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FORUM

Indigenous peoples boxed in by Brazil's political crisis

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Agribusiness has unprecedented leverage over highly unpopular Brazilian president Michel Temer, who is faced with several corruption charges and is struggling for political survival. In a little over one year, the agribusiness lobby and its allies have managed to erode thirty years of human rights and conservation laws. Indigenous peoples and their territorial rights are among the main targets of such policies, and there is no resolution to the situation in sight. With the insight of several scholars, the following forum assesses the consequences of losing the protection the Citizens' Constitution of 1988 once afforded indigenous peoples in Brazil.

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Introduction

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha

In Brazil, after two decades of military dictatorship, a new constitution proclaimed in 1988 gave pride of place to human rights and the protection of the environment.¹ Nicknamed the Citizen Constitution, it expressed hope for a regime of justice and democracy. Thirty years on, it has suffered from all sorts of distortions: its terms have been violated, as occurs so often with such documents, and even more seriously, people have attempted to disfigure it by way of constitutional amendments and decrees.

Land conflicts are endemic

A great many conflicts involve land and its use. Land outside of the real estate market is particularly coveted. Such land includes territory recognized to indigenous peoples and to the descendants of maroon communities (the *quilombolas*),² along with plots redistributed through the national agrarian reform program. All of these are now the targets of new policy proposals.

Across Amazonia, different actors sneak onto protected lands: the *grileiros*, who illegally take over territory by making use of documents forged out of whole cloth; the illicit lumberjacks, pillagers of valuable woods, who prospect the region with more and more sophisticated methods; the gold miners and other mining interests. Agribusiness, soy- and cattle-raising at its forefront, is claiming more and more space for its activities. These already occupy the majority of another precious ecosystem—the *Cerrado*³—and impinge powerfully on eastern Amazonia, especially in the state of Pará.

In other areas, conflicts also spring from older territorial evictions. Such is the case in the central-west region of the country, which includes Mato Grosso do Sul and the western part of Paraná. This territory was “colonized” with government encouragement during the 1940s. Guaraní people were violently dislodged and forced into small reservations; they have for decades sought to recover their traditional lands. Current occupants, backed by private militias, are fighting them. As a result, a string of assassinations has ensued. This tragedy is well documented in Vincent Carelli’s recent film, *Martyr*.

Such conflicts are endemic, not simply the work of those who have recently begun to invade public land. During the debates over the 1988 Constitution, the rights of indigenous peoples were already opposed by the mining industry and actors who were interested (for various reasons) in infrastructure construction. It

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1. Translated from the French by Gregory Duff Morton, Bard College.
 2. Translator’s note: In Brazil, Quilombola communities are rural communities composed of descendants of enslaved people who maintain a strong historical link with the past. Quilombola communities enjoy land rights under the 1988 Constitution.
 3. Translator’s note: The Cerrado is a tropical savannah ecoregion that occupies a large portion of central Brazil’s landmass.

is not difficult to spot the very profitable bribes involved in dam-building, and thereby to reveal the links that connect political parties to the promoters of that which, in Brazil, is still referred to as “development.”

The policy of dam-building in Brazil stretches back to the 1970s and the period of military dictatorship, but infringes more and more on indigenous peoples' territories. This policy has particular importance for the mining industry. It was revived near the end of President Lula's second term, and resulted in the Belo Monte Dam on the Xingu River and two dams on the Madeira River, which, once again, impacted several indigenous societies and riverine dwellers, the *ribeirinhos*. The current economic crisis has put on hold a plan for five large dams in the Tapajós basin, which would directly affect the Munduruku people.

A number of constitutional amendment proposals—referred to as the Proposta de Emenda à Constituição (PEC)—have been held in suspended animation for years, even decades, waiting for the right moment to be placed on the agenda of the House of Deputies. One of the worst menaces that is currently afflicting indigenous territories, PEC 215, is originally from 2000. The executive branch has always been constitutionally in charge of indigenous land demarcations, but this amendment would grant that power to the legislative branch, where agribusiness—in open opposition to indigenous peoples' interests—is strongly represented. The amendment would even require that Congress go through the process of ratifying indigenous lands that have already been recognized. This amendment proposal was rejected when it originally passed through the Constitutional Committee, but it was resurrected fifteen years later by the president of the House of Deputies—currently in prison under corruption accusations—and sent again to the Constitutional Committee. It was no surprise that it was approved this time around. So PEC 215 could now be placed on the congressional agenda and voted on when the moment is right. And the right moment could well be right now.

A new level of violence

To understand the rising strength of a new level of violence in rural Brazil, one must begin by considering its context: a political crisis without precedent. This crisis has ravaged numerous domains of Brazilian life, and traditional populations and the environment are especially affected.

Over the past several legislative sessions, the House of Deputies and the Senate have been dominated by a number of representatives and senators who—regardless of their political party affiliation—vote as a bloc on certain legislative proposals. These elected officials make up what is called the “*ruralista* front.” They express the interests of the great landowners, involved principally in extensive cattle ranching and large-scale farming of soy, corn, and sugarcane, who are the public face for the totality of Brazilian agribusiness, which also includes huge corporations such as Cargill, Bunge, Syngenta, and others. Under the Agriculture and Ranching Confederation of Brazil, landowners present themselves as key economic actors bringing in foreign currency in a period characterized by recession and massive unemployment, which has exceeded 13% for the first time. Their economic power translates into political power, especially in the legislature. Their platform includes the end of

new demarcations of indigenous land, the abolition of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI),⁴ a reduction in the size of areas set aside for environmental conservation, and the loosening of environmental regulations.

Over the last ten years, as the *ruralista* front has increased in power—both economic and parliamentary—traditional populations and the environment have been subjected to more and more aggressive attacks. Environmental and indigenous groups have also suffered notable defeats, such as the 2012 adoption of a new Forest Code and the granting of amnesty for previous violations of environmental rules. If one compares the acreage of indigenous lands that were registered over the past six presidential terms—from Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–99, 1999–2003) to Lula (2003–7, 2007–11) to Dilma Rousseff (2011–2014, 2015–16)—one immediately notes the inverse relationship to the rise of the *ruralista* front power. Fernando Henrique broke records for the scale of indigenous land demarcation, benefitting from financial support from the German government for this purpose. Lula, during his first term, increased the number of conservation units. He also helped resolve a thirty-year-old dispute, with the result that the invaders of Macuxi indigenous land, in the state of Roraima, were expelled. But the government of Dilma Rousseff gave few indications of favoring the environment, agrarian reform, or the rights of indigenous people and *quilombolas*.

Thus, the current situation is neither new nor unique. What has changed the game is the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff and the rise to power of her vice president, Michel Temer. He continues—as of the present moment—to be held in office by the financial and industrial sectors, although he suffers from extremely low popular approval ratings and is subject to corruption accusations. President Temer does not need to worry about his popularity (since he never had any), and he is known for his skill at handling bargains inside Congress; as such, he presents himself as being capable of pushing through changes that are widely unpopular, particularly a reform of labor legislation and changes in government-guaranteed retirement pensions.

