

KAINGANG TERRITORIES AND TERRITORIALITIES: THE POSTCONQUEST REINVENTION OF SPACES AND FORMS OF SURVIVAL

*Kimiye Tommasino'
Ledson Kurtz de Almeida²*

ABSTRACT

This article explicates the ways in which, postconquest, the Kaingang have faced decisive situations that have forced them to seek new forms of survival in the lands demarcated by the government. These lands, which have drastically diminished in size over the second half of the twentieth century, were stripped of the natural resources that guaranteed the Kaingang's survival. Analysis of this process revealed that the Kaingang were obliged to construct a new time (*uri*), as opposed to the old time (*vãsy*). The Kaingang maintained their territorialities according to their customary ways, despite their being in permanent conflict with the prescribed codes. As such, the territorialisation movement of the Kaingang is transposed upon the territorialities of a capitalist society founded on private property.

Keywords: Kaingang territories. Kaingang territorialities. Indigenist politics. Urban villages.

TERRITÓRIOS E TERRITORIALIDADES KAINGANG:

¹ Professor (emeritus) of Anthropology in the Department of Social Sciences, State University of Londrina. Master's and Doctorate in Social Anthropology from the University of São Paulo. E-mail for contact: kimiye13@gmail.com

² Master's and Doctorate in Social Anthropology from the Federal University of Santa Catarina. He practices as an independent anthropologist and consults in the area of indigenous ethnology in the fields of health, education and territorial management. E-mail for contact: ledsonk@gmail.com

A REINVENÇÃO DOS ESPAÇOS E DAS FORMAS DE SOBREVIVÊNCIA APÓS A CONQUISTA

RESUMO

Este artigo demonstra como os Kaingang, após a conquista, enfrentaram situações críticas que os obrigaram a buscar novas formas de sobrevivência nas terras delimitadas pelo governo, as quais foram drasticamente reduzidas e, ao longo da segunda metade do século XX, foram dilapidadas dos recursos naturais que lhes garantiam a sobrevivência. A análise deste processo indicou que os Kaingang tiveram de construir um novo tempo (*uri*) em oposição ao tempo antigo (*vãsy*). Os Kaingang mantiveram suas territorialidades segundo seus próprios padrões, porém em permanente conflito com os códigos oficiais. Nesse sentido, o movimento de territorialização kaingang sobrepõe-se às territorialidades da sociedade capitalista fundada na propriedade privada.

Palavras-chave: Territórios kaingang. Territorialidades kaingang. Políticas indigenistas. Aldeias nas cidades.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Throughout their history of contact, the Kaingang have lived amid processes of expropriation of the land on which they survive, and the destruction of forests and fields gave way to cities and large agricultural and pastureland holdings. The loss of the ecosystems that assured their hunter-fisher-gatherer economy occurred gradually, at least while there were still adequate environmental resources for living in the time/space that the Kaingang call *vãsy* or old time. Of all of the losses suffered by the Kaingang in recent history, two were profound and determinant: first, the loss of political autonomy and later, gradually, the loss of economic autonomy. Today they are completely dependent on the market system into which they were inserted postconquest.

Kaingang territorialities were ultimately reconfigured within these new developments, which, in turn, led to further unforeseen consequences in a chain-reaction that has yet to end. Well into the twenty-first century, a devastating backlash against indigenous societies at every latitude in Brazil is being experienced. The growth of the indigenous population, which lives in minute demarcated areas, has intensified the conflicts between whites and Indians in response to demands for land, significantly increasing the occupation of

indigenous groups in cities, with the ever-increasing development of “urban villages”.

The main objective of this article is to show how the Kaingang have recreated their territories in spaces dominated by national society through various pragmatic strategies. Having lost their status as free, the Kaingang are subjected to various indigenist politics throughout history, from the villages formed under the Portuguese imperial government to the republican period with the Indigenous Protection Service (Serviço de Proteção ao Índio-SPI) and, later, the National Indigenous Foundation (Fundação Nacional do Índio - FUNAI). Because it is a recent historical experience, it is possible to discern a heterogeneity of cultural responses deployed in parallel with a hunter-gatherer ethos and, more broadly, new elements adopted in the process of interaction with Brazilian society.

THE TRANSITION FROM A SOCIETY OF ABUNDANCE TO ONE OF SCARCITY, OR FROM *VĀSY* TO *URI*

We can classify the kaingang way of life during the old time or *vāsy*³ as a society of abundance. Numerous studies in ecological anthropology conducted by a wide range of authors have helped demystify the image of hunter-gatherer peoples as being on the brink of destitution and lacking the time to produce “complex culture”.

These studies on hunter-gatherers not only have demonstrated that the indigenous economy is not an economy of misery but also have gone so far as to define “primitive society” as the “original affluent society” (SAHLINS, 1972 *apud* CARVALHO, 1978). In these societies, production relationships do not arise separately from social, political, and religious relationships and kinship. Much to the contrary, these spheres form a multifunctional social totality. In fact, hunting and gathering activities constitute the exercise of reciprocity among relatives.

