surveys indicated that the hydroelectric dams planned for the Uruguay River would lead to the flooding of 1,556 hectares of indigenous lands, with the compulsory dislocation of approximately 310 indigenous (Santos & Aspelin, 1979). The Kaingang of Toldo Chimbanguê were among those affected. Based on the denunciations and in response to the pressure exercised by the Missionary Indigenist Council (CIMI), in 1986, 988 hectares were demarcated along the Irani River. This was a provisory demarcation, because the tensions between the Kaingang and the farmers, unions, associations and local politicians, made the demarcation of the land identified unviable at the time. Only in 2000 did FUNAI conclude the studies for

59 Decreto nº 35.007 December 9, 1993

60 For an analysis of CEPI in the political context of Rio Grande do Sul see Londero 2015.

61 This was also the period of revival of the ritual of the cult to the dead, the Kiki. Prohibited by the Indian Protection Service and condemned by religious missionaries who frequented the Kaingang lands, the Kiki ritual was abandoned in the 1940s. The revival of this ritual in the context of the retaking of lands is a complex issue, which involves the valorization of cultural forms, simultaneously, as ties to tradition, as support for solidarity to *relatives* and as resources of ethnic identification.

the definitive demarcation. In 2007, after twenty-one years, the Kaingang of Toldo Chimanguê had their territorial rights finally recognized.

On the left bank of the Irani River, the Kaingang of the Toldo Pinhal were living in a similar situation. In 1993, part of their territory (893 hectares) was demarcated. At the time they reported that the size of the lands totaled nine thousand hectares. In the report of 1993 FUNAI affirmed that the demarcation of 893 hectares was provisory. This situation generated an unexpected consequence. Some of the rural farmers occupying the lands were suffering because of the uncertain situation. Since those lands were identified as potential indigenous lands, there was a sharp decrease in public and private investments in the region (the municipal governments no longer conducted road maintenance, local commerce declined, bank financing for farming was cut). In 2001, the situation, which was dramatic for those small farmers, caused the farm families to go to court to require FUNAI to conclude the studies about the limits of the Toldo Pinhal. Paradoxically, FUNAI, pressured by the farmers, established a technical group in January 2002 to conduct a new study of the limits of the Toldo Pinhal. In 2007 the studies were approved and the territorial limits declared, totaling approximately five thousand hectares. The definitive demarcation was still not conducted, because the studies are being challenged by the same farmers who filed suit to require FUNAI to conclude the studies. Despite the apparent contradiction, the farmers, supported by rural unions and municipal governments, question the indemnifications. Unlike the retaking processes in Rio Grande do Sul, the indemnifications of these lands follows the procedure of the federal government which does not pay for the lands, only for improvements. Today, the territory of the Kaingang community at Toldo Pinhal is recognized by the state, but the demarcation has still not taken place. The Kaingang await the officialization of their territorial rights. The farmers await the recognition of their rights, their indemnifications. The tensions, however, do not wait.

Toldo Imbu was part of the land reserved for the Kaingang in 1902, by Decree nº 7 of the Paraná government. It is thus a territorial right that was lost to accommodate the rights of third parties. As in all the cases, this was a very violent process. The report of Kaingang Vicente Fokãe, who was born at Toldo Imbu, is illustrative and irreplaceable. Vicente, who was interviewed in May 2000, when he was 88, stated:

It was drizzling and suddenly a truck arrived with the people from ... it was a tough man, Wismar Costa Lima, it was 1948 he took the truck, I don't know if he rented it or if they bought it, but I think that they paid, then he spoke with the one who was the sergeant, a type of chief right, they called him the captain. Then they got them. He ordered them to come together, but some did not want to. But with force they tied up João Batista who is the brother of uncle Otávio, they were grabbing them and hitting them inside the truck, tying their hands behind their backs and binding their feet. So we saw them and we were already at Pinhalzinho [a village in the Xapacó Indigenous Land]. When we found out we left, right. There was a road there. So we couldn't turn back. The others left everything they had: plants, bees, forest, 'monjoio', animals, hogs, ducks, beehives, gardens, they left the garden without harvesting, beans, chickens, there was everything. Then it was just a look after they came, who they left at the post, at the post de Campina da Jacutinga, jailed there. Then others went to see the things that stayed behind, that had already gotten nearly everything, in the barn and they had set fire to the houses, they burned the houses. So this part that I know is from 1948, was transferred, a part of it was lost but not us...waiting" (Vicente Fokãe, interview with anthropologist Ricardo Cid Fernandes, in May 2000).

Many of these lands in the Toldo Imbu are now occupied by the urban portion of the municipality of Abelardo Luz, which makes their return an even more conflictive process. In 1999, the National Indian Foundation established a technical group to mark this indigenous land. They identified 2,300 hectares approved by FUNAI and declared it to be indigenous property by edict of the Ministry of Justice. Despite the pressure from the Kaingang, which since 1999 had occupied an area of the municipality, the land

situation of Toldo Imbu was still not regularized. The municipal government of Abelardo Luz conceded some houses in the area that was retaken, where the Kaingang families lived. In addition to the memory of the presence in the location, the studies by FUNAI, and the declaration of the Ministry of Justice, the demarcation of Toldo Imbu won a favorable decision from the Federal Court of the 4<sup>th</sup> Region. In 2012, the judge emphasized: “it is well known that Indians had always lived around the old São Pedro farm, which was broken up in properties for the plaintiffs, and the indigenous reserve of Xaçepó was even demarcated there by Funai, in favor of this Kaingang indigenous community (...) The study and the historic literature from the region thoroughly demonstrates this presence.”<sup>62</sup> Neither the land, nor the right to land were completely reconquered. In improvised residences provided by the municipal government, the Kaingang awaited the judgment of the appeals to the federal Superior Court of Justice.

The conviviality with cities is also at the origin of territorial rights, demands and conquests of the Kaingang Indigenous Land Aldeia Condá. Unlike the others, this Indian Land was acquired through the settlement of the Kaingang families who had lived in the city of Chapecó, it is thus considered an Indigenous Reserve. Living in the main city of western Santa Catarina, these families did not submit to the confinement of the indigenous policy and did not take refuge in areas of difficult access on the margins of rivers. They stayed in their traditional territory, “invisibly” accompanying the growth of the city of Chapecó which they continue to consider their traditional territory. The process of creation of the Aldeia Condá Indigenous Reserve began in 1998 through the constitution of a FUNAI technical group for the preparation of the “Report to Identify the Kaingang Families Resident in the City of Chapecó”. This report demonstrated that for the Kaingang, the city of Chapecó is their traditional territory and that despite the attempts to remove them from the city, taking them to Nonoai (RS) and to Toldo Chimbangue (SC), they always returned.

Based on the report prepared by anthropologist Kimiye Tommasino (1998), the purchase was determined of an area of 2,300.2 hectares in the rural zone of the municipality. The area selected affected 75 farm families. In this case, even with the indemnification determined by the FUNAI procedure, the negotiations with the family farmers reached an impasse, given that they did not accept the amounts offered. The solution found was to transfer responsibility for the indemnification to the electrical sector, by making the acquisition of the Aldeia Condá Indigenous Reserve one of the conditions for issuing the environmental license of the Foz do Chapecó hydroelectric dam.<sup>63</sup> This solution that resolved the problem from the perspective of the state, generated a difficult negotiation, because it opposed the objectives of the indigenous to other social movements like the Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB) and the Landless Workers Movement (MST). The negotiations were difficult, but were effective for guaranteeing the territorial rights of the indigenous. In 2006, the Kaingang received the lands acquired from the electrical sector and came to live at the Aldeia Condá Indigenous Land, some fifteen kilometers from the center of the city of Chapecó, their traditional territory. The guarantee of their right to these lands stimulated the Kaingang to defend other demands such as expanded access to education and public policies that supported the construction of their own indigenous citizenship plan.

## Final considerations new territories

Impeded from inhabiting the regions that support the main monuments of their territorial trajectory that dates back many centuries, limited to areas first reserved but then reduced by the state, and forced to accept sawmills, land leasers and squatters and large developments on their lands, the Kaingang have

62 Ação Civil Pública. Processo Nº 5000599-41.2011.404.7202/TRF 16/11/2012.

63 This condition was made official in the Termo de Conduta [Stipulated agreement] ANEEL/FUNAI 001/2001.

resisted and until today represent more than half of the population of the entire Jê linguistic family. They live in one of the regions in Brazil with the greatest political and economic strength of agribusiness. They have 38 indigenous lands recognized or in a process of recognition by the state and dozens of other areas about which the state land administration has not taken a position. Their leaders dialog, as did their ancestors, with official authorities at all levels, participate in the formulation of public policies while their intra- and inter-village dynamics remain beyond the comprehension of the *fóg* (the whites).

Upon analyzing the territorialization process, we take the risk of generalizing, making reference to the historic trajectories of conquest and colonization, the cruelty of the bureaucracy of confinements and to the intensity of the retaking. The result is nothing but an overview that is useful if it can help give value to the specific meaning of land to the Kaingang (*gá*). An ethnographic look at each situation would inevitably reveal the tensions of conviviality and conflict among different agents, discourses and powers. In all the cases, the Kaingang emphasize that their relationship with the land is one of belonging, it is umbilical. The surnames indicate a place, they belong to *that* land, to *that* location where the umbilical cord of *my parents, grandparents and children* are buried.<sup>64</sup> The dialects of their language are geographically locatable, because their sociology replicates affiliation to specific locations. The land is the origin and destination of the Kaingang, on it are generated the brothers of mythic time<sup>65</sup> and their dead return to the land, inhabitants of the underground, of the *numbê*.<sup>66</sup> About the variations in their cultural forms, the Kaingang have dialoged and dialog with the state power that makes their territories official.

The cycle of retakings that began in the late 1970s can be characterized as a movement in the direction of the repositioning or recovery of the territorial rights granted by the state. It is very clear that the Kaingang sought to and are seeking to recover their rights, associated to areas that were reserved to the indigenous in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Nevertheless, beyond this cycle of recovery and repositioning of rights, it is possible to identify conquests that go beyond the retakings. The occupation of political positions on the State Councils of the Indigenous Peoples of Rio Grande do Sul and federal court decisions recognizing the Tibagi River basin as traditional Kaingang territory are two concrete examples of how the cycle of retakings goes beyond the realm of the repositioning of territorial rights.

The new processes of ethnic reterritorialization, such as the encampment in Rio Grande do Sul and the villages that they form within cities, involve above all the production of new rights. In their struggle for the right to produce new territories, the Kaingang exhibit their capacity for ethnic mobilization, through political articulation among the villages, negotiations with institutions at various levels, a readiness to engage in conflict and a recourse to historic memory and to references to the cultural landscapes. Today, in processes and projects of creation of new villages, the Kaingang make new territories arise: as that in the Guaíba River basin in Porto Alegre or on the Curitiba plateau, as on the margins of demarcated lands, along trails, bus stations, in “houses of passage” in state capitals and cities of the interior. These are new struggles, to which we can see that the Kaingang people are accustomed and prepared to confront with the political resources they have constructed through experience. As in other phases of the ethnic territorialization process, the strengthening of political power is a Kaingang strategy.

Translated by: Jeffrey Hoff

64 For the Kaingang, the burial location of an umbilical cord is considered an important symbol of relationship with a place, with their land of origin. Many know the locations where the umbilical cords of their ancestors are buried and of their descendants.

65 According to Kaingang mythology, the pioneer demiurges who gave origin to humanity came to the world from underground, leaving from the tops of the mountains.

66 The main Jê archeological structures in southern Brazil are funeral complexes and the main traditional ceremony of the Kaingang registered by historic and ethnographic documents is the *kiki* ritual, which is dedicated to ancestors.