The *ruralista* front claims to command at present 228 of the 513 members of the House of Deputies. Moreover, they have two powerful allies: Pentecostal deputies and the group that advocates the right to bear arms. United, the three make up what is known in Brazil as the BBB Front—that is, the front of Beef, Bible, and Bullet. President Temer seeks support in the House of Deputies and the Senate by distributing ministerial posts to allied parties and, in particular, by granting concessions to the *ruralista* front. Following a practice used by Dilma Rousseff, he has become well known (and even created an uproar) for issuing Provisional Measures, presidential decrees that must be subsequently approved by Congress and be returned to the president for sanctioning.⁵ These decrees cover a variety of subjects, but their common characteristic is eliminating protections and weakening regulations. For

4. Translator's note: FUNAI is a Brazilian government agency that carries out policy related to indigenous peoples.

5. Translator's note: In Brazilian law, a president can issue Provisional Measures that have the force of law for 60 days, after which point they have to be renewed until they are ultimately approved or repealed by Congress.

example, banks were exempted from the requirement of verifying that the projects they plan to finance have respected environmental rules.

One decree in particular (MP 756) targeted the National Park and the National Forest of Jamanxim in eastern Amazonia. More than half of the National Forest of Jamanxim would be cut off, along with a part of the National Park of the same name—around six hundred thousand hectares in all. This case speaks eloquently: it means the dismemberment of the mosaic of conservation units that link the Xingu and Tapajós basins.

This is a mosaic with a very specific history. It was created in 2006 to reassure those who protested against a road, BR 163 that allowed for soy production from Mato Grosso to flow to the grain port of Santarém, on the Amazon River. One could have predicted that this road—which was in the process of being covered in tarmac—would serve, like all of the Amazonian highways, to spearhead a new onslaught on the forest. The government promised that, this time, a barrier would be erected against the damage created by the project, and for this reason eight conservation units were created to serve as protection. The initiative was named “sustainable BR 163.” In the unit closest to the road, an invasion of *grileiros* settled in. While at the time deforestation was slowing down in Amazonia as a whole, this region saw a strong increase.

At present, the core of precious trees has been exhausted, and the area is dominated by mining activity and the sale of illegally obtained lands. Instead of restricting these violations, the decree intends to legalize ill-gotten possession. The goal is simply to accommodate invaders.

Six former Environment Ministers and around seventy NGOs objected to the proposal in strong terms. President Temer ultimately vetoed MP 756, which he himself had initiated, and he cited the appeal addressed to him by the famous model, Gisèle Bündchen. But the government has since reintroduced a bill to the very same effect.

The parliamentary investigation

On May 30, 2017, a Commission of Parliamentary Inquiry approved a 3,400-page report that attempts to weaken and if possible eliminate the National Foundation of the Indian (FUNAI). The report also takes aim at the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA), the body that recognizes lands to maroon communities and also landless peasants' occupations carried out by landless movements on properties considered to be unproductive.⁶ The report's author is none other than the president of the *ruralista* front himself; in an earlier version, he suggested the dissolution of FUNAI and the creation of a different institution.

6. Translator's note: Brazil's landless movements, the largest of which is the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST), often carry out occupations of large plantations that are not productive. These occupations, which respond to the needs of small farmers in poverty, are guided by the provisions in the 1988 Constitution that allow for the government to expropriate large unproductive properties, indemnify the owners, and redistribute the land.

The opposition, which drew up a parallel report, has not had a single amendment approved, as the parliamentary commission has a majority of “*ruralistas*.” A first draft of the report demanded that the Public Ministry investigate 100 people, including prosecutors from the Public Ministry itself and two deceased individuals. The report’s revisers wisely excluded the dead and the prosecutors, and arrived at the final number of sixty-seven people—anthropologists, missionaries, indigenous people, staff of FUNAI and INCRA, an NGO, and even a former Minister of Justice under Dilma Rousseff (a very timid one at that). The ex-president herself, who had always refrained from favoring the demands of indigenous people, *quilombolas*, and landless farmers social movements, had hurried to change position on the eve of her impeachment in May 2016. The report demanded the cancellation of the last-minute measures that she implemented in this spirit.

The report’s accusations focus in particular on the procedures for demarcating indigenous territories. It alleges that the anthropologists charged with providing evidence for this purpose were not objective, but acted like activists supporting the indigenous cause. Their data, it was argued, was biased.

At this point, FUNAI and INCRA are both already seriously underfunded and their capacity is eroded. FUNAI no longer has a budget to manage complex situations, like first or new contacts with indigenous societies referred to as “isolated,” which have become abundant in southwest Amazonia. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, the UN High Commissioner for indigenous rights, has declared that FUNAI is so weakened that indigenous peoples no longer have any protection.

An increase in rural conflicts and deforestation in Amazonia

This is exactly what their enemies seem to be sensing. The “*ruralistas*” are celebrating a “new moment” in Brazil. They sense they now have free rein.

That means an increase in rural conflicts. According to the Pastoral Land Commission (CPT) of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil (CNBB), 1,079 conflicts over land were sparked in 2016, a record number since the beginning of the statistical series in 1985. This is an average of three conflicts per day. The number of assassinations, which declined between 2004 and 2014, has rebounded: 61 people were assassinated in 2016, and from January to May 2017, 37 rural assassinations were recorded. Over the course of 35 days, from April 20, 2017, to May 24, 2017, three attacks took place, which resulted in 22 deaths.

On April 20, 2017, at Colniza in Mato Grosso, nine peasant farmers were tortured and killed, and their leader was decapitated. The police were directly implicated in the third massacre, on May 24, 2017, which led to ten deaths, including the death of a woman, in the south of Pará state. It took place the day after a protest in Brasília that drew attention to the rising tide of violence against peasant farmers, activists, judges, and priests.

Indigenous people, to be sure, are among the victims. On April 30, 2017, the Gamela people from the state of Maranhão were subjected to an attack that wounded 22 of them. Two Gamela men had their hands cut off with machetes.

Amnesty International, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights all condemn the increase in

violence and the impunity of the aggressors. The United Nation Human Rights Council, in a report issued to the public in May 2017, declared that indigenous peoples are being subjected to risks unprecedented since the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution.

The same report recommends that Constitutional Amendment Proposal 215 be turned down. This amendment is, as noted above, a proposal from the *ruralistas* to take the power to demarcate indigenous lands away from the executive branch and grant it to the legislature. Such a measure, as everyone realizes, would be the end of any land demarcation.