One of the main characteristics of hunter-gatherers is the great mobility that they enjoy within their territories. In this way, modesty towards material and institutional demands and the possibility of relocating are quite valuable because the highest ideal is freedom of movement (SAHLINS, 1972 *apud* CARVALHO,

³ Pronounced as wāxí.

1978)⁴. This external characteristic must have contributed to the development of the stereotypical European view of these peoples.

Alcida Ramos cites the research of Jacques Lizot on the Yanomami, in which he reveals that in the case of these Amazonian natives, women spend 1 hour and 58 minutes and men spend 2 hours and 51 minutes over the course of the entire day to be able to eat reasonably well (RAMOS, 1986, p. 30).

Ramos concluded that Sahlins' work:

[...] has the merit of precisely demystifying the notion, still accepted by some, of the destitute native, always seeking sustenance, too occupied with the stomach to attend to the head, incapable, ultimately, of creating works of art or sophisticated culture. By doing away with this misconception, Sahlins also indicates that the pleasure of accumulating material goods is not universal, nor something imbued by nature, but simply a cultural value of consumer societies (RAMOS, 1986, p. 29)⁵.

It is possible to reconstruct the traditional kaingang way of life, which developed over thousands of years while a free people, from the historical records of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This way of life began to change soon after the Kaingang began to live in settlements, while whites had not yet destroyed their original means of subsistence, i.e., the diverse ecosystems still preserved at that time. Our aim is to demonstrate that the Kaingang fit the description of a society of abundance, just as Sahlins posited for hunter-gatherer peoples.

⁴ Sahlins cites numerous studies conducted in Africa and other regions where European presence had yet to destroy the original means of subsistence: the natives could typically, in two or three hours, obtain enough food for a day, without work or fatigue (EYRE, 1845, p. 254-255 apud CARVALHO, 1978, p. 31). Grey's work on populations in Western Australia confirms that the natives "can obtain in two or three hours a supply of food sufficient for the entire day, but their usual custom is to roam indolently from spot to spot, lazily collecting it as they went along" (GREY, 1841, v. 2, p. 263 apud CARVALHO, 1978, p. 31).

⁵ Translated from the portuguese text: "... tem o mérito de desmistificar precisamente a noção, ainda aceita por alguns, do nativo desprovido, sempre em busca de alimento, ocupado demais com o estômago para se dedicar à cabeça, incapaz, enfim, de construir obras de arte ou cultura sofisticada. Ao desfazer esse mal-entendido, Sahlins também indica que o gosto pela acumulação de bens materiais não é universal, nem algo dado pela natureza, mas simplesmente um valor cultural característico das sociedades de consumo" (RAMOS, 1986, p. 29).

The loss of freedom was traumatic, and it can be said that the wars of conquest represented a veritable tsunami not only in the life of the Kaingang but in the lives of all indigenous peoples. Once defeated, the Kaingang were subsumed within the history of capitalism and modern society. Throughout a long history as subjects of the nation state, they suffered all forms of violence, both individually and collectively. Following the enactment of the Federal Constitution of 1988 and the recognition of the right to self-determination, the situation did not change much in practice, leading to a continuation of the struggle for greater autonomy and respect from the surrounding society and installed powers.

The kaingang's great mobility, particular to hunter-gatherer societies, was due to two main factors: economic reasons associated with the demands of hunting and gathering activities⁶ and political reasons associated with war with rivals of the same ethnic group. In both the past and the present, tensions would erupt among local kaingang groups who became enemies, and the group that decided to break away would relocate to a distant river basin and establish an independent village (TOMMASINO, 1995; WIESEMANN, 1981). From times prior to recorded history, the Kaingang also waged war against other ethnic groups, such as the Guaraní, the Xokleng and, undoubtedly, certain ethnic groups that are extinct today.

Historically, the experience of contact with the expanding spheres of white influence produced a new type of mobility as a consequence of territorial expropriation, the politics of confinement, and the imposition of the peasant model on all Indians in Brazil in contrast to the hunter-gatherer ethos. We must also keep in mind all the forms of discrimination, violence, and neglect to which they were subjected, which reoriented the dynamics toward a new type of mobility.

According to accounts from different written sources, we can consider the 1930s-1940s as the limit between times past/*vãsy* and the current time/*uri* for the Kaingang. This period is when they lost the majority of their lands and when deforestation increased, giving way to coffee and cattle farms, along with dozens of cities created throughout the interior of the southern states.

The Kaingang classify old time, the time of their great-grandparents and parents, as *vãsy*. This refers to a time when they lived off of hunting, fishing, and gathering and possessed territories that were immense and rich in food resources.

⁶ This division of society into sectors, a result of the Cartesian paradigm particular to modern Western thought, is only instrumental because Kaingang thought and, consequently, practice do not make this separation; the social is lived as a totality.

In the narratives recorded in the field with the elders of the villages, several emphasised the physical vigour of the Kaingang of the past compared with the current situation: today, they are weak and stunted because they do not eat the same foods as they did before, “real” foods that produced “real” people (kaingang source).

In theoretical terms, the fundamental characteristics of hunter-gatherer societies are the following: high mobility and exploration of large geographic spaces; relatively small domestic units; production centred only on subsistence; lack of surpluses; and territorial boundaries that are not rigidly set but are somewhat open, fluid, and always in flux. It is evident, in practice, that none of these conditions exists in Brazil, while outside of Brazil, they are found only in remote locales, if at all.