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*Prof. Dr. Ricardo Cid Fernandes*  
Federal University at Paraná  
Graduate Program in Anthropology  
Contact: ricardo.cidfernandes@gmail.com

*MSc. Paulo Roberto Homem de Góes*  
Federal University at Paraná  
Graduate Program in Anthropology  
Contact: prhgoes@gmail.com

Dossier

Fighting for Indigenous Lands in Modern Brazil.  
The reframing of cultures and identities

# Societies “against” and “in ” the State – from Exiwa to the Retakings

Territory, autonomy and hierarchy in the history  
of the indigenous peoples of Chaco-Pantanal

*Andrey Cordeiro Ferreira*

Programa de Pós-Graduação de Ciências Sociais em Desenvolvimento, Agricultura e Sociedade,  
Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro/RJ, Brasil

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this article is to conduct an exercise in historic anthropology and an anthropology of territory, based on an ethnography of the experiences of domination and resistance experienced by the indigenous peoples of Pantanal, in particular the Terena, within the processes of colonization, formation of nation states and capitalist development in South America. We will analyze experiences of indigenous autonomy against and in the state, and their dialectical territorial expression in the colonial world and in the contemporary dynamics of territorial and interethnic conflict in twenty-first century Brazil.

**Keywords:** Indigenous peoples; policial systems; autonomy, social cartography.

# As Sociedades “contra” e “no” Estado - de Exiwa às Retomadas: Território, autonomia e hierarquia na história dos povos indígenas do Chaco-Pantanal

## **Resumo**

O objetivo do presente artigo é realizar um exercício de antropologia histórica e do território, a partir da etnografia das experiências de dominação e resistência vividas por povos indígenas do Pantanal, em especial os Terena, no quadro do processo de colonização, formação dos Estados nacionais e desenvolvimento capitalista na América do Sul. Iremos analisar a constituição de experiências de autonomia indígena contra e no Estado e sua expressão territorial dialética, no mundo colonial e na dinâmica contemporânea do conflito territorial e interétnico no Brasil do século XXI.

**Palavras-chave:** Povos indígenas, sistemas políticos, autonomia, cartografia social.

# Societies “against” and “in ” the State – from Exiwa to the Retakings

## Territory, autonomy and hierarchy in the history of the indigenous peoples of Chaco-Pantanal

*Andrey Cordeiro Ferreira*

The purpose of this article is to conduct an exercise in historic anthropology and an anthropology of territory, based on an ethnography of the experiences of domination and resistance experienced by the indigenous peoples of Pantanal, in particular the Terena, within the processes of colonization, formation of nation states and capitalist development in South America.<sup>1</sup> We will analyze experiences of indigenous autonomy against and in the state, and their dialectical territorial expression in the colonial world and in the contemporary dynamics of territorial and interethnic conflict in twenty-first century Brazil.

In this exercise, we use the analysis of territory and of territorialization processes as a starting point for a discolonial criticism of the official historiography and cartography, and of indigenous ethnology.<sup>2</sup> Official narratives about the history of Brazil and the Americas normally make indigenous history invisible and more specifically the importance of territorial control and of experiences with autonomous social structures that are alternative to colonialism and the nation state. Or the official narratives romanticize them with narratives about primitive communism or of insulated indigenous societies, in traditional sociocultural isolation.<sup>3</sup> The territorial expression of these societies becomes invisible, and is at most represented as areas that suppose a certain degree of cultural homogeneity, but which are normally not considered part of real history and its conflicts. This invisibility and romanticized perspective, is in our understanding, and expression of the coloniality of knowledge (Lander 2005) and becomes a form of repression of histories and experiences of resistance and of indigenous autonomies that can help to denaturalize and relativize the official histories of formation of the national state. These histories and experiences of resistance give a dialectical character to indigenous ethnology and ethno-history (an ethnology in which indigenous societies are characterized by contradictions and ambiguities, which constitute their agency and historicity, but also recognize them as complex sociocultural systems doted with radical alterity and autonomy). The indigenous experiences and perspectives are not, from this

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<sup>1</sup> The data that we use here were obtained from a long ethnographic and historiographic experience among the Terena in Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) - Brazil (a doctoral study conducted from 2001-2006, studies for demarcation of indigenous lands solicited by the courts and executive branch (2008-2010) and research projects about bioenergy and territorial conflicts (2010-2012). In the case of the Kadiwéu, we especially used data from theses in anthropology and history and also our historiographic research, as well as information obtained in field work in activities of the indigenous movement of Mato Grosso do Sul.

<sup>2</sup> By official historiography and cartography we understand the discourses produced not only by the state, but also from the point of view of the state. In general, the official historiography is that, which in Brazil is based on the narrative of the “Discovery” of America and creates the myth of three formative races. This narrative is also doted with great symbolic and institutional power. In this narrative, Brazil was a large space void of sovereignty and political systems that was occupied by Portugal and since 1500 frontiers have been delineated that have advanced progressively. The indigenous peoples appear in this narrative with an ambiguous function. In the reading of the old Portuguese colonial state, they were the enemies against which the state was constructed. After the independences, the indigenous peoples were portrayed in the nationalist narrative of the New States as the “originals”.

<sup>3</sup> The narrative of primitive communism portrays the indigenous as egalitarian and non-hierarchical societies, without internal contradictions and conflicts. This narrative was employed in both philosophy and in indigenist studies and is revised today in different forms, especially in the environmentalist discourse. This narrative, in affinity to a type of mythology of new states, impedes a suitable understanding of indigenous history.

perspective, traditional a-historic structures (mental or cultural) and the forms of resistance and societies “without a state” and “against the state” are not lost links from a pre-colonial past. To the contrary, they are the fruit of practical strategies and of forms of thinking that can be, and effectively are, revised in the forms of contemporary resistance and struggle.

It is in this sense that we will analyze territory as a function of types of autonomy, in which these projects for autonomy re-signify and re-functionalize the categories of indigenous thinking and invent new forms of territorialization. In this way, the indigenous ethnography and ethnology can be anti-hegemonic forms of narrative, expressing dissident perspectives and experiences that are made invisible in the official history and cartography. The analysis of territory and of territorialization processes are a starting point key to a discolonial indigenous ethnology.

Our focus will be a historic analysis of three territorialization processes (Pacheco de Oliveira 1999). In the first, we intend to show how a specific form of autonomous indigenous system (which is partially summarized by the indigenous toponym *Exiwa*) expresses a historic experience of a society without state, an autonomous political system that existed at the frontiers of Portuguese and Spanish colonialism, against and by means of them. *Exiwa* indicated the existence of symbolic, mythic and political space, a territory of ancestral occupation of a society without state, an autonomous social and political system. The first process of territorialization took place between the mid eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, when there was an overlapping of two types of society or political systems: the state societies (represented by the Portuguese and Spanish empires) and a society without or against the state (represented by what we call the Autonomous Indigenous System of the Chaco-Pantanal).

The second process was, from an indigenous perspective, a process of deterritorialization and took place between the end of the Paraguay War and the first half of the twentieth century in which the Autonomous Political System was destroyed and there was a large process of territorial expropriations, indigenous slavery and ethnocide. Its territory was fragmented during the formation of new states<sup>4</sup> and by the different types of national capitalist development, which formed a state and capitalist territorial web. This fragmented the territory that previously was self-governed by indigenous societies into dozens of deeded plots of land and administrative units. This then constructed an hierarchized society, with a large concentration of lands and power, in which the indigenous societies occupied a subaltern position. This situation lasted in a more or less stable manner until the 1970s, and was aggravated by the green revolution and a new form of the “March to the West”<sup>5</sup> (with the development of agroindustry and rice, soybean and sugarcane cultivation in the cerrado, especially in Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul).

The third process of territorialization took place in the late twentieth century, when the indigenous peoples of Mato Grosso do Sul had an uprising (Ferreira 2017; Salvador 2016) which triggered widespread territorial conflict that is continuing, characterized by the retakings.<sup>6</sup> The retakings are social and spatial units that express processes of cultural re-elaboration and experiences of resistance to forms of domination, they are discourses and forms of action of the indigenous movement. The retakings assume ambiguous forms simultaneously, because they inter-relate state and non-state forms of social

4 We are using the term “new states” to indicate the nation states that arose from movements of independence from colonization processes. In the Americas, all of the nation states of the nineteenth century are new states in relation to the old Portuguese and Spanish empires.

5 In Brazil, the expression March to the West was used to describe a policy of occupation of the frontiers in the 1940s, this second March took place in the 1970s.

6 The idea of retaking was raised in Brazil by the “Brazil 500 More Movement”, realized by the indigenous movement and other social movements. The idea of “retaking” was based on anticolonial narratives and a critical reading of the official commemorations of the 500 years of the “Discovery of Brazil” by the Portuguese. Instead of “discovery”, it spoke of the colonial “invasion” that endured in different forms. The “retaking” is thus precisely a legitimate form of reappropriation by the indigenous peoples of the invaded lands. Therefore, the idea of retaking is not only a synonym for a peasant type of land occupation, but is also a specific historic narrative of an anticolonial nature, which expresses the indigenous condition.

organization that are hierarchical and autonomic. These three processes of territorialization express different forms of a dialectical relationship between domination and resistance, which is materialized in spatial terms. We will thus narrate how territorial conflict can be considered as a dialectical process of domination and resistance and of equilibrium of different autonomies, “in the state” and “against the state” and in forms of territorial dialectic.

### **Territorial dialectics: spatial relations, hierarchy and autonomy**

We will first define some categories, concepts and theoretical presumptions. We are beginning from a social anthropology approach, in particular the procedural studies of territorialization and ethnicity (Barth 1976; Ferreira 2013; Pacheco de Oliveira 1998, 1999), which consider territory as a support for and expression of cultural and social organization, and more specifically understand territory as a historic process. This approach breaks with the notions of absolute and independent “space” and “time” to consider them (as in the theory of general relativity) as a complex space-time, as relative units and in the final instance, interchangeable. In this way, territory (space) is a historic situation (time) and vice versa.

We now turn to the definitions of the concepts of space, territorialization and territory. Space, as we understand it, in a broad definition, is an extension that contains a part of the world. Space is not a reality “per se”, but a representation created by a subject to express limits (Haesbaert 2004; Rafestin 1993). Therefore, space can be understood as a basic category of thinking and of reality, a condition necessary for all phenomena in the material world. When we speak of territory in anthropological terms, we understand it as the space of a certain society, social structure, group or institution, that is, as socially controlled and projected limits. Space, thus constituted as territory, expresses a relation of power: by controlling the territory this society establishes its power over itself, its groups, material resources and also in relation to other societies. We should certainly warn that when we speak of territorialization we are referring equally to a process of deterritorialization, that is, it would be correct to speak of a territorial dialectic (territorialization/deterritorialization). By a process of territorialization/deterritorialization, we understand the production of limits/frontiers, flows/connections and points of occupation. That is, it is the historic process by which societies, their institutions or groups project new social and spatial relations, incorporate new spaces and reorganize old ones. The territorialization process is thus an action of creation-destruction and consequently of transformation of territories. In sum, when we speak of territory and of a territorialization process, we understand them as products of a dialectical social relationship of occupation and control of space in which societies are established. Space, territory and territorialization are basic categories for an anthropology of territory.

But if territory is understood as a type of sociologization of space, these social relations are relations of power and can have different forms and contents. In this sense, an anthropological theory of spaces would be needed, as delineated by Jean Loup Anselme, as a topological anthropology (Anselme and M'Bokolo 1985). An anthropology of territory would consider spatial or topological relations as an expression of power relations. The fundamental problem of topology is precisely how geometric limits and forms relate with each other. In cartography, territorial relations are represented by geometric forms, that is, the social and the geographic are represented topologically. These “geometric” forms, as sets, are topological precisely because they express different possibilities of relation. Considered in this way, territorialization processes can be expressed in different types of topological relations, of which we highlight the following: 1) relations of containment (contained/enclosed or encompassing/encompassed); 2) relations of adjacency (proximity); 3) relations of connectivity; 4) relations of intersection or overlapping; 5) relations of disjunction (separation or distancing).