The statistics on rural conflict are roughly parallel to those on deforestation. After an increase between 2000 and 2004, the rate of deforestation dropped (with several relatively modest fluctuations) until 2012, but climbed again starting in 2013. According to data from the National Institute for Space Research (INPE), based on satellite imagery, 8,000 square kilometers of forest disappeared in 2016, a jump of 29 percent compared to the previous year. As a result, Norway has decided to reduce by half its support to the Amazon Fund for the year. Germany will probably follow suit.

The judicial branch: The invention of a time limit or *marco temporal*

The 1988 Constitution defined what counts as indigenous land: it is the territory necessary for the physical and cultural reproduction of the society in question. It is hardly surprising that the report of the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on FUNAI and INCRA would take up again a theory supported by one part of Brazil's Supreme Court, known by the name *marco temporal*, which might be translated as "temporal landmark."

The rights of indigenous peoples to their lands have been enshrined in every Brazilian constitutional text since 1934; they were declared even in colonial times. The 1988 Constitution asserts that indigenous rights are "originary"—i.e., they are deemed to exist, like the different Swiss "cantons," prior to the state itself. The role of the state is not to grant indigenous peoples land rights but to recognize and demarcate them. Yet this new doctrine, the temporal landmark interpretation, holds that the only indigenous peoples who can benefit from the recognition of their right to land are those who were occupying their territory on the day when the 1988 Constitution was promulgated.

There were immediate objections to this temporal landmark interpretation. For one, it could not hold for indigenous peoples that had forcibly been expelled from their land. The theory's advocates responded by posing a condition: these peoples would need to prove that they had not ceased to resist, either by arms or by legal means. Given the reality of the facts, this condition is absurd. The targets of this aberrant interpretation of the 1988 Constitution prominently are the Guaraní of the Center-West of Brazil, expelled from their lands since the 1940s. They were crammed into small reservations and were not, at the time, legally entitled to launch a lawsuit. Their capacity to do so was not recognized until the 1988 Constitution.

Eminent juridical scholars have disputed the temporal landmark theory, and a gathering of luminaries at the University of São Paulo Law School in November

2015 became the stage for a major declaration of solidarity. The struggle against that theory is permanent, as its holders endeavor to turn it into consolidated jurisprudence. Given that there have been different decisions by the two sections of the Supreme Court, a ruling by the Supreme Court plenary was expected with great anticipation. On August 16, 2017, the “temporal landmark” was not explicitly on the agenda; nevertheless, votes from many Supreme Court justices were auspicious.

Indigenous people, boxed in by the three powers

It is striking—indeed, infuriating—to witness the rapidity of a process that, in several months, has disfigured the human rights and environmental legislation enshrined since 1988.

As for indigenous peoples, they are organizing and protesting. According to the Articulation of Indian Peoples of Brazil (APIB), no fewer than 4,000 indigenous people from some 200 ethnicities flocked to Brasília between April 24 and April 28, 2017, a record number. Every year on April 19, on the occasion of the National Day of the Indian, in a sign of protest, indigenous people camp for several days on the monumental esplanade of the Ministries laid out by the great urbanist Lúcio Costa. This year, the symbolism of this space was even stronger than usual. In front of the indigenous activists were the House of Representatives, the Senate; on their left was the presidential palace; on their right was the Ministry of Justice. Visibly, they are being boxed in by the powers that be. It is hoped that a respite might come from the Supreme Court.

* * *

On “temporal landmarks”: Double standards on the past

Ruben Caixeta

Today, we see rising opposition to the titling of indigenous lands in Brazil. The *ruralistas*, landowners with increasingly significant political power, have been pushing for a legal-political thesis, called *marco temporal* (“temporal landmark”), which is aimed at stalling the process of historical reparation.

This thesis, present in all spheres of power in present-day Brazil, argues that indigenous peoples would only have right to land that was in their possession on October 5, 1988 (when the current Federal Constitution was promulgated). This is a not-so-veiled way of dismantling and preventing the enactment of indigenous land rights, for we know that several of these peoples were simply decimated, others violently expelled from their lands, or confined to tiny reserves, as well as subjected to forced removals on a large scale. Many others were only able to “reclaim” their lands after 1988!

Suffice it to remember the Kaingang people in Rio Grande do Sul, confined within a small territory, as well as several Guaraní and Kaiowá groups in Mato Grosso do Sul. We can also mention the case—which we know best—of the Katxuyana Indians, who in 1968 were removed from their traditional land by the Cachorro River, west

of Pará, and taken by the Brazilian military to a border surveillance post along the Surinamese border in Northern Pará. The Katxuyana children at that time did not know why they were being boxed in a Brazilian Air Force plane and dumped more than a thousand miles away. The old men wept for leaving behind their fields, hunting and fishing places, pets, sacred sites, and for being taken to completely unknown peoples and places. They resisted, increased in numbers, and, in 2003—after the *marco temporal* time frame—they returned to the land that had always been theirs. And now the Brazilian state will say that the Katxuyana have no right to their land?

Irony and cynicism. There have been, and there continue to be, other temporal landmarks of interest to landowners in Brazil. In 1850, it was established what can be considered as the first large-scale legalization of land grabbing by settlers, the *Lei de Terras*, or Land Law. Another “landmark,” instituted by the New Forest Code (approved in 2009) on July 22, 2008, granted amnesty to all rural property owners who had legally or illegally removed preexisting native woods (the so-called “consolidated occupation”). And very recently, on July 11, 2017, President Temer enacted a Provisional Measure (MP 759/2016) that became known as the *grilagem* (land-grabbing) MP, allowing for massive legalization of ownership of public lands of up to 2,500 hectares invaded before the 2011 temporal landmark.

These double standards demonstrate very well the side taken by the Brazilian State on temporal landmarks: for lands grabbed before 2011 (just over five years ago), the occupation will be considered legal and the land will be titled as private property; for Indians who cannot prove that they were occupying the land in 1988 (thirty years ago), they will no longer be able to claim possession of their traditional territories!

If these landmarks are enacted, there will be less forest, less rivers, less life, and more death and injustice in Brazil.

* * *

Indigenous responses to encircling threats in Amazonia

Jeremy M. Campbell

Brazil's indigenous peoples and *quilombola* communities are increasingly boxed in by the three powers of the state, as Manuela Carneiro da Cunha demonstrates in her withering critique of the recent crescendo of attacks leveled at traditional peoples and their allies. The times are indeed dire, the threats alarming both for their number and for the present convergence of political, economic, and social crises in Brazil that swell the air with danger and possibility. It seems we are at an inflection point—when, due to any number of fateful decisions (e.g., the implementation of PEC 215 or dissolution of the National Indian Foundation, FUNAI)—the trajectory of the indigenous rights movement could change drastically and permanently. It feels like we are on the bottom side of the curve for which 1988's Citizen's Constitution was the promising peak.