It is possible to gain an idea of the nature of *vãsy* space-time by consulting certain sources, such as accounts of travellers and explorers, historical research by certain more recent historians, and the narratives of indigenous elders. For example, in reference to documents left by Elliot between the years 1847 and 1865, Mota states:

These documents, dealing with descriptions and accounts of the period, give us a clear vision of kaingang territories between the Paranapanema and Uruguai rivers in the nineteenth century and show us that kaingang populations used to occupy extensive areas covered by natural meadows interspersed with Araucaria forests. These vast meadows interspersed with pines (Araucaria) provided immense amounts of pine nuts, which used to make up one of the main food sources for the Kaingang and the animals that were part of their diet. Even today, we can observe remnants of these meadows and Araucaria forests in numerous parts of the locations indicated by Elliot in the nineteenth century, and many of these locales became indigenous kaingang areas, evidently as a result of the brutal reduction of their territories in these centuries of war and conquest (MOTA, 2000, p. 85-86)⁷.

⁷ Translated from the portuguese text: “Esses documentos, confrontados com as descrições e os relatos da época, nos dão uma clara visão dos territórios kaingang entre os rios Paranapanema e Uruguai no século XIX e nos mostram que as populações kaingang ocupavam extensas áreas cobertas de campos naturais entremeadas de bosques de araucárias. Esses vastos campos entremeados de pinheirais (araucárias) forneciam imensa quantidade de pinhões, que se constituíam num de seus principais alimentos e também dos animais que faziam parte de sua

Another rather interesting work on hunter-gatherers of the Gran Chaco of Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia, authored by Volker Von Bremen, provides an account of development aid projects targeted toward indigenous peoples in this region, providing certain information useful for understanding the Kaingang. For this population, the fact that they had direct access to the natural resources that served as the foundation of their sustenance led Volker Von Bremen to consider that

The reproduction of such resources does not constitute a reason for worry – as in all other societies – because these groups of hunters and gatherers consider themselves to be an integral part of the environment. For this reason, indigenous people do not accept the idea of the existence of an essential superiority of human beings over the rest of nature. The question of a “conscientious and responsible treatment” of nature is for them – in the manner in which we interpret this problem – irrelevant, as human beings do not possess the force or the will necessary to dominate nature (BREMEN, 1987, p. 8)⁸.

In hunter-gatherer cosmology, humans, animals, and plants maintain a relationship of reciprocity and symmetry, participating in the same symbolic universe. In addition to indigenous knowledge and the mastery of different hunting and fishing techniques, it is also necessary to include magic techniques that allow contact with spirits and supernatural beings that collaborate in the success of food-gathering activities. Bremen summarises this aspect of the economy of these peoples:

Thus, because all natural and cultural phenomena contain a spiritual character, they possess their own individual personality, their own

dieta. Ainda hoje, podemos constatar restos desses campos e dessas florestas de araucárias em várias partes dos locais apontados por Elliot no século XIX, e muitos desses locais se transformaram em áreas indígenas dos Kaingang, evidentemente observando a brutal diminuição ocorrida em seus territórios nesses séculos de guerra de conquista” (MOTA, 2000, p. 85-86).

⁸ Translated from the portuguese text: “A reprodução de tais recursos não constitui um motivo de preocupação – como em todas as outras sociedades – posto que esses grupos de coletores e caçadores se consideram parte integrante do meio ambiente. Por esse motivo, os indígenas não aceitam a ideia da existência de uma superioridade essencial do ser humano sobre o resto da natureza. A questão de um “tratamento consciente e responsável” da natureza é para eles – na forma em que nós interpretamos esse problema – irrelevante, pois o ser humano não possui a força, nem a vontade necessárias para poder dominar a natureza.” (BREMEN, 1987, p. 8).

character, their own peculiarity, and even their own will. They all play a particular role that was defined in the timeless past (times immemorial, the age of dreams) and that has been transmitted to the Human of our time through myths, retaining its effectiveness up to the present...

As an integral part of a whole, a human being sees – according to a more cyclical conception of time – the completion of his or her mission in preserving the world just as it is and, that is, in the reproduction of that which in previous times became what is today...

Therefore, a human being does not pursue the objective of transforming the environment through his or her own initiative because he or she is only a part that possesses the same value as all other coexisting parts. His or her will occupies a place alongside (and not above) the will of all other beings (BREMEN, 1987, p. 9)⁹.

These observations by Bremen support the works of Sahlins, who states that “worker is neither a status in itself nor labour a true category of tribal economics.” (SAHLINS, 1974, p. 125). They also support Marx’s statement that “the institution of the individual as worker is, in its purest form, a historical product [...] Therefore, work is an abstract category and only valid within the limits of historical conditions.” (MARX, 1961 *apud* SAHLINS, 1974, p. 127). In this sense, Sahlins asserts that hunter-gatherer societies are societies “against the economy”, or rather, although they may have an economy, these peoples do not economise.