Processes of territorialization/deterritorialization, as power relations, are expressed in different spatial relations, so that the production of relations of containment, adjacency, overlapping and disjunction delineate the forms that the territorialization assumes, with its content being essentially sociological. By this we mean to say that all territorialization processes assume forms of specific spatial relations, which are equally historic: to territorialize/deterritorialize is to encompass, approximate, connect, overlap or separate. It is precisely the analysis of processes of territorialization/deterritorialization as the transformation of spatial relations that we use to demonstrate our argument.

But if the forms of territorialization processes are spatial relations, their **contents** are social relations. To consider this content, we use a dialectical theory that considers the relations of domination-resistance, hierarchy and autonomy and of autonomies “in” and “against” the state (Bailey 1987; Ferreira 2013; Foucault 2003; Scott 2008). By autonomy we understand the condition in which a certain society and or its particular component subgroups can determine the form, function and meaning of its own social institutions and consequently, of its territory. By hierarchy we understand a historic relationship and condition in which a society and or its groups are subordinated and do not determine the form, function and meaning of its institutions and territories, which are determined by other societies or groups. This means that autonomy is a relationship of symmetric and hierarchical power an asymmetric relation and condition.

In terms of content, territorialization/deterritorialization processes can express different relations and tendencies. Territory can be a space of autonomy and symmetry or a space of hierarchy and dependency/subordination. In this way, when we think of territory, in sociological terms, we must always consider if the processes of territorialization and the spatial relations that they involve constitute spaces of autonomy or spaces of hierarchy. All processes of state formation, and particularly of colonial and modern nation states, consist in generating and integrating different hierarchies, creating a chain of relations of command and obedience that must go from the nucleus of central power to each most peripheral point of society (Bookchin 1982). Therefore, spatial relations (encompassing, connecting, approximating, overlapping and separating) are ways of creating or expressing these hierarchies and forms of domination that are socially and historically constructed. On the other hand, spatial relations can also express forms of resistance and autonomy. Resistance, understood as an action that is opposed to a force by aiming in a direction contrary to it, from a sociological perspective implies that the groups that are submitted to spatial relations of domination can develop spatial actions and relations (encompassing, connecting, approximating, overlapping and separating). Spatial relations and their forms can thus express different contents, actions of domination oriented to establish hierarchies or actions of resistance oriented to autonomy, considering all the complex mediations possible among them. Therefore, a fundamental problem for an anthropology of territory is to understand if the territorialization/deterritorialization processes tend towards autonomy or hierarchy, this is because the same forms (spatial relations) can express different contents (social relations).<sup>7</sup> It is important to observe that we are operating with a dialectical concept of autonomy. We understand that there are two large forms of autonomy, the “autonomies in the state” - in the sense that social groups seek to construct autonomy within the state by integrating with and strengthening the state - and the “autonomies against the state”, in the sense that there are common forms of organization and political systems that try to escape from existing states, constructing territories that are self-governed by different types of social structures (Ferreira 2016; Scott 2014).

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<sup>7</sup> We can also present this distinction as analogous to the distinction between signs/signifiers and meanings within symbolic analysis in anthropology. Spatial relations are thus like signs, they are formal representations analogous to sounds, signals or images; social relations are the social or cultural meanings immanent to these signs. In this way, spatial relations are also acts of communication that can be subject to an interpretive analysis.

But it is impossible to think of the relations of autonomy and hierarchy without characterizing their relationship with the state. One of the fundamental aspects of the modern state is the monopoly over control of territory in which all the spatial relations that express it tend to produce hierarchies and centralization. For this reason, we will make recourse to the elaboration of political anthropology. This dialectical approach critically recuperates the theorization of distinction between societies “with and against” the state and state societies. For the purposes of this article, we want to reconsider a problem that we understand is central to the analysis of territory; the problem of autonomy and hierarchy.

The main contribution of political anthropology was the denaturalization of the state as an institution and value. It demonstrates (in the works of authors such as Radcliffe-Brown, Evans-Pritchard, Gluckman, Leach and others) that various societies have existed “without state”, given that the functions of producing “social cohesion” and order were assumed by kinship relations and forms of social and religious organization (Balandier 1969; Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1987; Leach 1995).

Pierre Clastres, meanwhile, criticized the notion of “society without state”, affirming that this concept continued to operate with an evolutionist vision, and, at the limit, an ethnocentric one, because it demarcated “absence” as the main characteristic of these societies. For this reason he suggested the idea of a “society against the state”, which indicates that societies (indigenous, traditional) would have a conscious and voluntary opposition towards the state and, moreover, towards forms of coercive power (Clastres 2003). Nevertheless, Clastres attributed this opposition to the state as a condition inherent to indigenous peoples, which he denominated as “indigenous philosophy”, creating a homogenizing and even a romantic vision of indigenous societies, which he affirmed are “naturally” inclined to opposition to states and to coercive power.<sup>8</sup> This thesis ignores not only indigenous pre-Colombian state societies (such as the Incan empire), but also how various hierarchical relations existing within societies without a state, or how gender, gerontocratic or shamanic hierarchies can historically evolve into political inequalities and forms of coercive and hierarchical power<sup>9</sup> (Bookchin 1982). The main problem of the functionalist and structuralist approaches is that they conceive of societies with and against the state as a-historic forms (Ferreira 2011). This produces a history and ethnography outside of time and an homogenizing view of these societies. The problem is that these indigenous peoples maintain various relations, participate in the colonial world and integrate the state structures.

But the concept of society without and against the state can be a powerful tool for the denaturalization of the epistemologies of government and of the modern state itself, notions that inform the official history and cartography. For this reason we should understand it precisely as a dialectical category. Societies without and against the state should not be conceived in terms of a simplistic evolutionism (as belonging to a pre-modern past), or as a type of mental structure immanent to indigenous societies (as in structuralism), or from the structural functionalist perspective (in which societies without state only produce order and cohesion). We understand societies without and against the state as historic forms of social organization that maintain a dialectical relation with states. They are always constituted by an opposition to states as a way to escape their control, but often at the interior of the states or at their frontiers, and maintain with these state structures ambiguous and contradictory relations. It is often possible for single ethnic groups

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8 Tania Stolze de Lima (2003) and Marcio Goldman, in an introduction to the book *A Sociedade contra o Estado*, began with a quote from Ailton Krenak (a Brazilian indigenous activist) who quoted Clastres saying that “according to him the indigenous are naturally against the state” (p.8). This vision exemplifies how the Clastres’ formulation tends to an essentialization of the indigenous who come to be “against the state” because of an immanent impulse. Thus, we understand that the notion of society without state remains valid, because even they can develop hierarchies that approximate states, therefore, anti-state activism is not an immanent property, but a historical one, of certain societies.

9 Nevertheless, it is essential to indicate that various “societies without state” were hierarchical societies and these hierarchies were accentuated in colonial situations. In this way, even societies without classes and without state could be hierarchical and, precisely for this reason, raise complex theoretical challenges for history and anthropology, as well as practical challenges to states.

and other social groups to participate in different political systems simultaneously, strategically using these contradictions and antagonisms, as in the classic example of the kachin and chan system, described by Leach in *Sistemas Políticos da Alta Birmânia*, in which the possibility is demonstrated of being able to simultaneously enter and leave a state and belong to state societies and those without a state (Ferreira 2014; Leach 1995; Scott 2014).

Finally, even understanding that the so-called societies without and against the state have a distinct scale, we understand that similar questions can be formulated today in terms of the type of experience of autonomy that each indigenous people will develop – if they are autonomies in the state (that is, if their projects suppose the construction or participation in structures of the national state as a condition for their autonomy) or if they are against the state (that is, if they suppose the need for self-governed territories, outside the realm of political control of the nation states (Ferreira 2016; González 2010).

Autonomy as a project and tendency emerges in the framework of the indigenous experiences and as being deeply linked to territorial conflicts. It is essential to critically analyze the nature of this autonomy. The retakings express this contradiction, because they place into conflict and interaction forms of autonomy in and against the state.

In this way, we can define here that our project of topological anthropology and anthropology of territory studies the dialectic of territorialization-deterritorialization and, through them, the relations between autonomy and hierarchy and between “autonomies in the state” and “against the state”. The big question that we intend to address here, through the history of the peoples of the Pantanal, is precisely how a society without and against the state is constituted and becomes fragmented, socially and territorially. We then analyze the rise of different expressions of resistance that arise by means of spatial relations, especially those materialized in the forms of the retakings. To do so, we use some principal instruments: a map of the ethnographic areas (which are critical re-elaborations of cultural areas); ethnohistoric maps, submitted to an epistemological criticism and also prepared based on a social cartography and not only on official documentation; maps of social cartography, understood here as the cartographic depiction of subaltern perspectives, that is, of repressed territorialities (symbolically and materially). These maps will be the fundamental starting point of our analysis of the territorial dialectic as a dialectic of domination-resistance expressed in spatial terms.

### **The Chaco-Pantanal as “ethnographic area”: culture as historic-social process**

We are defining here as the unit of analysis what we can denominate, according to Mellati, as an ethnographic area. More specifically, a specific region – that of Pantanal do Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) - Brazil, located within the ethnographic area of the Chaco. The notion of ethnographic area is a re-elaboration of the concept of cultural area, formulated in anthropology and in ethnology.<sup>10</sup> In general, it supposes a type of unity subjacent to the cultural area. Different proposals of cultural areas were developed, normally grouping the peoples of a region as a function of their linguistic unity or cultural traits (such as rituals, religion, technology, productive activity) and ethno-linguistic maps were prepared and those of cultural areas that classify the peoples of America as hunter-gathers, pastors, farmers etc..

The cultural areas would be forms of trying to transform time into space, that is, to portray the process of historic differentiation of culture in spatial terms. The problem is that these schemes tend

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<sup>10</sup> “The notion of cultural area was born at the heart of U.S. anthropology and does not escape an orientation aimed at reconstituting the route of cultural traits among different societies, not on a world scale, as the centro-European diffusionists of the early twentieth century would like, but only on a region level, at most continental. Wissler, in 1922, was the first to propose for the Americas a division into cultural areas. And since then, other researchers have made new proposals” (Mellati 2016).

to be reductionist. In the first place, because the cultural areas were conceived as fixed, precisely by adopting linguistic, religious or technological criteria, which makes it difficult to sustain the existence of homogenous cultural areas over history. On the other hand, the linguistic criteria, which is often used, does not translate into an effective unit, in such a way that groups with the same language can have cultural practices and historic trajectories that are completely distinct. Cultural areas also do not consider the real history of violence and colonization, and thus produce a naturalist and abstract cartography in which indigenous peoples are represented as grouped points, which do not reflect the historic trajectories of these peoples within the states (old and new ones) in a process of formation and transformation, and are at most placed in the framework of representation of the natural world (hydrography, geographical relief, etc.).

By indicating these limitations, authors such as Eduardo Galvão<sup>11</sup> and Júlio Cesar Mellati proposed a critical reformulation of the concept of cultural area. Galvão would conduct a historic analysis of the concept of area, once again giving space the character of time, and therefore, recognizing its relativity: Galvão uses three innovative criteria —temporal limit of validity, “intertribal” contact and “contact with the national society”.