Yet it would be useful to recall that political decisions reflect, in some way, forces and trends situated in the rough and tumble, day-to-day forms of speech,

practice, social relations, and political conventions that build up over time. The devastating effectiveness of the *ruralista* front in Brazil, for example, emerges from and reflects a bundle of ideologies regarding the occupation and “improvement” of land that is always already imagined as empty. The frontier as a nation-building ideal has deep historical roots in settler democracies, but the particular variant on march today in Brazil—in the hands of billionaire agribusiness elites who cynically manipulate the agrarian poor—reworks material from the years of the military dictatorship (*Ditadura*, 1964–85). I have seen this firsthand in Mato Grosso and Pará, where colonist communities openly pine for the days of militarist law and order.⁷ Many colonists who are new to the agricultural outposts of central Amazonia hold a nostalgia for a time when so-called progress was uncomplicated by native rights or environmental protections. Most manage no more thoughtful consideration of indigenous peoples beyond the good/dead Indian trope; those that do, reveal a vernacular theory of citizenship that holds real Brazilians (colonists) as the bearers of rights and the beneficiaries of state actions. Indians, they say, should *become Brazilian* (and “produce”) if they want to be granted respect and recognition. This is precisely the region where the BR-163 highway has been paved, Conservation Units like the Jamaxim National Forest are being carved up and sold, and indigenous territories of the Munduruku and Kayapó are under siege.

By now, this kind of revanchist conservatism has become a fixture on the world stage: members of the “producer” class aggrieved by the seeming advantages given to unworthy or “illegal” groups. Seething with resentment, the colonists feel boxed in. The ruralist politicians sense this and mobilize votes on the municipal, state, and federal level. The nostalgia for a powerful and purposeful nation is a complete fantasy, but its racial and economic messaging is clear: white leaders will open the gates on Amazonia, Inc., shred the social safety net, and turn out indigenous and conservation land for development. Colonists in Amazonian states salivate at the prospect. And, when thwarted by jurisprudence, ruralist sympathizers cry, “majority rule!” since, after all, they have the votes.

And yet, the citizens’ constitution has not been wholly trampled underfoot. The April 2016 administrative decision to revoke licenses for the São Luis do Tapajós Hydroelectric Complex in Pará, and the August 2017 judicial finding that refused to allow the *marco temporal* idea to apply to indigenous reserves in Mato Grosso, constitute real victories for indigenous peoples, gained through engagement with procedural politics. These two victories also rest on social and cultural work—mobilizations, yes, but also the attitudes, political conventions, and courage of indigenous people. Since October 2014, the Munduruku have been demarcating ancestral territories along the middle Tapajós River. Though they had long petitioned FUNAI to demarcate the territory, pressure from mining and hydroelectric interests put the brakes on any official recognition. So the Munduruku decided—collectively, in assemblies of men, women, and children—to risk their own lives to

7. I worked for nearly a decade in the agricultural frontier region of Pará, where I conducted an ethnographic study of the attitudes and practices associated with land-grabbing. The resulting book is *Conjuring property: Speculation and environmental futures in the Brazilian Amazon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).



demarcate their lands, fittingly, “to the standards of the state.”⁸ For months, warriors cut boundary paths through the woods and encountered the camps of illegal loggers and land-grabbers who had disturbed indigenous sacred sites. Even after they emerged momentarily successful both with the demarcation and with the fight against the São Luis dam, the Munduruku remain surrounded by those that mean them harm: those that call them imposters, vermin, or worse; who burn their crops or their villages; who sell their land out from under them, and call it the inevitable and proper course of progress. These threats also box in the Munduruku, and yet they remain indefatigable.

The Munduruku speak with one voice, arrived at through a long process of building consensus. This is their tradition. As democrats, Brazilians speak in many voices but labor under the conceit that the quick accounting of votes provides a basis for fair and responsive government. The danger is that protections for minority groups and the environment might be canceled by a mechanism of majority rule, shredding the constitution in the name of a Brazil that never was. Such a reckless path could be avoided if we turned to learn a bit more about process, consensus, and courage from our fellow, indigenous, citizens.

* * *

Anthropology in the face of Brazil's political crisis

Carlos Fausto

Some fifteen years ago, in a casual conversation with Manuela Carneiro da Cunha about anthropological expertise on indigenous lands and identity in the 1980s, I asked her why Brazilian anthropologists, especially those working with “traditional peoples,” had never fully embraced postmodernist rhetoric.⁹ She looked at me with a slight smile and said, “We just couldn’t.” This impossibility stemmed from Brazilian anthropologists’ political role in the defense of indigenous rights at the time. By late 1980s, when I was starting my field research among the Parakanã, the generation of my professors were fighting for the inclusion of a very innovative set of indigenous rights in the new Constitution, proclaimed on October 5, 1988. As president of the Brazilian Association of Anthropology, Carneiro da Cunha was a leading figure in this movement, which brought together indigenous and nonindigenous organizations. The main innovation of Article 231, which concerns indigenous rights, was to declare their rights “originary,” thus not reliant on state recognition for their existence. From then on, demarcation of indigenous lands became a state obligation, and a mere recognition of a right that existed prior to the very existence of the state. For years to come, anthropologists would occupy a

8. For more information on the Munduruku “autodemarcation,” visit www.autodemarca-caonotapajos.wordpress.com. The demarcation and its aftermath are described in public letters by the leaders of Associação Pariri and the Movimento Ipereğ Ayü e Da’uk.

9. In Brazil, the expression “traditional peoples” applies to Amerindians, *quilombolas* (Maroons), and to small communities living on subsistence and extractivist practices (tappers, *ribeirinhos*, etc.).

central place as the main state agents responsible for translating indigenous oral and practical knowledge of their territory into the bureaucratic language of the state. In this way, it became possible to demarcate vast tracts of lands, especially in parts of Amazonia where nonindigenous populations were still scant.

Obviously, it was not in our common interest (indigenous and nonindigenous) to inflict in ourselves the epistemological self-flagellation of postmodernism. On the contrary, it was necessary to affirm not only our scientific authority as translators but also the validity of indigenous oral history and the traditional use of the territory as sources of legitimate knowledge and collective ownership rights. Carneiro da Cunha played a central role in gathering and mobilizing the reflexive forces of Brazilian anthropology in order to produce the knowledge necessary to respond to these ends (think, for instance, of the project that led to the publication of *História dos Índios no Brasil*, in 1992). At the time, we also could not easily discard the holistic notion of culture in favor of a more dynamic and less totalizing concept. After all, Article 231 recognized for the first time the right of indigenous peoples to their own “social organizations, mores, languages, beliefs and traditions,” an enumeration of abstract entities that was synthesized in a simple word: “culture”—a word that many indigenous people rapidly incorporated into their own discourse, both internally and externally. These politico-conceptual facts contributed for the somewhat more classic flavor of 1990s Brazilian anthropology, at least of part of it, in comparison to North American anthropology. If it then appeared a bit conservative, it ended up proving, in my view, more radical, both academically and politically, in this century.