Based on sources regarding the kaingang economy in the nineteenth century (AMBROSETTI, 1895; BORBA, 1908; MABILDE, 1983), the Kaingang exhibited great territorial mobility, spending weeks or even months in different hunting, gathering, and fishing locations. They would return to their *emã* (villages)

⁹ Translated from the portuguese text: “Assim, já que todos os fenômenos naturais e culturais encerram um caráter espiritual, possuem sua própria personalidade individual, seu próprio caráter, sua própria peculiaridade e inclusive sua própria vontade. Todos eles cumprem uma função determinada que já foi definida em um passado sem tempo (tempos imemoriais, idade dos sonhos) e que tem sido transmitido até o Homem de nossos dias através dos mitos e conserva ainda sua efetividade... Como parte integrante de um todo, o ser humano vê – seguindo mais uma concepção cíclica do tempo – o cumprimento de sua missão na conservação do mundo tal como este é, isto é, na reprodução daquilo que no tempo passado se converteu no que hoje em dia é... Portanto, o ser humano não persegue o objetivo de transformar por iniciativa própria o meio ambiente, posto que ele mesmo é somente uma parte que possui o mesmo valor que todas aquelas outras partes com as que ele convive. Sua vontade ocupa um lugar junto a (e não sobre) a vontade de todos os outros seres.” (BREMEN, 1987, p. 9).

when, in the winter, they would perform the *kikikoi* (ritual of the dead). At these times, people from all of the villages belonging to groups connected by kinship and political alliance would gather and participate in the ceremonies of the most important ritual, which is at the same time religious, political, and social. That is, the *kikikoi* represents a total social fact, in the Maussian sense.

According to Lévi-Strauss's accounts of the Kaingang of São Jerônimo da Serra and Apucarantina in 1935, the Kaingang of São Jerônimo lived in five villages with a total population of 450 people across an area of one hundred thousand hectares. Adding narratives collected in 1992 from elders in the villages of Apucarantina, Barão de Antonina, and São Jerônimo to Lévi-Strauss's description, we can confirm that up to that time, the Kaingang still lived by hunting, gathering, fishing, and farming small fields. In the basin of the Tibagi, this was possible because *Araucaria* forests still existed, game and fish were abundant, and one hundred thousand hectares of land allowed the Kaingang to live off of natural resources. However, *vãsy* was already coming to an end with the acceleration of capitalist encroachment.

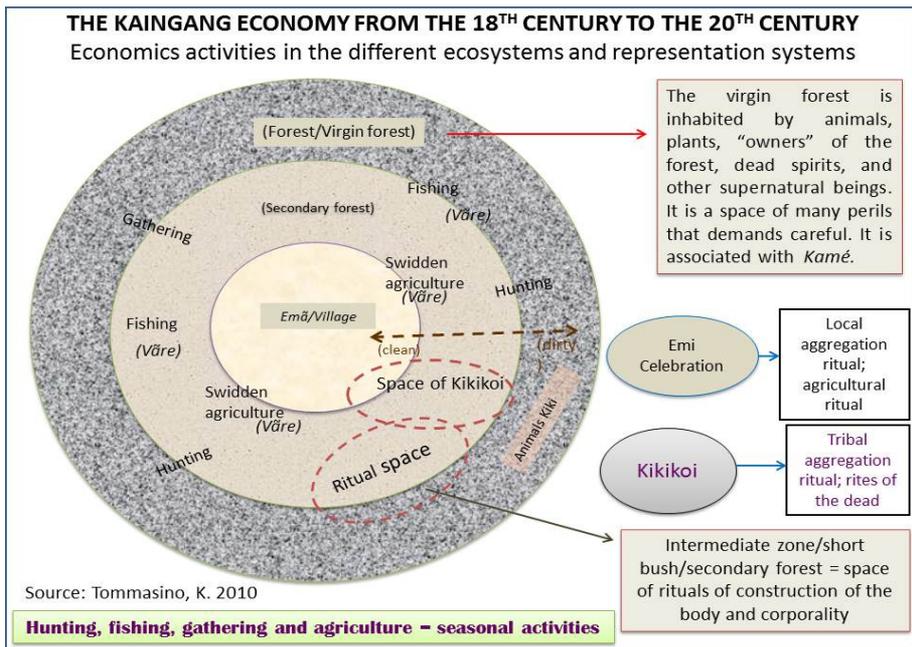
The period between 1940 and 1950 was crucial because the authoritarian actions with regard to official indigenist policy intensified. They were carried out through a wide network of interinstitutional reach that involved the state government, federal government, colonising companies, agents of the SPI, regional capitalists with landholding and logging interests, and colonisers with an interest in gaining plots for settlements. Territorial reduction was accompanied by interference in social organisation and ritual practices.