We thus see that the concepts of area are not static or exterior to colonization processes. Melatti, for example, reformulated the concept and denominated it as ethnographic areas,<sup>12</sup> adding to it the international dimension, that is, they are not only areas of Brazil, but of the Americas, This formulation is extremely important. The concept of ethnographic area, understood as a form of cartography, seeks to portray a space (of interethnic relations, of the relation with the national society, with the environment and with the very cultural alterity of each group). The concept of ethnographic area, developed in Brazilian anthropology as a critical appropriation of the concept of cultural areas, designates a theoretically constructed analytical unit based on the identification of certain ethnographic criteria.

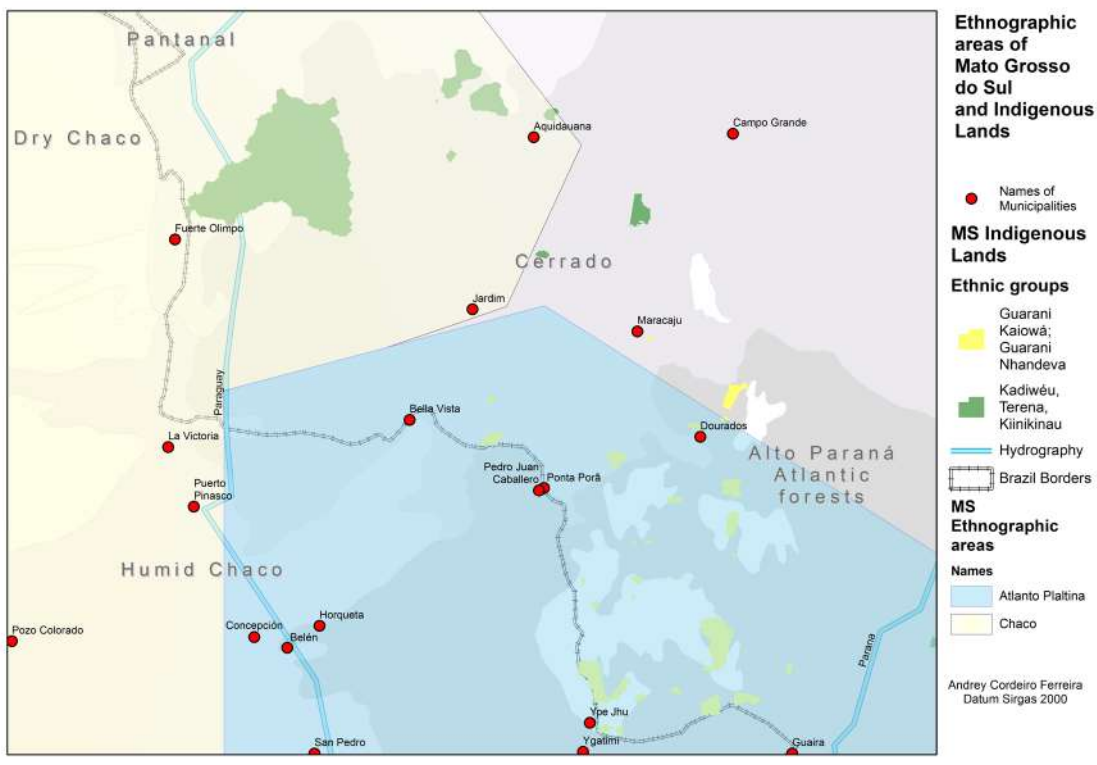
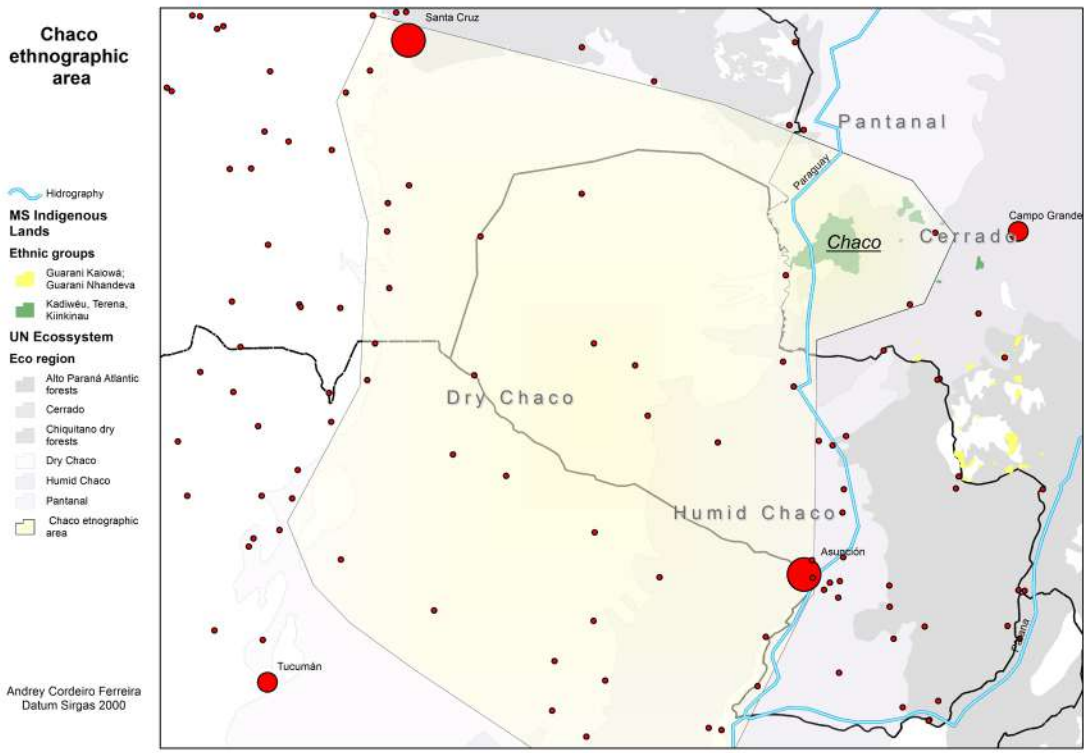
On the map below we indicate what today are two ethnographic areas that span the state of Mato Grosso do Sul – that of Chaco and the Atlanto Platina. The first includes the indigenous lands of the Terena and Kadiwéu and the second the indigenous lands of the Nhadeva and Kaiowá. As can be seen, the limits of these ethnographic areas are located in the Cerrado, in the Pantanal and in the Atlantic forest. But these biomes are interlaced with the biome of the Chaco and its subsystems. For this reason, we highlight within this ethnographic area a region that we call the Chaco-Pantanal. This unit of analysis is, in ecological and historic terms, an area of broad extension and a transnational territory that spans what today are Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina.<sup>13</sup> We denominate this area, at least in Brazilian territory, the Chaco-Pantanal because it combines, in historic, cultural and ecological terms, elements of the Chaco, located to a large degree in Paraguay and Argentina, and of Pantanal, located in Brazil.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Galvão gives his division into areas a temporal limit valid for 60 years, from 1900 to 1959, the date when he first presented his work. He thus avoids considering on a single map current indigenous societies with others that disappeared during the colonial or imperial period, or the same society in two different points of the map, due to the dislocations suffered during the period of more than four centuries since the presence of the whites, an inconvenient choice made by other authors who design the map as if it was made at the initial moment of the conquest – as does Murdock’s division — forgetting that it did not occur simultaneously at all points of the continent, but was a gradual process.

<sup>12</sup> “Instead of speaking in “cultural areas”, it is better to say “ethnographic areas”, to accentuate that they do not exist entirely on their own, but that the researcher is who, in the final analysis, delineates them” (Melatti, 2016).

<sup>13</sup> “The geographic area known as Grã-Chaco, or simply Chaco, is located in southern Bolivia, west of Paraguay, north of Argentina and in a small portion of western Brazil. It is between the right bank of the Paraná and Paraguay Rivers, on one side and the base of the Andes on the other. For the northern limit we can use as a rough reference the railroad line that links Corumbá to Santa Cruz de la Sierra. To the south, it gradually runs to the Pampas” (Mellati 2016). What we call the Chaco-Pantanal is, thus a fraction of the ethnographic area of the Chaco.

<sup>14</sup> Júlio César Mellati, as we will see below, created a series of ethnographic areas to group the indigenous population of Brazil. One of these areas he denominated the “Chaco”, however, for reasons that will become more clear in this article, we decided to denominate this area as the “Chaco-Pantanal”.



When we consider the ethnographic area of the Chaco,<sup>15</sup> we are speaking of a region formed by a long historic process, but that presents as its main characteristic the fact of having overlapping territories and interlacing histories, to use an expression of Edward Said.

Two global characteristics of this area are fundamental: 1) the Chaco is a periphery of all the countries in which it is located in relation to their capital cities and regions of higher demographic occupation. Buenos Aires, La Paz, Brasília and Asuncion are presented in such a way that the Chaco constitutes a “peripheral center”, as a periphery at the interior in relation to all these capital cities and countries; 2) the Chaco encompasses a broad region of the international frontier, that is, it was an area of delimitation of frontiers and limits of new states. Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay waged wars that involved the indigenous peoples of the region. This condition of national periphery and international frontier give this ethnographic area a series of specificities influenced by the relations with the nation states and their societies and economies.

The Chaco-Pantanal region is composed of two main ethnicities – the Terena and the Kadiwéu. The Terena are one of the indigenous societies that currently occupy the region of transition between the Cerrado and the Pantanal of Mato Grosso do Sul, a state in Brazil’s Midwest. In twentieth century ethnology they were classified as a subgroup of the Guaná-Chané, a people that occupied a broad strip from the periphery of the Andes to the surroundings of Asuncion, Paraguay, and the margins of the Paraguay River, belonging to the Aruak linguistic group. The Terena appear in the historic and ethnologic literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the chronicles of travelers and Spanish and Portuguese colonial authorities. The Kadiwéu, in turn, were considered in the literature as a subgroup of the Mbayá-Guaicuru, a society that had an important role in the colonial world of South America. Known in the colonial world as horsemen Indians, they occupied a broad territory along the Paraguay River. At the same time, the Guaná and Guaicuru (and even the current Guarani) had a historic relation that is essential to understanding their history and current culture.<sup>16</sup> In this portion of the territory, in the previous centuries, the Guaná were inserted in relations of alliance and servitude with the Guaicuru, and the Guarani were frequently kidnapped and absorbed as “captives” by these peoples.

When we consider the history of these two peoples, the notion of ethnographic area acquires full significance. The history of the groups, identities and ethnonyms tends to be discontinuous. Groups and ethnonyms disappear, merge or are simply made invisible by forms of power. At the same time, there were various types of exchanges (kinship, productive, economic) among the Guaná and Guaicuru of the past. For this reason, it is extremely difficult to write indigenous history based on a singular ethnic group found today. The current ethnonyms, ethnic identities and ethnic groups were completely transformed and re-signified during the past century.

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<sup>15</sup> Mellati, by defining the ethnographic area, calls attention to some characteristics of the terminology of the Kadiwéu and Terena kinship system (the form of classifying cousins as “brother-cousins”) and some other elements of social organization. But, beyond this, there is the fact that the Kadiwéu and the Terena have been raised to the condition of ethnicities officially recognized by the national state, to the degree that the others were considered to be “extinct”. It is important to observe precisely how a process of cultural diffusion of certain rituals occurred, and particularly of a nationalist ideology that characterized the Kadiwéu and the Terena. In addition, there are various exchanges and circulation of people among the indigenous lands of Pantanal.

<sup>16</sup> At the same time, this distinction between two cultural areas should also be considered as historic, or that is, relative, because centuries ago the Guarani also occupied territories of the Chaco-Pantanal and maintained (and maintain) contradictory relations with the current Terena and Kadiwéu and the former Guaicuru and Guaná. These two ethnographies are largely the fruit of the process of formation of the “new state”, Brazil, and of different processes of indigenous resistance and adaptation strategies.

Below we present a scheme of some ethnonyms registered in the documentation and bibliography to exemplify this question.