In Brazil, this was mainly articulated by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro’s creative synthesis of poststructuralist and posthumanist thinking. Although I don’t consider myself to be part of the ontological *mouvance*, I recognize its crucial role in reaffirming the claim for radical difference, which the postmodernist fear of exoticization and the postcolonial emphasis on identity had suppressed. This idea is aptly conveyed by Viveiros de Castro’s expression about the “ontological self-determination” of minority peoples, which implies not only having a culture but also a world (which includes the way they choose to change it). Instead of treating a people as subalterns (and subaltern-ing them even more), our choice has been to highlight their richness, and what it says about our poorness.

This move is in line with another inversion adopted by some Brazilian anthropologists to avoid the debate on authenticity: instead of studying the invention of tradition, we preferred to focus on “traditions of invention”; that is, traditions that include transformation as part of their own reproduction, meaning we should concentrate on their own ways of effecting transformation. This was a necessary move not only in theoretical terms but also in political ones, once the new Constitution allowed indigenous peoples that had supposedly become “extinct” to resurge and claim their collective rights.

Most of the current situation described by Carneiro da Cunha in her text results from right-wing reaction to the extraordinary advancements made possible by the 1988 Constitution. Looking back in hindsight and considering the correlation of forces, I am surprised by how many steps forward we took. Although a minority, indigenous peoples and their supporters had been vocal enough to counterweight the main economic and political forces. In the last years, however,

the scale leaned to the latter's side as the left in power banded together with farmers, constructors, and banks, favoring a developmentalist policy typical of clientelist state capitalism (strongly associated with corruption). Under huge pressure during Dilma Rousseff's government, indigenous peoples were the first to initiate the protests of 2013, which two months later would debouch in the big and amorphous marches of June.

With the organized social movements dehydrated due to their paralyzing proximity to the government, the anti-indigenous representatives and their sponsors gained a momentum, which was further reinforced after Rousseff's impeachment, and even more now with Temer's corruption scandal. The aim of this vast anti-indigenous alliance is to erase Article 231 from the Constitution, and to criminalize those who defend indigenous constitutional rights, including anthropologists. The struggle is still underway, and there is a need to gather forces, nationally and internationally, to make the power scale lean back to the other side.

The current situation obliges us to ask what type of anthropology is in need (if any) at this juncture. What does it demand of us, anthropologists, besides our political engagements as secondary agents (since indigenous peoples are themselves at the forefront now)? Obviously, it calls for the type of text I am commenting on here. But in order to really captivate hearts and minds once more, we need also to convey new knowledge. Of which type, then? In the last decade or so, Carneiro da Cunha has been moving in a direction that may give us some clues to answer the question. She has been promoting new articulations between different sorts of knowledge, particularly natural and cultural sciences, and scientific and traditional knowledges. As I see this, the new synthesis would point to a new ecology of life in Amazonia beyond (but including) the human.

This is no easy task to achieve, and it will demand a lot from new generations. It calls for more fieldwork and a greater taste for empirical data, new methodologies, and collaboration with archaeologists and natural scientists, as well as new forms of joint research with indigenous people, which include their knowledge beyond mere discursive elicitation: Nothing short of a new empirical science, and a new ethnographic theory.

* * *

Originary rights, ending rights, and the rights to be ends

José Antonio Kelly

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha's essay is a detailed report and analysis of the many fronts from which indigenous peoples in Brazil are currently under attack. The hard data and organized narrative of events is necessary to grasp the bigger picture we often miss, saturated with news on social media.

The text's most important message is the orchestrated nature of the encroachment on indigenous lands and rights leveled by the economic and political powers-that-be. One cannot but be horrified by the efficiency of this articulation spearheaded by the BBB Front (Beef, Bible, Bullet) in Congress on behalf of the agribusiness, mining, and infrastructure industries. Consider these: the illegal acts of *grileiro*

land-grabbing, death squads targeting indigenous and peasant leaders, *garimpeiros* and loggers; those acts cloaked with makeshift legality—provisory measures, constitutional amendments, and parliamentary committees weakening environmental legislation, FUNAI and INCRA, and delegitimizing anthropological practice; the reconversion of illegal into legal wrongdoings—the land and environmental cases but also the attempt to impose the *marco temporal* thesis and the systematic rule-breaking that surrounded the construction of the Belo Monte dam in the Xingu, the symbolic indigenous heart of the country. These all betray a unified effort in which the continuities between war and politics are there for all to see (read with Carl von Clausewitz or in reverse with Michel Foucault).

Like some seeds that lie dormant on forest floors for years awaiting a gap of sun to quickly colonize a forest patch, these powerful sectors have found their moment to dismantle all the obstacles that the 1988 Constitution placed in the way of their outdated view of development and economic growth at whatever cost. An unpopular government with serious legitimacy issues and an ongoing economic crisis has provided to them virtually unlimited bargaining power. It is no exaggeration to say they sustain the government and in return the government sustains them in a closed loop, short-circuiting the people.

Such a coordinated effort is only possible once the institutional checks and balances have also been shaken. The BBB front and their allies in other branches of power have de facto placed themselves above and beyond the state. In a macabre inversion of the originary rights of indigenous peoples, those rights that predate the emergence of the state, the BBB and their business partners appoint themselves with a right to be the end (in both senses of the term)—not prestate but poststate, if you want.

The stage is set for a confrontation between those who see the 1988 Constitution's enshrining of human and indigenous rights as a rectifying break with a past never to be revisited, and those who see it as a detour off a track the country should never have left. "Putting Brazil back on track" is one of the government's mottos; the scary question is what track they envision that to be.

It is ironic, to say the least, that this attack occurs alongside a surge of culture-promoting policies and projects for indigenous communities. The benefits of cultural recognition and revitalization notwithstanding, this official multiculturalism has allowed the state to portray itself as redeeming historical debts and acknowledging its internal diversity, while it simultaneously destroys the social and physical conditions of its emergence.

Carneiro da Cunha's analysis also signals some real continuities in the government's dealings with land rights as it has shifted from left to right—here, development serves as a conciliatory common ground. Her report also mentions denunciations coming from UN bodies, and one suspects a dangerous growing insensitivity of the Brazilian government to such calls that in the past were instrumental in curtailing development schemes harming indigenous peoples, international pressure against road building and the *garimpeiro* invasion of Yanomami territory in the 1980s being a case in point.