For example, the Kaingang reduced to the Apucarana Indigenous Land [Terra Indígena] (IL) performed the traditional *kikikoi* ritual, bringing together various local groups along the banks of the Água do Encontro stream. They made use of paths that organised their movements over a large territory where they gathered pine nuts and built fishing enclosures (*pari*) along the Apucarana, Tibagi, and Apucarantina rivers. Sebastião Kanhere described the impact of the advance of whites and the head of the SPI with regard to reducing territories and essential natural resources on the performance of the *kikikoi*:

That's where they meet, all the relatives. Where they make the drink. And where they always go to meet their relatives. Whoever is the father-in-law, whoever is the son-in-law, whoever is the brother, whoever is the cousin. The family is known by the mark. By the mark, they meet [...] It ended because of the White Chief. Because they destroyed a

wild area, the coconut palm was also lost. Everything was lost because of the White Chief. When the forest is lost, the bees are also lost. When the bees are lost, the coconut palm is also lost. The heart of the palm is lost, everything is gone. The animals are also gone. There are no more (Sebastião Kanhere, 85 years old, Apucarana IL, 2002)¹⁰

The figure below is an approximate representation of the kaingang economy¹¹ based on their cosmology (TOMMASINO, 2010).



¹⁰ Translated from the portuguese speech, recorded by the authors: “Ali onde que eles se encontra, os parentes tudo. Quando onde que eles faz essa bebida. E onde que eles vão sempre se reunir tudo pra conhecer os parente. Quem é o sogro, quem é o genro, quem é o irmão, quem é o primo. Aonde que eles vão se juntar pra conhecer a família. Tem a família pela marca. Pela marca, onde que vão conhecer [...] Acabou por causa do Chefe Branco. Porque eles acabaram com uma área de natureza, coqueiro também acabou. Acabou tudo por causa do Chefe Branco. Quando acaba a floresta, acaba as abelha. Acaba as abelhas, acaba os coqueiro, acaba tudo. Acaba o palmito, acaba tudo. Os bichos também acabou. Não tem mais. Não tem mais” (Sebastião Kanhere, 85 anos, TI Apucarana, 2002).

¹¹As we know, in indigenous societies the economy is inseparable from the other spheres. It is impossible to speak of productive activities without speaking of kinship, religion, and politics.

Kaingang society is focused on the environment as a powerful element of socialisation and perception of the world. The cosmos is viewed as totalising. Dualism, characterised by the complementary and asymmetrical relationship between opposites, introduces values of a triadism characteristic of other Jê/Bororo societies. This triadism reflects values of concentric dualism, which signifies the fundamental existence of complementarity among the home, the clearing, and the bush (CRÉPEAU, 1997).

Beginning in the 1930s, kaingang territories were increasingly occupied by white colonisers and the State. Indigenous lands came to be expropriated through laws and decrees that served to make viable modern capitalist occupation. The process of reducing the areas occupied by the Kaingang was generally conducted through a combination of measures controlled by inter-sectorial interests of the State and capitalists (loggers, colonial enterprises, and colonists).

The official measures for defining the land size for each group followed the following criteria: 100 hectares per indigenous family plus 500 hectares set aside for the installations of the Indigenous Post (TOMMASINO, 1995, p. 160). If the objective of the State was to impose upon the Indians the peasant model, it is clear that at the beginning, no anthropological study was conducted to assess the land size truly necessary for the definition of the measures. According to the documents, it was seen as an agreement between the federal and state governments because the middle ranks of the SPI reached the point of attempting to roll back the scheme by proposing a middle way, although this proved unsuccessful¹². To make matters worse, the institutional structure of the SPI came to have corrupt agents who clearly acted against the interests of indigenous societies, as the Relatório Figueiredo, which was recently made public, demonstrates (CORREIA, 1967).

The facts related to the formation of the Apucarana IL serve as a parameter by which to understand the process noted above. Indigenous families were confined to a small fragment of their territory by a great deal of pressure, repression, and violence. Non-indigenous residents of the municipality where the IL is located would recognise the Post Chief as the one who “controlled the colonising enterprise” because he was the son-in-law of the supervisor of said enterprise in the area. These individuals were associated with the landholders and loggers. One of the colonisers who secured a plot in the territory originally belonging to the Kaingang stated:

¹² For further details about the 1945 e 1951 laws, which reduced kaingang indigenous lands, please consult Tommasino, 1995.

They did not care how it was done, they would come and mark it with the mark of Moacir Viana [landholder and logger]. Even in my farm, there were eight marked pines. The guy that worked would come over and indicate the wood that was of no interest, of twenty-five to thirty centimetres in width. There were some who would come and mark everything, and afterward another one would come to see what was worth the effort. (Eduardo Torres Bitencourt, 10-11-2007).¹³

When they began to live on government lands, the Kaingang came to be administered almost always with a heavy hand¹⁴ by the officials at the posts, to the point that there were periods during which the Indians chose to leave the reserved areas to work on the surrounding rural estates or even within the perimeter of indigenous land occupied by white families who established themselves as renters or invaders and who contracted indigenous labour.