"Genealogy" of the Indigenous Peoples of the Ethnographic Area of the Chaco-Pantanal and its subgroups							
Guaicuru (Guaicuru Language)				Guaná ou Chané (Aruak Language)			
Kadiuéu	Beaquiéus	Ejueus	Egaiegi	Terena	Laiana	Kinikinau	Echoaladi

Thus, the Guaicuru and Guaná – the main indigenous peoples in the region in question - were subdivided into groups. The main ones remaining are the Terena and the Kadiwéu. Today, some of these old Guaná subgroups are officially recognized as Terena.

During the twentieth century, the Brazilian state imposed the Terena identity as the official identity, so that the Laiano and Kinikinau were encompassed in this ethnic identity. In this way, we can affirm that the colonialization process involved a resignification of the ethnonyms and ethnic identities.

The current ethnographic areas, Chaco and Atlanto Platina, indicated above, historically took shape between the decades of 1910 and 1960. At that time there were different territorialization processes and policies of symbolic domination, nationalization and integration of the indigenous peoples in the society of capitalist classes. Certain ethnonyms were imposed and others repressed. The Terena and Kadiwéu emerged as official and surviving ethnicities, to a large degree because they were made official and reinforced by the administrative practices of the nation state and indigenist policy. For this reason, an "ethnohistory", in the sense of a history focused on existing ethnic groups is not sufficient. It would lead to historiographic errors and distortions.

Therefore, when we speak of the indigenous peoples of the Chaco-Pantanal, we are referring to this region with this new composition of ethnonyms and ethnic groups that in the past constituted other forms of society and that had overlapping territories and interlacing histories. In this way, we understand that the concept of ethnographic area and of peoples of the Chaco-Pantanal allows realizing an exercise in historic analysis that breaks with the colonial nature of historiographic and cartographic knowledge. At the same time, it is a more fluid unit, because it is not necessarily focused on any particular group, and it is historic. The unity of the ethnographic area takes place through shared historic experience and not through the cultural, linguistic unity or social organization.

Even the notion of ethnographic area is not able to grasp the depth and complexity of the historic processes. One of the elements that singularize this ethnographic area is the fact that they have belonged to what we call the Autonomous Indigenous Social System of the Chaco-Pantanal, a society without and against the state that existed in the region for two centuries. Its history and experience were made invisible. Here we will present its constitution and transformation and then show how the indigenous peoples still face questions raised by the history and formation of the new states, which are manifest especially in the meaning of their territoriality. It is in this area that territorial dialectics develop, processes of domination and resistance, expressed in spatial relations and projects of autonomy in the territorial conflicts.

### **Exiwa/Society against and in the state: cartographic coloniality and ethnohistoric maps as a subaltern perspective**

In the 1950s, anthropologist Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira registered the following statement of an important Terena shaman:

There was a clump of *exerogupi* (tall grass) at a place called Etxi-uá, that is there in Pantanal (on the western bank of the Paraguay River), where today there are only Xamacoco and some Kadiweú who are fighting with

them. It is for this reason that the lips and ears of the Xamacoco are pierced... Young Terena removed all of the Terena people from below the earth, from the hole of the *exerogupi*. They came out shivering from cold and became stuck in the ground. They shivered vigorously. An old woman also came out who left her *Huapio* in the hole. She wanted to go back to get her Hupaie and returned there, and was tamped down by Pitanoé, one of the Terena twin brothers. Half of the Terena remained there and perhaps there are still Terena there (Cardoso de Oliveira 2002: 125).

Exiwa is a category of the Terena indigenous discourse that indicates a territory that is historically occupied and a mythic space. As it is possible to perceive by the ethnographic report above, Exiwa was simultaneously a place in Pantanal, on the margins of the Paraguay River (close to where the city of Corumbá is now located) and a mythic place of origin of the Terena, where a figure like Pitanoé removed the Indians from inside the earth. Exiwa, therefore, is a toponym that simultaneously indicates a certain region in the social world and a place of memory and cosmology of the group. Another fundamental component of this narrative is that the Exiwa was a space of interethnic conflict, a place of war between different indigenous societies.

The indigenous Terena category of Exiwa is thus a route for decolonizing this historiographic and cartographic narrative. This toponymic diversity expresses a struggle of symbolic classifications (Bordieu 2004) and a real political struggle for territorial control.

This brief description is key to considering the relations of domination and resistance and the spatial relations, especially how a society in and against the state is constituted amid the process of formation of the world system and colonialism in a peripheral region of South America. Nevertheless, in Portuguese and Spanish America, this region received another toponymic denomination, which is related to the territory that is now known as Pantanal:

The immense flood plain located at the interior of South America known today as Pantanal was transformed into lands belonging to the Spanish crown by the treaty of the Tordesilha in the late fifteenth century (...) since then, the floodable areas of the upper Paraguay river basin came to be recognized as the fabulous Xarayes Lagoon. (...) In the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, the same region came to be the Pantanal. This denomination was given by the Portuguese Del Brasil, the *monçoeiros*, who following the Paulista flags, advanced beyond the limits fixed in 1494 in Tordesilhas and, in the early 1700's, made those waters their route to the conquered lands (Costa 1999: 17-19).

In the Spanish-speaking countries, the toponym Chaco (from the Qêchua, "Chacu") first indicated the province of Tucúman and later came to designate the entire territory to its east, in an extension of 700 thousand square kilometers, encompassing territories of Bolivia, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil. The region of Chaco was characterized by the existence of a large ethnic and cultural diversity, and was subdivided into "cultural areas": the Upper, Middle and Lower Paraguay. The Upper Paraguay or Chaco Boreal ranged from the Port of Candelária to the Jauru River, currently encompassing the region of Corumbá until Cuiabá.

During the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a conflict for the appropriation and legitimate control of the territory of the Chaco, among the Spanish (later Paraguayans), the Portuguese (later Brazilians) and indigenous. This area was known by the Spanish as "Chaco", by the Portuguese as "Pantanaes" and by the Terena Indians as *Exiwa*. *Chaco*, *Pantanal* and *Exiwa* are, respectively, Spanish, Portuguese and Indigenous categories that described a territorial and environmental agglomerate. They designate an intersected territory, although they are not precisely the same, as we will see.

This overlapping of toponyms and in the definition of limits is the expression of the first process of territorialization to which we refer. This process involves the formation of the modern interstate system in the Americas, materialized by the Treaties of Tordesilhas, Madri and Santo Idelfonso. These treaties express

the tendency of colonization to produce spatial relations and cartographic representations that are part of the state-colonial power under formation. What we argue here is precisely that the border of what was known until the nineteenth century as the Gran Chaco and the Pantanais are fluid and within them - more than a series of insulated indigenous groups - there was an autonomous indigenous system, a society without and against the state that combined a group of ethnicities and ethnonyms that, with colonization and the formation of new states, were transformed and some destroyed.

One of the characteristics of the process of colonization and statization of the territories is that the indigenous are under represented in the official cartography, in which the indigenous societies do not have territories per se. Cartography operates with three types of graphic representation: lines, points and polygons. The polygons represent sovereign units, a form of monopolistic relationship of territory, and materialize in geometric terms the concept of sovereignty and property (for this reason states and properties are represented as such). The indigenous peoples only appear in this cartography as points and often do not appear, except marginally (in sparse notations). Thus, the states have the privilege of cartographic representation, which is simultaneously a form of knowledge and power.

The ethnohistoric maps make the indigenous visible, although usually treat the colonial and state frontiers and limits abstractly and represent the space of indigenous societies as an empty space, occupied exclusively by them. Thus, two cartographic representations are created, in nearly separate ontological planes: the cartography of the states and the cartography of the indigenous peoples, the first with visibly expressed limits, under the form of polygons, and the second represented as an agglomerate of points or names dispersed in a space outside of world history. Our argument consists in affirming that it is possible, through critical ethnography and historiography, to reconstruct the ethnohistoric map as a tool of cartographic decolonization.

We developed the ethnohistoric map below based on data compiled by various authors and on criticism of colonial sources and reports. This map presents information that usually does not appear in the official maps and cartography, or in the common ethnohistoric maps. It was prepared precisely by superimposing two cartographies: the official cartography and an ethnohistoric cartography.<sup>17</sup> Three planes of information can be seen in this map, which in our understanding summarize the long term process that took place at the frontiers, and which corresponds to the process of formation of the new states (Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina).

In the first plane, we have a map of location of indigenous peoples, of the Portuguese and Spanish colonial settlements and fortifications. This plane especially reflects the information for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The background of this localization map includes the limits of states in processes of formation and destruction, within which are indicated precisely the dynamic character of the limits and territories demanded by the states, which suffered great changes between the Treaty of Tordesilhas (1494) and the Treaty of San Idelfonso (1777). A large portion of Brazilian territory as an independent state was, at some moment, part of the Spanish empire. But what is most important, the line that marked Tordesilhas and later the line of the Treaty of San Idelfonso, created a complex relationship of overlapping with different indigenous systems, like the known Inca Empire (represented on the map), but also with a society without and against the state, an autonomous political system that existed in the Chaco-Pantanal region. This system was described and analyzed by Portuguese colonial authorities who produced a vast documentation about it. Various historic sources indicated the limits in which the Guaicuru and other indigenous peoples exercised control. The best category is used by Ricardo de Almeida Serra who spoke

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<sup>17</sup> We are particularly supported here by the reading of Portuguese military documents, such as those of Ricardo Almeida Serra, who wrote veritable ethnographies about the region. These documents describe the political and cultural systems and customs of the indigenous peoples. Between the lines, and even at times on the main lines, information of a cartographic nature is indicated that we used to construct the territorial limits. Moreover, we used an ethnohistoric map presented by Alfred Mettraux, which was geo-referenced and formed the basis for the historic location of the Chaco peoples.



The map above portrays different aspects of the territorialization process. The colonization process of America, seen from the perspective of the state, indicates a struggle for the expansion of the limits represented in the cartography of the treaties. The Treaty of Tordesilhas, for example, divided South America in two. When we confront the map of the Treaty of Tordesilhas and the cartography of the colonial limits with the ethnohistoric map, we see that this process of territorialization, which extended from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, was essentially a movement of imposition of spatial relations of overlapping and intersection: the proclamation of limits by the states in formation was a demand for sovereignty and property, but these limits encompassed the indigenous peoples. The current limits between Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia were delineated more or less in the eighteenth century, although this relationship of overlapping was never only between the states and the indigenous peoples, but was also between the Spanish and Portuguese colonial states and later between Brazil and Paraguay.

The ethnohistoric map attempts to portray not the state-colonial point of view, but the indigenous perspective. The circular points indicate precisely the broad distribution of indigenous peoples throughout the region. The region in yellow indicates the limits of what we call the Chaco Pantanal Autonomous System, a region that was more than an agglomerate of isolated ethnic groups as the ethnic-historic maps usually portray. For this reason, it is necessary to understand the social and spatial relations that are portrayed on the map.

In the eighteenth century the Spanish and Portuguese sought to expand and establish units of colonization in the region, mainly forts and prisons. Between 1750 and 1780, the indigenous peoples particularly maintained relations of disjunction and separation: revolting escapees from the colonial cities and missions sought to construct relations of distancing, these were forms of resistance expressed in spatial terms. The destruction of countless cities and attacks against the colonial peoples within this territory indicate precisely this. These spatial relations of disjunction were forms of resistance to colonialism and allowed the indigenous peoples to have an Autonomous System.

In the late eighteenth century, there was a peace treaty between the Guaicuru and the Portuguese colonial government, which after the Treaty of São Idelfonso (1777) was signed between Spain and Portugal, accelerated the process of construction of Portuguese military facilities within the autonomous indigenous territory. This relationship, combined with other relations of the Guaná – who came to construct their villages around the military forts – created a relationship of complementarity between the indigenous political system and the political system of Portuguese colonialism. The autonomy of the indigenous, who until then were considered to be “against the state” came to take place “in the state”, supporting themselves on the political and commercial alliance with Portuguese to remain viable.