In neighboring Venezuela, at the opposite end of the political spectrum, following the plummeting of oil prices the government has turned a keener eye to the vast mineral reserves (gold, diamond, coltan, iron, and aluminum ore) that



lie south of the Orinoco, home to several indigenous peoples. The so-called Orinoco Mineral Arc, an area equivalent to roughly 12 percent of the country running along the southern bank of the Orinoco, has been declared an area of national strategic development, where the government is offering to share its riches with over a hundred mining companies without due consultation with indigenous communities, whose land rights and demarcation processes have been conveniently overlooked or shelved, despite constitutional guarantees to that effect. This adds to the alarming increase of illegal gold and coltan mining within Yekuana, Yanomami, Piaroa, Hoti, Pemon, and many other indigenous peoples' territories that have aggravated social conflict, not to speak of its devastating health and environmental consequences (endemic malaria, deforestation, and degradation of the country's main water sources). The Venezuelan government is unashamedly intensifying its state's twentieth-century extractivist essence, and contradictory as it may be, the nature-as-resource paradigm is being upheld by the anticapitalist beacon of South America . . .

As this partial contrast—or lack thereof—between Brazil and Venezuela shows, a political analysis seen from the vantage point of indigenous and environmental concerns, invites a rethinking of ideological coordinates, one where left and right will perhaps become obsolete categories.

Indigenous peoples' resistance became an effective channel to rally opposition against Brazil's dictatorship in its latter phase. In the current conjuncture, they are again among the protagonists of the protests against the dismantling of 1988 Constitution. As anthropologists, we are used to denouncing the dominant control of the state over minorities, but when we find indigenous folk calling for the respect of its constitutional backbone, and the political elite trashing its principles, rest assured the latter have something altogether more monstrous coming. Brazil's "national society" still ignores the debt owed to the political determination of the indigenous people in their midst. We must turn now to their unfailing resistance, having outlived so many ends-of-the-world, to overcome our own sinking feelings of powerlessness, and stand our ground for the battles to come.

* * *

Governing coalitions and the plunder of the Amazon

Claudio Lomnitz

The weakened Brazilian presidency, added to the depth of that country's recession, which is the worst in its contemporary history, has fostered a veritable land rush in the Amazon, spearheaded by some of the most rapacious fractions of Brazil's class structure. It is the government's job to channel the economy toward sustainability, and to steer populations away from depredation as a mode of life, but, as Manuela Carneiro da Cunha argues so cogently, they are instead supporting an economy based on despoiling the land of precious woods and minerals, and then turning the remaining woodlands over to cattle ranching.

Brazil's weak president relies crucially on alliances with the numerous members of the legislature who are bankrolled by ranchers and agribusiness. This was

already true to an alarming degree of Dilma Rousseff's weak tenure, but it has become a genuine linchpin for President Michel Temer, who was not elected to the presidency and whose approval rates are abysmal. The art of "working" congress and appeasing its members is thus critical for presidential survival, and it is indeed being cultivated, even at the expense of the constitution itself. Such is the foundation of presidential power in these uncertain times.

These politics have led to an alarming reduction of the territories that are constitutionally recognized as the inalienable territory of indigenous peoples, and to tolerating or fostering deregulation of forest and water management. Extractive activities are freely allowed where they should be banned or regulated, so that confrontations and violence are on the rise, and at an alarming rate.

What to do from outside of Brazil, given these dynamics? Inside Brazil there are both social movements and judicial activists who are stepping up to the plate and who are involved in the struggle to stop the destruction of peoples and forests that Carneiro da Cunha has outlined here with such precision and economy. Presumably, there is also some relevant party politics, though one worrisome aspect of Carneiro da Cunha's discussion is that Brazilian political parties tend to compete for the so-called ruralist base. There are, in other words, ruralist deputies on both the "left" and the "right," and the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* ("Workers' Party," PT), at least, is by no means immune to the politics currently being espoused by the Temer government with no holds barred.

Indeed, this is a situation that calls for international and transnational solidarity with the indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin and their constitutional rights as well as with all of the sectors of Brazil's political society that prioritize environmental protection over making a quick buck in extractive industries. International solidarity from the anthropological community is relevant, particularly in light of the fact, emphasized by Carneiro da Cunha, that court testimony offered by anthropologists has been demoted from "expert" to "activist" status, which is a cause of some concern. Moreover, the clout of the National Indigenous Foundation (FUNAI) has been sharply reduced, and although that institution has a problematic history (in the years of dictatorship it was often used against Indian communities), it is responsible for the demarcation of indigenous lands. Undermining FUNAI is a way of loosening claims and vigilance over territory.

Following the lead of Carneiro da Cunha's indictment, signed statements from international anthropology associations are both fully warranted and urgent. Beyond that, international solidarity and support for environmentalist safeguards would be well advised to predict and plan ahead against the sort of nationalist responses to environmental criticism that characterized the Brazilian military during the dictatorship. Brazil's governments have tended quite consistently toward old-school modernization strategies. To a large degree, this has even been true of PT governments. Initiatives of international solidarity with Brazil's Indian peoples ought to be careful to frame suggestions and demands in such a way that they are in sync with international best practices, so that the ruralists and their political allies cannot rely, yet again, on the kind of patriotic grand-standing that Dr. Johnson once characterized as "the last refuge of the scoundrel."

* * *



A call to uphold the rights of indigenous peoples in Brazil

Carlos D. Londoño Sulkin

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha's report generates indignation for the situation of indigenous peoples in Brazil. In the name of purported economic development, a cadre of wealthy agroindustrialists in control of Congress are using the levers of government to change policies and restructure the state in such ways as to impose their private interests and an ideology that cannot abide a different regime of ownership—one in which some Brazilian lands are somehow excluded and protected from the neoliberal market. As has happened again and again in the Americas for centuries, efforts at recovering and protecting indigenous lands and natural reserves—efforts at which Brazil excelled in the 1990s—have been met with a dazzling array of practical policy tricks and reactionary violence.

In February of 2016, the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America (SALSA) sent a letter to then-President Dilma Rousseff denouncing the Brazilian state's egregious, systemic disregard for indigenous and human rights. Again in April 2017, SALSA joined with peer organizations ABA (Brazilian Association of Anthropologists) and GIPTA (International Working Group for Autochthonous Peoples) in condemnation of many of the political depredations that Carneiro da Cunha describes: our open letter in "protest of escalating attacks on indigenous rights in Brazil" garnered over 1,500 signatures.

SALSA categorically condemns the PEC-215 legislative proposal for rolling back Brazil's advances in demarcating indigenous land, and dams, railways, and other huge infrastructure projects that again and again have treated indigenous people's opinions, interests, and lives as unworthy of respect. SALSA has also repeatedly gone on record against the application of the *marco temporal* ("time limit") thesis, which we find is a transparent attempt to invalidate territorial rights based on an invalid interpretation of the Brazilian constitution. We also find that the conditions in Brazil for conducting scientific work—especially the work of professional anthropologists—are deteriorating due to overreaching and politically motivated investigations against FUNAI and INCRA spearheaded by the agribusiness lobby. In all three of these undertakings, political and economic forces are attempting to open new avenues to seizing land while flouting international treaties and established law. Brazil is violating the principles of its own 1988 constitution, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), and the Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO 169/1989) to which it is signatory. These documents, and Brazilian law itself, oblige the nation-state to protect indigenous territories and to consult thoroughly regarding any projects in their territories.