To assure internal control of the indigenous group, the SPI agent would install leaders who were willing to collaborate, according to the elders of the Apucarana IL:

[...] it was a period of dictatorship. At that time in the dictatorship, only those at the very top called the shots. They got scared and started coming here. Viana, they're talking with the governor, and then they promised, if those groups, if they had a banana tree, or some apple orchards, from there they could make a house for themselves because they were going to wipe out the lumber trees And the sawmill, the sawmill was already set up there, so he promised, they got scared and they came over here. Then, they started to invade the land [...] And the Post Chief was already on the side of that group of people¹⁵

¹³ Translated from the portuguese speech, recorded by the authors: “Eles não queriam saber de que jeito que era, chegavam e marcavam com a marca do Moacir Viana [fazendeiro e madeireiro]. Inclusive no meu sítio tinha uns oito pinheiros marcado. Chegava o cara que trabalhava e dizia a madeira que não interessa, de vinte e cinco a trinta centímetros de grossura. Tinha uns que vinham e marcavam tudo e depois o outro passava pra ver o que valia a pena” (Eduardo Torres Bitencourt, 10/11/2007).

¹⁴ For further details about compulsory removal and deportation, corporal punishment, and arrests in ILS, see Tommasino, 1995.

¹⁵ Interview conducted on November 10, 2007, recorded on digital audio (timestamp 1 h 40 min 00 sec). Interviewer: Ledson Kurtz de Almeida. Translator: Aparecido (Kaingang resident of the Apucarana IL). Interviewees: Benedito, Sebastião and Adriano (elder residents of the Apucarana IL).

This direct interference of the indigenist agent in the political system was observed by the anthropologist Herbert Baldus in the Palmas IL (Toldo das Lontras) in 1933:

The officer of the Commission for the Protection of the Indian limited the power of the hereditary chief, commanding the inhabitants of “Toldo das Lontras” to elect as chief one of their own who [...] was agreeable to the official (BALDUS, 1979, p. 308).

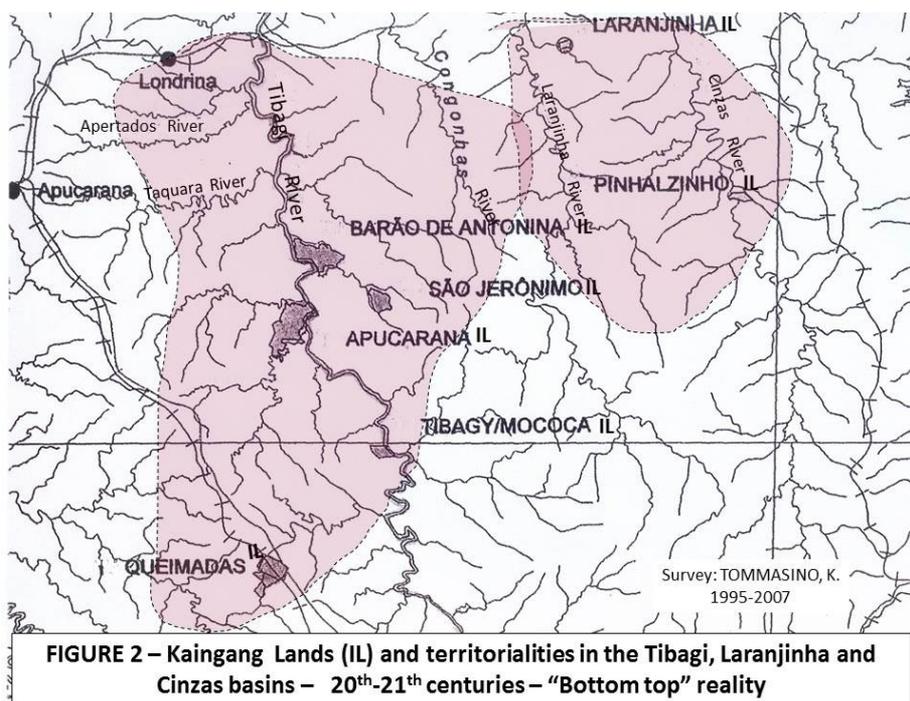
These accounts show that the expansion of coffee plantations and cattle farms from the 1930s onward continually advanced toward the delimited lands of the posts. This expansion also coincides with the construction of sawmills inside and outside of the posts in the following decades. The reduction of lands from 1945 (Decree-law 7,692) and 1951 (State decree 13, 722), along with the deforestation of the territories inside the posts, made Kaingang life constantly more dependent on the market system. The sale of baskets in cities and even panhandling and prostitution emerged as complementary alternatives for survival.

NEW TERRITORIALITIES, NEW SPACES FOR SURVIVAL

Studies conducted in the Tibagi river basin show that the Kaingang continued to move within their ancestral lands and maintained open borders, even in defiance of the whites and their laws. Analysing this process, we can see that the Kaingang maintained their territorialities according to their own standards, despite their being in permanent conflict with the official norms. An indigenous territorialisation movement is observed, transposed over the territorialities of capitalist society founded on private property, environmental protection areas, parks, and the remaining fragments of forest.

The studies showed that even living in demarcated areas, kaingang families continued to live in some of the sites of the old villages. The Kaingang of the Apucarana IL fished in the *pari* that they built in the Apertados and Taquara rivers until 1966; they fished in the Bom, Araruna, Preto, and Três Bocas rivers. Indians from Barão de Antonina said that until “the other day” (approximately 1998), there was a family living on the margins of the Lambari river, and families from the Barão IL fished until the 1980s on the Passo Liso river (TOMMASINO; MOTA, 2002, p. 93).