This autonomy in the state was thus one of the main factors to make viable the territorial construction of the colonial state and later of Brazil during the Imperial period. Without this spatial relationship of overlapping of two systems, which in reality expressed a dialectical relationship of alliance and collaboration between indigenous societies and the states (the old Portuguese colonial state and later the New Independent State of Brazil) it is not possible to understand the colonization of the region.

Beginning in the 1790's, there was a substantial change. Until then, the Guaicuru and indigenous resistance was expressed in relations of disjunction. Since then, after the Treaty of Peace and Friendship was signed between the Guaicuru and the Portuguese colonial state, neighborly relations and those of connectivity began to exist between the indigenous peoples of the Autonomous System of the Chaco-Pantanal and the colonial state.

As indicated on the map above, it is possible to see that the military fortifications in the region date to the 1770's. The creation of the Miranda prison and of Fort Coimbra, are not only acts of imposition, but are negotiations with the indigenous peoples. Attempts to create *aldeamentos* would be realized around the

village of Albuquerque, alongside the Forte Coimbra, and close to the Miranda prison. The aldeamentos were state territorial and administrative units, in which the indigenous would be located and governed by authorities named by the state. When we consider the indigenous history, we see that the indigenous also sought a certain overlapping and approximation. They sought to establish themselves in the vicinities of the military facilities, either by adapting to aldeamentos or by creating autonomous villages nearby. The neighborly relations of proximity thus expressed a change in the political behavior and in the position in relation to the state. These relations between Portuguese colonial units and the Guaicuru and Guana peoples were also relations of connectivity. Not only in neighboring territories, but they were connected by different types of relations of cooperation and conflict.

Thus, there was a peculiar spatial and social overlapping, a territorial dialectic that also overlapped the old Autonomous System of the Chaco Pantanal and the colonial state in formation and expansion.<sup>19</sup> The indigenous society existed simultaneously “against” and “in” the state. The alliance with the Portuguese sought to give more power to the indigenous peoples to confront the Spanish. At the same time, the Guaná sought greater autonomy in relation to the Guaicuru, given that there were conflicts between these ethnicities. The Portuguese state also depended on this alliance to consolidate these positions and combat the Spanish advance. In this way, the colonial state was constructed “against” and “within” the Chaco Pantanal system.

The territory of the Autonomous Chaco-Pantanal System was not exclusive, and was not a monopoly, there were various overlapping demands for sovereignty. Nevertheless, the frontiers were occupied and administered, or in fact governed, by the indigenous peoples. The Autonomous System was not a unit exterior to the colonialisms and states, even if it had been pre-existing in relation to them. This system was simultaneously constituted “against the State” - by the affirmation of a segmented organization, based on indigenous lineages and inter-ethnic alliances based on a dual relation of alliance and descendency - and also as a society “within the state”, given that this territory encompassed Portuguese and Spanish colonial institutions, which constituted a commercial space and one of exchanges, essential to the reproduction of the Autonomous System of the Chaco Pantanal. For this reason, we are far from the ethnological narratives that place the indigenous societies in a condition of original insulation, from which they had only been removed later on by colonialism, or from visions that narrate a process of linear colonization in which the demands for sovereignty and ownership of territories (by colonial states) is misunderstood as occupation, possession and real use (that is with territorial management).

The Autonomous System of the Chaco-Pantanal constructed its autonomy in an ambiguous and antagonistic dialectical relationship “against” and “in” the state, according to the historic situation. This country, made invisible in the official cartography and historiography, was fragmented and deterritorialized since the end of the Paraguay War, in 1864. That is when a process of deterritorialization began, which would transform indigenous history, which we will now analyze. The process of colonialization, formation of the new state and development of the capitalist economy were expressed in a standard of spatial relations of overlapping and disjunction. These relations led to a structural territorial conflict which would prolong through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and that raised once again the projects of indigenous autonomy “in” and “against” the state.

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<sup>19</sup> In the report of the president of the province of Mato Grosso, José Antonio Pimenta Bueno, dated 01/03/1838, we find the following commentary: “The number of domesticateds does not include the superb and intrepid nation of the Aaicurus horsemen, who are always roving and enterprising.(.) We have taken not a small advantage at the service of defense of the Lower Paraguay from the Guató, Laianas, Terenos, Quinquinaos and Guanas...” (Relatório 1837: 18). We see two important elements here: the continued hostility that the Guaicurus maintained within the Empire and the consolidation of the use of the indigenous groups for the purposes of the Imperial policy.

## Deterritorialization and new spatial relations

The War of Paraguay (1864-1870) is a mark of definition of frontiers in South America. At its end, the interstate system was established and the colonialization process of the Chaco-Pantanal region had an accelerated beginning. This large process of deterritorialization began in the 1860's, although only acquired a definitive form in the 1900's.

There were countless Guaná and Guaicuru settlements in the nineteenth century, but few aldeamentos. Nevertheless, as we demonstrated above, the Guaná and Guaicuru, despite establishing alliances with the state (the Portuguese and later Brazilian), remained outside the orbit of the government and state hierarchy. The ambiguity of the historic situation would allow them to remain autonomous. Nevertheless, the cattle ranches advanced throughout the region, as well as the administrative subdivisions, with the growing creation of municipalities within the province and then state of Mato Grosso.

The deterritorialization process thus had a dual meaning: it sought to incorporate the lands within the relations of capitalist production and ownership and especially subordinate the indigenous peoples to territories integrated to the hierarchy of government authority. The territorial conflict was thus prolonged for a number of years and we can cite here the example of an *autonomous settlement* in the nineteenth century known by the toponym Piranhinha. This village was described by a Brazilian military engineer, Taunay, in a report of the Commission of Army Engineers prepared during the Paraguay War:

Indians - At the aldeamento of the Terenos at Piranhinha, we found the best disposition of people in the person of Captain José Pedro (This Indian, educated by Frei Mariano de Bagnaia, had notable qualities. He knew how to read, write, and taught the doctrine to the children in his village and maintained much discipline and order among those in his command). He died in the city of São Paulo, when he returned in 1867 from Rio de Janeiro, where he had gone to complain to the government about some lands): they presented to us 60 young good shooters, ready to serve as excellent troops in surprises and ambushes. At the aldeamento of Francisco Dias there are 40 robust men, ready to take up arms, which they have, and only lack ammunition.

Of the Quinquinao people, camped at various points, 30 men can be counted on. There are a total of 130 Indians who are in the case of serving as a strong contingent. We have, however, not visited two aldeamentos eight or ten leagues from here, one Quinquinao and another Laiano, which should increase the number of men and provide some *alqueires* of rice and corn. Beyond Miranda there are also other points at which there are escaped Indians (Taunay, 1869: 309-310)

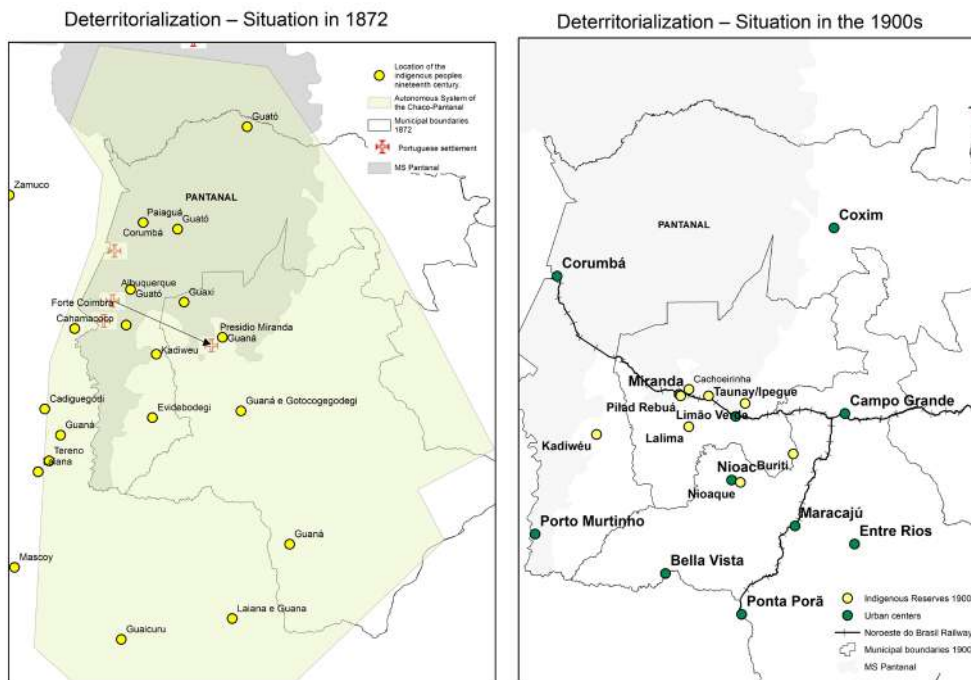
This document makes explicit the relationship with the state, especially the army, because the Indians were effectively recruited to serve in military activities of the Brazilian army. Moreover, Taunay spoke of two Terena leaders or captains, José Pedro and Francisco Dias, who commanded *aldeamentos* in the Morros. The *aldeamento* of Piranhinha served both as a point of support for the activities of the Army Commission of Engineers during the Paraguay War and also provided soldiers to the Brazilian troops. This *aldeamento* remained practically invisible in the sources of the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> As can be seen reading between the lines of this document, the Terena and Kinikinau faced land conflicts and a Terena captain died upon return from a trip to the capital of the Empire, Rio de Janeiro, where he raised the issue.

We can say, therefore, that various domination strategies were employed by means of production of spatial relations. The settlers-farmers of the region of Mato Grosso and large monopoly capital (especially foreign) adopted a practice of overlapping in the region, by beginning processes of gaining land deeds, declaring as their properties the lands within the former territory of the Autonomous System of the

<sup>20</sup> The village of Piranhinha, according to the data indicated by Taunay, was located in the same region in which today is found the aldeamento of Limão Verde: *between the Taboco and Aquidauana, near the Piranhinha and João Dias streams and within the branches and buttresses of the Serra de Maracajú*. The village of Piranhinha is not mentioned in the literature and in the documents we studied after the Paraguay war.

Chaco-Pantanal. Through these processes, a type of primitive accumulation of lands began that was consolidated in the early twentieth century. The state expanded its action by multiplying the number of administrative units (municipalities) and large infrastructure projects (construction of the telegraph line and later the railroad Ferro Noroeste do Brasil).

In the first half of the twentieth century, this process was intensified and created the structure of the indigenist administration that finally settled the Indians, integrating them within a governmental hierarchy. Analyzing the spatial relations, we can extract important information. When we analyze two historic moments, a map of spatial distribution of the indigenous peoples up to 1872 and another of distribution in 1900, we see that some fundamental relations will be materialized in the territory. We can compare the two situations below:



In 1872, there was a great variety of points of Guaná, Guaicuru, Paiagua, Guato and Guaxi occupation (and there were even some points of occupation during the nineteenth century that were not represented on this map), especially along the Paraguay River, of the two sides of the border. The Pantanal was occupied by a variety of indigenous peoples. The region of Corumbá (within Pantanal and the Chaco Boreal) had a large aldeamento (known as Bom Conselho) and countless villages, but these were mainly shifted to the surroundings of the Miranda prison, while groups like the Guato, entered the Pantanal.