In recent years, governmental disregard for indigenous well-being and rights has harshly impacted Guaraní-Kaiowá, Xavante, Munduruku, Gamela, Juruna, Xikrin, Arara, Xipaia, Kuruaya, Kayapo, Ka'apor, and Yanomami, among other indigenous peoples. Despite the parliamentary investigations and the specter of having their reputations sullied by political attacks, SALSA members have been diligent in documenting and distributing news of these abuses.

Violence perpetrated against indigenous populations translates, on the one hand, into forced displacement, coerced migration to the outskirts and slums of cities, problems of collective health, food insecurity, murder, rape, alcoholism, and suicide; and on the other hand, into the increasing criminalization of indigenous leaders. We therefore ask the Brazilian state to respect the constitutional rights of the indigenous peoples of the nation as well as the international treaties that protect traditional populations. It is widely known that these lands are fundamental to their survival and to maintaining the diversity of life on the planet.

* * *

Agribusiness and protected areas

Caio Pompeia

An agenda that contests Conservation Units and territorial rights of political minorities has gained momentum in Brazil. Some of the main leaders of this agenda are actors who, inside and outside the state, advance a political-economic plan mobilized through the notion of agribusiness.

Since its original conception at Harvard Business School in the 1950s and 1960s, two essential dimensions have accompanied the idea of agribusiness. On the one hand, the term brings an encompassing perspective for understanding and measuring on and off the farm factors that are connected with the production, the processing, and the distribution of food and fiber. On the other hand, it encourages a better coordination among agents who constitute a given commodity system—such as soybeans or cotton—and serves as a tool for garnering more support from the state. Connecting elements from these two dimensions, a set of macroeconomic statistics related to agribusiness started to be publicized in the United States.

In Brazil, the use of these statistics would become much more widespread and strategic than in the United States: first, with the assertions related to the significant participation of agribusiness in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP); then, with the narratives linked to its importance to the balance of trade and the creation of jobs; finally, with the associations of projections of growing necessity of food in the world with the crucial role that the country might play in this regard.

Some leaders began to use this statistical apparatus to contest Conservation Units and indigenous lands (besides other minorities' territorial rights) when the agenda concerning these public lands gained more prominence. Their line of reasoning has had two intended audiences. On the national scale, these actors stress that protected areas jeopardize the contributions of agribusiness to the GDP, the employment rate, and the trade surpluses. On the international scale, they emphasize that these areas hinder Brazil's "role to help feed the world."

This work with numbers has been very efficacious, among other strategies, to obtain public legitimacy for their agenda and prevent the state from creating areas for conservation and recognizing minorities' lands. However, there are at least three aspects of the mobilization of quantitative data related to agribusiness that deserve a more careful appraisal.

First, one should be attentive to the political synecdoches operated in the public sphere. At one level, the leaders who make use of these numbers speak as if they represented all who compose the statistics related to agribusiness, which is not true (for instance, they count rural populations who live in extreme poverty and produce for self-consumption as part of the total that is presented as “agribusiness jobs”). At the other level, one is invited to believe that all agents who mobilize the notion of agribusiness and its numbers contest protected areas, which is not the case either.

Second, the statistics of agribusiness should not be taken as the translation of reality. The Ministry of Agriculture,¹⁰ for example, currently overestimates Brazilian agribusiness net exports by not taking into consideration the country's relevant imports of inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides (respectively 24,485,493 and 414,975 tons in 2016, according to *Anda* and *Sindiveg*), while it applies the broad perspective of agribusiness to the exports of processed products. Another indication of this disjunction between numbers and facts is the discrepancy that can be noticed at times between the agribusiness macroeconomic statistics, depending on who calculates them.

Third, there is an incongruent aspect in the use of quantitative data that is directly linked to the protected areas, for one cannot ignore the contradiction between a discourse of environmental sustainability anchored on indications of productivity gains—which is central to the agribusiness narrative—and the practice of fighting fiercely to incorporate more public lands.

These aspects, nonetheless, are not being taken into consideration. As a result, one can say that the socio-biodiversity in Conservation Units and the indigenous peoples are also boxed in by statistics, to borrow Manuela Carneiro da Cunha's expression.

* * *

A long-term extermination

Aparecida Vilaça

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha is one of the most important and well-known Brazilian anthropologists, with a well-recognized international career; she has the extra merit of always being able to combine her academic activities with political activism in defense of Brazilian indigenous populations. In this arena, she stood out as the president of the Brazilian Anthropology Association during the elaboration of the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, doing huge political work to ensure the Indians constitutional rights to their ancestral lands and cultural specificities. Those rights have been suffering all types of distortions in recent years, through constitutional amendments favoring the usurpers of their territories.

Carneiro da Cunha's article summarizes in an exemplary way the main problems experienced by these populations in recent years, which have become acute during the present political crises in Brazil, when the exploitation of all kinds of conservation units, including indigenous reservations, has served as a currency for

10. Personal communication, June 16, 2017.

the negotiation of votes in favor of the stay of President Temer, who is accused of corruption.

Like most Brazilian anthropologists, I find myself directly involved in the drama of a specific indigenous population, the Wari', inhabitants of the western part of the state of Rondônia, with whom I have lived during longer and shorter periods for three decades. For at least a century, the Wari' have been on the run, initially from the rubber exploiters who entered their lands and killed their families, and more recently from the settlers, cattle ranchers, and professional fishermen who have prevented them from living in part of their ancestral territory. Massacres and epidemics resulted in the extermination of two-thirds of their population in the 1950s and 1960s. I chose one among several of these massacres in order to give the readers some "flavor" of what is still happening in Brazilian Indigenous lands nowadays, particularly among the Guaraní of Mato Grosso do Sul, whose misadventure is narrated in the film mentioned by Carneiro da Cunha, *Martírio (Martyr)*.

The narrator is Paletó, one of the most important Wari' sages, recently deceased, who lost in this occasion two of his children, his wife, his father, his brother, and several other relatives. It happened in a village named Xi Kam Arají, near the frontier between Brazil and Bolivia.

I'd gone to bathe, taking the maize beer path to the river. My late daughter, To'ò Em, had already finished bathing when the enemy killed her. "Let's go father. I'm cold." "No. Let's bathe a while longer." "Let's go, father. I want to catch some sun." "Come on!" "Okay. Will you carry me, father?" "No, I don't want to. Your mother can. I'll carry your younger brother," I said. "Okay." Her mother carried the girl. She walked ahead. "Let's go," I said to her.