In these rivers where they fished in *pari*, families dwelled in huts (in) or stayed in camps (*vãre*). In these spaces outside of the ILS, Indians also worked (and still work sporadically) as day labourers (“*bóias frias*”), sold their handicrafts in cities, sought a variety of services, attended dances, played soccer, maintained friendships and fictional kinship ties with non-indigenous families, and participated in both religious and secular celebrations. The figure below attempts to show an approximation of this reality “seen from the bottom top”, that is, from the kaingang perspective.



We can say, according to the studies, that:

- a) Indigenous Land (IL) is a legal category that designates a territory demarcated and approved by public authority. It is important to highlight that the current ILS in Paraná correspond to a negligible portion of the “lands traditionally occupied by the Indians” of which the Federal Constitution speaks.

- b) Traditional kaingang land/Ngá does not coincide with the portion recognised by the State as IL. The Ngá corresponds to an area where the Kaingang survive and exercise their territorialities. This includes the IL area plus the surrounding areas that were part of the traditional territories where the Kaingang stayed (although with the status of sojourners) as well as the new areas where each group occupied territory to assure their physical and cultural survival in the postconquest period. Its borders maintain the same characteristics as before: they are neither rigid nor fixed but instead are open, fluid, and in constant flux.

The IL acquires conceptual aspects derived from territoriality to assure coexistence and control in a limited (enclosed) space. Based on an ethnographic study of the Apucarana IL (ALMEIDA, 2011), the concepts that distinguish individual and collective spaces may be understood. To achieve a better definition of the concepts of “individual” and “collective”, in the specific case of the Apucarana IL, first the spatial units classified by empirical study are defined:

- The house, patio, family field (garden, larder, and ranch), and the *pári* are more individual spaces.
- Forest spaces (for hunting), spaces for gathering (plants for handicrafts: bamboo, vines, seeds; edible plant material: fruits, edible plants; and medicinal plants), and the river (in general) are more collective spaces.
- Areas for planting and husbandry not reserved for specific families are considered collective (community) areas.
- Space delimited for villages is a specific political unit.
- The space demarcated as IL is an overarching political unit.

The surrounding villages are political-territorial units that bring together families allied through kinship or common interests. They establish power relations with the central village (Headquarters). Each one of these units deals separately with local interests, although they do not possess decision-making

autonomy, being subordinate instead to the decisions made by leadership in Headquarters.¹⁶

Of the small units, the most restricted is that of the house, the space of the nuclear family. This unit is connected with others of the same nature. This connection can occur in the patio space or beyond it. We may treat this relationship between nuclear families as belonging to the sphere of the domestic unit, conceived of as individual in the sense that it seeks its physical and cultural reproduction in a more autonomous way. The scope of this unit is defined through the type of connection that nuclear families ascribe to each other.

The collective space is defined by the connection among domestic units, generally with greater local power and political leadership, in the sense of having dominion over the production area, thereby expanding the scope of the individual domestic units. Generally, the result of production carried out in these spaces favours the domestic units involved and the respective family units that depend on them.

There is still a conception that community use applies to areas not identified as specific domestic units. The leadership defines spaces as community spaces appropriation for the development of specific economic activities (generally large-scale cultivation or cattle husbandry) and at certain times (typically celebrations): their products are made available¹⁷ or are otherwise destined for supporting the leadership itself.

Pedro *Kagrexág* de Almeida, a professor and resident of the Apucarana IL, explained the concepts of *isũwẽ* as being individual areas, generally associated with specific families; *ĩtĩtũwẽ* as being areas that do not belong to others, or rather, that are not considered to be under the domain or occupation of someone or of another family; and *wẽnh kartũwẽ* as being areas that belong to all, including (but

¹⁶ A contradiction and overlap with the individual spaces of domestic units have been observed with regard to collective spaces that are conceived of as community spaces for economic production under the control of leadership in certain kaingang ILs. Projects proposed for community production should be required to take into account before the mapping of areas for family use, given the capacity of those who exercise local power to free up spaces to the benefit of their group.

¹⁷ Translated from the portuguese speech, recorded by the authors: "... essa duplicação que passa ali na aldeia ela não é duplicação de qualquer uma propriedade branca. Porque quando passa uma BR dentro de uma propriedade branca, aquela propriedade tem um dono, tem um proprietário e aí o proprietário faz um preço, se acerta e daí o asfalto sai, a BR sai... Agora nós é diferente. Nós, indígenas, nós se comunicemo as lideranças que convivem ... nós somos indígenas e quando acontece temos que enconjunτά todas as lideranças que convivem naquela região. Isso já vem acontecendo há décadas..." (Francisco dos Santos, Cacique as Aldeia Morro do Osso).

not limited to) gathering areas or virgin forests. As such, when reference is made to a family area, the kaingang concept is *inh krê fag*, which is close to what we understand as a family group because it includes sons and sons-in-law: “the son-in-law (*inh já mrê*) is treated like a son”. The term “family” in the Western conceptualisation does not exist in the kaingang language. With respect to the spaces occupied by the family in the Kaingang conceptualisation, Pedro *Kangrexág* clarified that “sometimes the sons-in-law wish to operate separately, but the sons work together”. In this case, the concept of *inh kankã ta vĩ* signifies the unity between brothers and father.