After the Paraguay war, a large race began to gain deeds to lands within the old territory of the Autonomous System of the Chaco Pantanal. Until this time, a spatial relation of overlapping prevailed in which the administrative frontiers, and political and productive structure of the Brazilian state expanded in relations of overlapping and intersection, based on a complex system of reciprocity and relations of dependence and reciprocal obligations in which the indigenous peoples believed it was the obligation of the state to meet their demands<sup>21</sup> (Ferreira 2011). Between 1872 and 1900, a broad and accelerated process of colonization took place, which would transform the social and spatial relations.

<sup>21</sup> During much of the nineteenth century these spatial relations of overlapping expressed social relations of asymmetrical reciprocity. In this way, the spatial relation of overlapping was ambiguous: it expressed a strategy of domination and strengthening of the state, but simultaneously gave the indigenous peoples a position of status. But the spatial relations of overlapping would increasingly acquire an expropriatory form. This relationship of asymmetrical reciprocity is essential to understanding the position of the indigenous peoples of Pantanal towards the state. The relations established between the indigenous systems and the modern state were analyzed in detail in the article “Dialéticas Coloniais” [Colonial Dialectics].

On the map from the 1900s, we can see how there is a process of “spatial centralization”. By this we understand the way the indigenous peoples of the Pantanal are joined in specific points of the territory: the Kadiwéu are centralized in their reserve in the municipality of Porto Murтинho, a mountainous region that is difficult to access. It should be observed that the Kadiwéu had a fate that was exceptional in the entire Chaco region, having obtained a reserve of 500 thousand hectares recognized by the Brazilian state.<sup>22</sup>

All of the dozens of points of indigenous occupation existing in the nineteenth century were reduced to reserves, created in the early 1900s. The broad territory was fragmented and the indigenous peoples placed in a spatial relationship of disjunction: the farms, which until then had a relationship of overlapping, came to “expel the Indians” or the state rounded them up and placed them on the reserves. The spatial separation was an element necessary to the construction of the private properties as a space of monopoly of the settlers-farmers.

It should be observed that the village of Albuquerque would give way to the city of Corumbá. Due to construction of the Port of Corumbá, a river network was established that made the city of Corumbá a strategic location for the establishment of an export center. The point of concentration of these relations of connectivity was the port. Thus, the indigenous deterritorialization process was provoked by the integration of the region of Corumbá to the world system, given that the region became a point of connectivity in a river and commercial network that linked it to commerce on the Plata River and thus to the Atlantic.

The indigenous peoples were expelled from the region denominated as Exiwa. In the case of the old Guaná, who were concentrated around the Miranda Prison, they were removed from the region of Albuquerque/Corumbá and from Pantanal, as can be seen by the map. The conquest of Pantanal, was thus realized for the construction of an international river network. The relations of territorial overlapping and the pact with the state were unable to impede a new territorial integration, promoted by the forces of the global market, which took advantage of these spatial and political relations to advance a new colonization project. Therefore, the indigenous territorialization process can be best understood if we understand the need to free up and pacify the entire region on the margins of the Paraguay River for this process of commercial integration (Targas 2012).

The peoples of the Chaco-Pantanal have different fates: the Kadiwéu had a large land reserved for them, while the Terena were centralized in small reserves, of at most 3 thousand hectares. The construction of the Noroeste do Brasil railroad intensified this process because the tracks cut through the Terena territory and deepened the integration of the region in the world economy, linking the Paraguay River and the city of Corumbá to the ports of Brazil’s southeast. The Kadiwéu Reserve was demarcated in 1903 and recognized by the state government of Mato Grosso (Flores 2009; Silva 2014). Then, the demarcations of the Terena lands took place. While on the Terena lands there was a spatial relation of disjunction (with the Terena expelled from the lands they occupied and enclosed on small reserves), the Kadiwéu were submitted to a spatial relation of domination by means of overlapping, under the form of leasings, primarily stimulated by the state. The leasings allowed the creation of countless farms within the Kadiwéu territory.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The Kadiwéu indigenous land was marked with its current limits in the 1980s. In the early 1900’s, however, there was already recognition of the “donation” of lands to the Kadiwéu by the state.

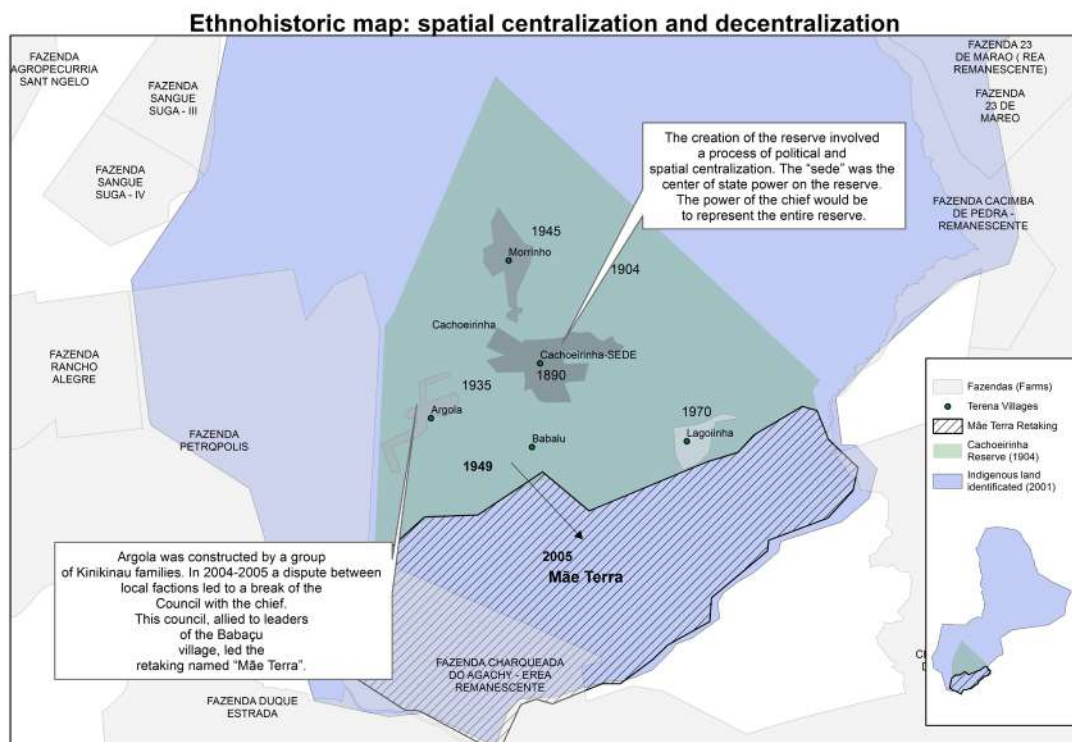
<sup>23</sup> “The permission given by the SPI [Indigenous Protection Service] for the farmers to remain on the Kadiwéu territory generated discomfort for the group, given that their lands were leased and negotiated. Facing this situation, some Indians began to work as employees for the farmers on their own land to guarantee their survival (...) At first, the leasings were not seen well by the Indians because it was the SPI that received the money and later FUNAI [the National Indian Foundation]. Over time, this changed because the administration of the leases was passed to the Association of Indigenous Communities of the Kadiwéu Reserve (ACIRK). The leasing practice that initially was seen poorly by the Indians became a source of subsistence for most of the family groups (...) in the 1980s, 89 farms were leased within the Kadiwéu area. In the Bodoquena village, most of the families received income from leasing of each one of the farms. The anthropologist commented that on the families of greater prestige in the village, each adult member, man or woman, had a farm and received income” (Flores 2009).

In this way, we can affirm that the colonization process was essentially a process of production of spatial relations of overlapping and disjunction. The first would allow the realization of a political-military and social “siege” and the beginning of fragmentation of the territory of the Autonomous Indigenous System. The second created an agrarian structure, by discriminating private properties and indigenous reserves, which integrated the indigenous peoples within a governmental hierarchy.

The reserves would be the space of a new type of government, in which the Indians would be administered by state authorities, which would indicate the “chief-captains”. Each reserve was to have a centralized system of power, in which each village would be governed and represented by a single chief-captain. Thus, the “top” of the indigenous political system would integrate the lowest level of the government-state hierarchy. The territorial system of the reserves therefore expressed the hierarchization and subordination of the indigenous peoples and the destruction of their autonomy.

### Indigenous autonomy and territorialities: the myth of the gift of land and the retakings

We will now analyze how the social relations would be transformed by a process of territorial conflict, which began in a more or less systematic manner in the 1980s. This process is illustrated by the indigenous retakings. We will analyze the general situation of the retakings in Mato Grosso do Sul and later analyze how the spatial relations express social relations and cultural meanings. The ethnohistoric maps allow us to analyze how the reserves express the territorial dialectic between spatial and political centralization-decentralization and how this dialectic led to the phenomenon of the “retakings”.



The ethnohistoric map above portrays the spatial relations in one of the Terena reserves, the reserve of Cachoeirinha. The 1904 limits of the reserve sought to create a merger between two spaces, in principle distinct ones: the Cachoeirinha village, which according to the narrative of its residents was created in the late nineteenth century, was chosen for being the center of the indigenist state administration. Thus, the state sought to have the limits of an autonomous village, which was shaped like many others, coincide with the space of the reserve.

In 1904, when the Rondon project began marking the Terena reserves, a spatial phenomenon occurred: the relationship of the political alliance induced the indigenous territoriality to become equal to that of the reserve, that is, it accommodated to the territorial organization of the nation state. Thus, the geometry of the territory was centralized, producing two superimposed “polygons”, that of the indigenous territoriality and that of the state territory. At the same time, the *cacicado* system was initiated in which the state appointed the chief who would be the leader officially recognized to speak in name of the Indians.

The spatial centralization was thus reproduced within the village, so that portion that was known as the “sede”, would also become the center of power. Nevertheless, a contradictory process took place. During the twentieth century other villages arose, Argola (1935), Morrinho (1945), Babaçu (1949) and Lagoinha (1970). This process was ambiguous. The villages were being created by state incentive, which wanted to intensify production of the reserves (the villages began as farm plots that were transformed into residential areas), but soon local leaders appeared who came to demand autonomy for the villages and to establish their own chiefs.

Another essential aspect is that indigenist policy imposed a Terena identity to groups coming from various territorialities and identities (Guaná, Guaicuru, Laiano, Kinikinau). Thus, the situation of the reserve centralized the indigenous population in the space of the reserve and the recognition in the Terena identity. But as can be seen, these groups maintained some differentiation, as in the case of the Kinikinau families who occupied the Argola village. These identities and territorialities remained significant in the realm of the domestic group and were essential for the rise of the retakings.

The situation of the reserves thus had two characteristics: 1) it would repress the indigenous territorialities, which should disappear in the assimilation process; 2) it would centralize the groups, establishing indigenous leaders who would be representatives of the state in relation to the ethnicities and would discipline them.

Despite this imposition, and precisely because of it, the decentralization process intensified, which was expressed by religious factionalism and then by territorial decentralization. In the late 1970's there were three latent antagonisms within the Terena reserve: 1) between different territorialities (for example between the Kinikinau territoriality and the others), expressing the ethnic and religious diversity, which was evident in spatial relations of disjunction (formation of new villages which were separated by natural limits, as is the case of the Argola village); 2) between these territorialities and the state territoriality of the reserve (which contains and represses the social relations); 3) with the limits of capitalist-monopolist ownership (especially farms). Thus there was a triple latent antagonism: inter-ethnic (between identities); between the indigenous territorialities and the reserve; and between the indigenous territorialities and the capitalist-monopolist ownership.