We were still some distance from the houses when we heard a shot. . . . They were shooting lying down. They struck one of the house posts. They [the Wari'] thought the post had split by itself. They shot again. The shot hit Wao Em' [Paletó's younger brother]. "Run from the enemy!" they screamed. They started to flee. Manim, who was building a house, came down from the roof. I heard shots. They seemed to be shooting from behind me. I wanted to run. They hit the arm of Tem Arakat's dead mother [referring to his mother-in-law] and she stopped. I was still running when I saw the enemy. They were already there. [Noise of gunshots.] It must have been a machine gun for them to kill so many of us. My son fell wailing, Tem We fell wailing, her older brother too, those who stayed in the house. Orowao Kukui, the daughter of the old woman Topá, was behind the house and collapsed. Further on, the wife of Hwerein Pe e' fell as well as her children who were with her.

My father ran along the path to the river. There were no enemies. He stopped and shouted to the enemy: "You killed all my grandchildren, wretched enemy! . . . These are my grandchildren you killed, wretched enemy!" The enemy saw him. He was some distance away. He shouted, turning to face the enemy. He [the enemy] shot him in the chest. "Ei, Ei!" He died. They shot at me on the path too. One of them chased me. A bullet hit my daughter's leg here. Her foot fractured at this point. She became separated from her mother: "Father, father, it's the enemy, father! Mother, it's the enemy!" [she shouted]. I sat down, hiding in the forest.

The enemy arrived. They pointed their guns at her [Paletó's daughter], wanting to kill her. As they pointed, her mother approached: "I'm going to get my daughter who's crying." She was crazy. She didn't see the enemy. Covering her eyes with her arm, she crawled over to her daughter and lay beside her. The enemy remained quiet, waiting for the mother to arrive so they could kill them both. They tried to hit their heads. She had a bit of life left. She ran away from her daughter.

That's why I dislike the enemy who killed my father. We weren't going to shoot the enemy. We just fled. We were scared of them. We fled. We ran and ran. [When we went back] the enemy was still there. By the time they left, the dead were already rotten. The vultures had eaten my daughter: "Look at her foot!" [someone showed Paletó the girl's partially eaten foot]. My father, too. The vultures had eaten his buttocks. And sucked out his eyes. Everyone, the vultures had eaten everyone. (Paletó, pers. comm., 1992)

Since the 1980s the Wari' have demanded the inclusion of the area of this village and of several others within the limits of the reservation granted to them, which was delimited based on the reduced territory that was occupied by the remnants of the massacred population. In 2007, I carried out, together with anthropologist Beth Conklin and archeologist Dusan Boric, an anthropological study aimed at the inclusion of this and other areas in the indigenous reservation. Ten years later, the new boundaries have not yet been ratified, and the Wari', suffering the continued pressure of the invaders, and still traumatized by the experience of the massacres, have their survival threatened by territorial confinement. Their drama is shared today by a significant contingent of Brazilian indigenous populations.

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Boxed in: A reply

Manuela Carneiro da Cunha

I begin by thanking respondents for their thoughtful comments.¹¹

A number of issues came up. The comments of Ruben Caixeta, Aparecida Vilaça, and Jeremy Campbell directly rely on their ethnographic data. Vilaça presents us with a narrative by a Wari', Paletó, who describes the massacre of his family. Nothing could be more poignant and more basic than that. Together with Munduruku resistance and Katxuyana forcible exodus, we hear of real people and actual suffering and protest. Are we to accept, as temporal landmark theory wishes to establish, that Katxuyana have lost their constitutional land rights? Are we aware of the double standards going on for indigenous peoples and landowners, as Ruben Caixeta very perceptively points out?

We are confronted, as José Antonio Kelly shows, with the irrelevance of left and right governments in South America when it comes to so-called development

11. Translated from the French by Gregory Duff Morton, Bard College.

policies that ignore indigenous rights.¹² Yet, what makes the present moment so dire is the coordinated anti-indigenous campaign that agribusiness has launched, seizing the opportunity given by a weak president who clings to power by any means. By voting laws that deface human and environmental rights, agribusiness is making their recovery more difficult and protracted.

And yet, *ruralistas'* self-presentation looks deceitful when it comes to production and jobs provided. Their very prominence relies on questionable statistics, as Caio Pompeia suggests. We go back to Benjamin Disraeli's famous dictum, "there are three kinds of lies: lies, damn lies, and statistics."

Carlos Londoño Sulkin and Claudio Lomnitz touch on international solidarity with both indigenous peoples and anthropologists. This is a sensitive matter. While one definitely needs international support, that support is often maliciously portrayed as the interference of foreign interests. The *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* (APIB), which has recently taken up mobilizing academics to join their protests, has wisely urged everyone not to send letters to the judiciary. As Claudio Lomnitz points out, accusing foreign mingling into internal affairs is a time-proven instrument for dismissing human rights in Latin American countries. Indeed, during the Constitutional Assembly in 1987–88, a huge orchestrated scandal raised by select major newspapers and based on such accusations was used against indigenous peoples' rights. And yet, there is no substitute to international outrage at what is going on in Brazil.

One other topic that comes up in the comments concerns anthropology itself as practiced in Brazil. Solidarity with the people we work with and write about has opened up our craft for accusations of activism (as opposed to science) by *ruralistas* and their allies. On August 16, 2017, Justice Lewandowski publicly stated in his ruling that anthropology was indeed a science. It is somewhat ironic that our epistemologies (for there is more than one, as we well know) had to be upheld by the Supreme Court. That no doubt will single out Brazilian anthropology for decades to come. But that same solidarity has inflected the course of anthropology in Brazil, as Carlos Fausto's comments reminds us. Good ethnography is part of its mandate: that includes endeavoring to understand and then explain the relation indigenous societies entertain with territory, how they conceive of the tangible and intangible world, how diverse they are and how precious their diversity is; their history, their practices, knowledge, and innovations . . .

N.B. As I finish writing this reply, on August 24, 2017, the disaster goes on at a very rapid pace. Just yesterday, President Temer opened up to mining no less than 47.000 km² of Amazon protected forests and indigenous territories.

Reference

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12. A book that examines policies and encroachments on indigenous rights in several Amazonian countries has led me to the same conclusion: whatever the regime in place, things only get worse (Carneiro da Cunha 2015).

Les Peuples Indigènes pris dans la crise politique au Brésil

L'agribusiness a une influence inédite sur le très impopulaire président brésilien Michel Temer, qui a fait face à plusieurs accusations de corruption et se bat pour sa survie politique. En un peu plus d'un an, le lobby de l'agribusiness et ses alliés sont parvenus à éroder trente ans de lois sur les droits de l'homme et la conservation. Les peuples indigènes et leurs droits territoriaux font partie des cibles de telles politiques, et il ne semble pas qu'une résolution soit en vue. Offrant le point de vue de plusieurs chercheurs, ce forum évalue les conséquences de la perte de la protection que la Constitution des Citoyens de 1988 a pu offrir dans le passé aux peuples indigènes du Brésil.

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