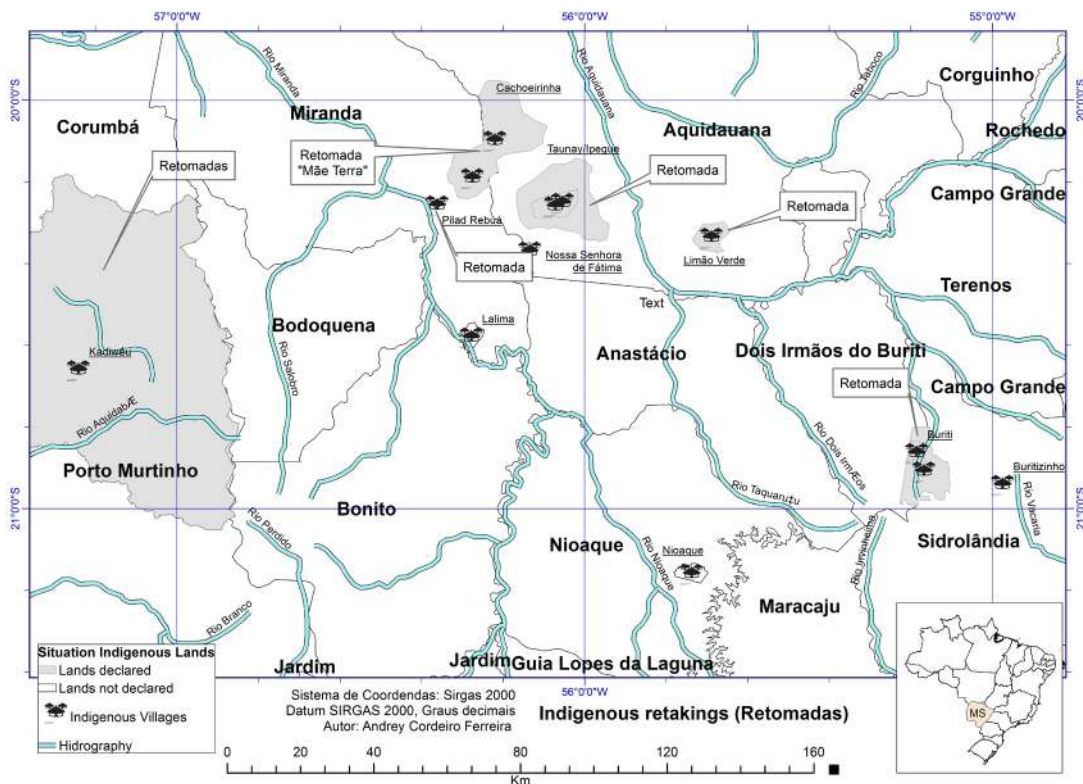
The response of the state, was then to try to centralize the reserve once again. Although the chiefs of the new villages were recognized, the position of the General Chief was created, who would be the leader of the central village and centralized power over the entire reserve. This process of political and spatial centralization, however, wound up combining with another, the movement for the demarcation of the indigenous lands, which sought precisely to break the limits of the reserve and give expression to the indigenous territoriality. This process resulted in the identification and declaration of the limits indicated in the ethnohistoric map. In this way, the indigenous demand and the state intervention produced a new spatial relation of overlapping: overlapping now expressed a territorialization movement, the indigenous peoples were expressing their territoriality in new limits that would annul the private properties.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The process of demarcation of the Terena indigenous lands began in the mid 1990s, when different working groups were created for the Identification and Delimitation of the Indigenous Lands. Some of these groups concluded their works between 1999-2002, resulting

In 2005, there was a retaking of the Fazenda Santa Vitória, which was given the name “Mãe Terra” [Mother Earth], led particularly by groups of the Babaçu and Argola villages. This retaking was the synthesis of the contradictions and tensions indicated above. At the heart of this process, Terena families who were living on the Kadiweu indigenous land moved to the retaking and assumed the Kinikinau identity. The retaking was promoted by dissident leaders, who soon proclaimed that the retaking was outside the authority of the General Chief. The position of chief was abolished in the retaking, and an Indigenous Council was established for its administration. In this way, the small space of the retaking was used to materialize and express indigenous demands and subjectivities that had been repressed by the spatial and power relations of the reserve.

Thus, the retakings can be considered to compose three dimensions: 1) Narrative: it is an anticolonial criticism and a form of legitimation of the right to indigenous occupation. A retaking implies the idea of recovering a space that was previously expropriated; 2) Practical: As a tactic of peasant resistance that involves the retaking of lands through collective action; 3) Organizational: it rearranges social and spatial relations simultaneously.

In this sense, the retakings tend to question and break with the state hierarchies expressed in the reserves and in the administration of indigenous lands – even if relatively. The retakings are the expression of the insurgent and autonomous microterritories in a process of decentralization, which are counter to the centralized spatial relations imposed by capitalist development and the formation of the nation state, annulling property relations and production systems (such as the leasings). The retakings break with the social and political hierarchies of the reserves and experiment with new forms of autonomy.<sup>25</sup>



in the identifications of the indigenous lands of Cachoeirinha, Limão Verde, Taunay-Ipegue and Dois Irmãos do Buriti, represented on the map. But the Indians could not take possession due to legal actions filed by farmers. The retakings were thus the political means the Indians found to progressively take possession of the demarcated lands. This process is underway and the territorial conflict assumes the form of struggle for their effective possession.

<sup>25</sup> At the heart of the retakings process an organizational process intensified, that of the formation of the Indigenous Assemblies and Councils. This is then reflected in an advance in the search for political structures that are capable of countering the existing social and political hierarchies (Ferreira 2017).

As we can observe on the map, five of the seven Terena reserves experienced retakings between 2005 and 2015 and various land retakings were conducted within the Kadiwéu reserve. However, there is a standard subjacent to this map of spatial distribution of the retakings: they all, with the exception of one, (Pilad Rebuá), were realized after the intervention by the state, through the Groups of Identification and Delimitation of the Indigenous Lands. In the case of the Kadiweu land, they are actions taken within the demarcation realized in 1984, seeking to expel cattle ranches that were established on the indigenous lands.

The retakings are distributed throughout the ethnographic area of the Chaco-Pantanal, among the Terena and the Kadiweu. Nevertheless, if the spatial relations today tend to decentralize power, they are also linked to still more complex cultural meanings. We can say that the meaning given by the indigenous to their territory, or that is, its territoriality, contains a historic relation with the state, showing how the historic experience of the group is transformed in cultural meanings.

Hilário, a Kadiweu participant of one of the retakings, affirmed that the Kadiweu land had been an area passed to them by Emperor Dom Pedro II in recognition of the participation of their ancestors in the Paraguay War. “It was a way for him to retribute the Indians that were in the war.<sup>26</sup>” The Terena have a similar narrative. A number of times we heard in the field research, in interviews or public events, indigenous people affirming that the lands of the Terena village had been given by the emperor in retribution for the participation of the Terena in the Paraguay War. In the case of Terena, we know that this narrative structure is also reproduced in a more specific way, for example in the Lalima village the indigenous people use the “physical markers” that had been placed by the Indigenous Protection Service and the Rondon project as the sign of the concession of lands to that community and in Passarinho and Moreira they cited documents related to the “donation” by the municipality.

The conception of territoriality of the Terena and Kadiweu thus involves a complex memory and experience of the relation of these groups with the state. The Terena and Kadiweu participated in the great Latin American war that defined the borders of the new states and in exchange for loyalty (gift) in the conflict the emperor of Brazil promised the demarcation of lands (counter-gift). In the case of the Kadiweu, this concession was relatively concretized, but in the case of the Terena it was not. For this reason, the Terena experienced in the twentieth century a process of deterritorialization that the Kadiweu experienced in another way. In this way, in the vision of the territoriality of the area of the Chaco-Pantanal the right to the territory concerns relations of “reciprocity” established with the Brazilian state, especially the payment of the counter-gift of the right to lands. This aspect is not the only aspect of the territoriality, but it is essential, because it is the element shared in the entire ethnographic area.

We can say that the element shared by the indigenous peoples of Pantanal is a historic memory of the Paraguay War, translated into rites and in what we can call the myth of the gift of the land. This myth is at the base of the visions of territoriality of the Terena and Kadiweu and is also expressed in the retaking movements in Mato Grosso do Sul. This myth also indicates the ambiguities that mark the transformation of an indigenous autonomy “against the state” into an indigenous autonomy “in the state”.

For this reason, today we find three categories and spatial relations intertwined. Territoriality, an expression of the meanings attributed to space, is a form of conceiving and perceiving spatial relations, it is a subjective representation that can be objectified or not in borders, that is, in a territory. In this way, territorialities have latent and emergent properties, and their emergence is essentially historic. The concept of territoriality in the ethnographic area of the Chaco-Pantanal has as a generative meaning the myth of the gift of land, a fruit of a relationship of reciprocity and conflict established between the indigenous peoples and the Brazilian nation state.

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26 See more at: <https://www.campograndenews.com.br/cidades/na-luta-da-retomada-indios-veem-inimigo-publico-e-poucos-avancos>

Today this territoriality is expressed in retakings, which because of their conflictive dynamic, produce an autonomy against the state and are, to a large degree, a relative negation of the myth, because nothing more is expected than that the state fulfill the act of the gift, the indigenous peoples act on their own. In this way, the retakings, at the same time in which they reconstitute the territoriality, transforming it in territory, create a tension with the cultural and mythic meanings that motivate them. This territoriality partially overlaps the parcels of the old Ancestral Territory (the territory of the autonomous system of the Chaco-Pantanal), that is, the land occupied by the ancestors or by currently existing groups.

Finally, the territoriality and the ancestral territory are overlapped by the notion of Indigenous Land, which is how the state codifies and institutionalizes a vision of indigenous territory. Normally it is a fraction of the ancestral territory.

Therefore these three categories overlap but are still radically different. The symbolic overlapping of the concept of territoriality (an indigenous perspective on the use of territory) with that of the indigenous land implies an abdication of the ancestral territory. It is in this sense that there is a type of adaptation and renovation of the myth of the gift of land: the understanding is that the state would concede and regularize the indigenous lands on which would then be realized an “autonomy in the state”. In this way, the practice of resistance by means of the retakings and the appeal to the category of indigenous land revise a tension between the autonomies in the state and against the state in symbolic terms, expressing a polarity of the symbol, in the case of the myth of the gift of land, which is simultaneously a concession and an obligation of the state. But the search for autonomy continues along these contradictory paths.

Meanwhile, from the time of Exiwa or of the Autonomous System of the Chaco-Pantanal to the retakings there are qualitative differences and another that is quantitative. First, qualitatively, these social structures are able to construct a nearly total autonomy in relation to the neighboring colonial states. Therefore, even with internal hierarchies, these societies were thus a sovereign power and consequently a rival structure to the modern states (colonial and national) in process of formation. Secondly, quantitatively, these societies have a territorial and demographic extension that is much greater than any contemporary ethnic group considered in isolation.

We can say that societies without and against the state were rival and alternative social structures to the states (old and new) in processes of formation in South America. The societies without and against the state and the state societies, having a territorial expression, thus maintain a dialectical relation of historic antagonism and complementarity. Therefore, these societies without and against the state have a scale different from those of the currently existing ethnic groups, individually considered.

Today, the struggle for indigenous autonomy also takes place in the frameworks of the nation state within the limits of the praxis-myth it generates. This autonomy is not a rival structure that is alternative to the nation state, at least not on the currently existing scale, but this does not mean that it cannot move in this direction. The nations without state, which are organized under forms proximate to the Indigenous Confederations (like what we call the Autonomous System of the Chaco-Pantanal), passed on specific social and cultural forms, which are expressed in the struggles between autonomy and hierarchy of the indigenous peoples of today.

An anthropology of territory is increasingly needed to be able to consider spatial relations as social and power relations, and these as relations of meaning. In this anthropology, space is historic time and time is a social space of power and meaning.

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*Andrey Cordeiro Ferreira*

Professor at the Social Sciences Pos-graduation Program in Development, Agriculture and Society (CPDA)/Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

Contact: andrey2099@hotmail.com