When they work as day labourers on the properties surrounding the ILs or even receive salaries as formal employees inside or outside of the ILs, it is important to clarify that the pay obtained in this way circulates according to the rules of kaingang reciprocity within the community. When the conditions of their ancient habitat have changed, the Kaingang have sought new possibilities for their survival. Indians became familiar with paid work from their first experiences of contact, and the objective of production continued to be immediate survival, such that the pay thus obtained was transformed into food, clothing, and other products that they needed. In this sense, it may be said that in the geographic spaces of the south, multiple territorialities are in tension with one another because they are antagonistic and contradictory; private property is transposed on other forms of cultural appropriation culturally distinct from the capitalist mode.

VILLAGES IN CITIES AND ON HIGHWAYS: KAINGANG TERRITORIALISATION BREAKS WITH THE GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES OF INDIGENOUS LANDS

Regarding kaingang relationships with cities, we know that almost all of the major kaingang chiefs (*Põi*) made trips to the capitals to negotiate the demarcation of the lands with government officials (during both the imperial and republican periods), to demand objects from modern society, and even to denounce the dispossession of the lands. Since coming to live in the confined areas of the settlements, the Kaingang have frequented the cities, starting in 1846 in Rio Grande do Sul, 1859 in Paraná, and 1912 in the state of São Paulo. Numerous chiefs travelled prior to these dates to negotiate boundaries and village sites.

The increase in the importance of cities for the Kaingang is related, directly or indirectly, to the growing precarious conditions in the ILs. The growth of the

population, compounded with the scarcity of the land and degradation of the soil, has created problems that can no longer be solved as they had been in the past. For example, because hunter-gatherers always lived in small local groups (generally an extended family), when the population grew, the groups split into two, and one of the two took up residence in a new area. However, at present there have not been new or unoccupied areas for a long time.

When the government created the settlements, it placed age-old rival groups in the same area, and over time, these rivalries grew as a result of the indigenist policies that took advantage of these differences to strengthen their control. On the indigenous side, each group also sought advantages for itself to the detriment of rival groups, creating animosities that evolved into open conflicts and making life in the ILS unsustainable. Some ILS saw internal armed conflicts and/or expulsions. In the last two decades, some groups have found solutions, such as leaving the ILS and forming camps (*vãre*) or villages (*emã*) along highways or environmental protection areas (parks) and on the outskirts of cities.

Highway BR-386 in Rio Grande do Sul (RS) is an example of the federal and state highways that were constructed in territory that, historically, belonged to the Kaingang people. Regarding this highway, the elders remember the locations of the *vãre* along it that were used in expeditions to the region, which, today, is the municipality of Porto Alegre. Beginning with the official settlements, this Jê people, characterised by their occupation of large territories under their control, was reduced to demarcated areas mainly located in the north of the state. However, camps can still be seen along the highways still in use, with or without the blessing of the municipalities in which they are found (ALMEIDA, 2009).

The camp located in the municipality of Lajeado is an example of the type of pressure that municipalities place on the Kaingang. It was initially located at the margins of one of the highways that serves this municipality, but it was relocated under pressure from the local municipal government to a small plot on the outskirts of the city.

The Estrela group, meanwhile, remains on the edge of highway BR-386, although it suffers the same type of pressure from the municipality. This group is tied together by a shared memory of kinship with indigenous people identified with the *Nonoai* IL through the João Koito's branch of the family. Koito was murdered in the Morro do Osso region in the municipality of Porto Alegre toward the end of the 1960s. From this relationship, ties extend to other Kaingang who migrated from *Nonoai* to the Lajeado camp and to the villages of greater Porto Alegre.

A large part of the families that comprise the villages of the Vale do Taquari up to the area of greater Porto Alegre are originally from ILs in RS, especially *Nonoai*, because of the historical process of repression and totalitarianism associated with certain caciques, because of the small size of their original locations, and because of the population growth and inadequate land management. Certain leaders expelled those who disagreed with their initiatives and practices from the area. Various groups of families ended up leaving as a consequence of expulsion or freely chose to do so, dissenting from the policies noted. There is evidence that the descendants of Maria, cacique of the Estrela Village in 2009, had come from similar circumstances. This factor is an important reference with regard to the political unity examined in this study.

Cacique Maria stated that she is “closer to *Iraí*, *Guarita*, and *Nonoai*”, places where there are greater opportunities to establish alliances. According to the accounts of the Kaingang from Estrela, the elders held a living memory of the actions of the SPI in the demarcated territories. Based on the memories of her father, Cacique Maria, for example, reported in vivid detail the strategies of domination implemented by the SPI.

In general, groups located in greater Porto Alegre – Farroupilha, São Leopoldo, Morro do Osso, Lomba do Pinheiro, and Morro Santana – went on, along with the groups from Estrela and Lajeado, to form a territorial and political unit that united all the villages. In broad terms, the highways of the region, especially BR-386, were used by the Kaingang referred to herein to access the forest sites where they gather the material for handicrafts and medicinal plants, as evidenced by the numerous paths seen within the forest. The forest areas along the two-lane stretch of BR-386, for example, were not reserved exclusively for the Kaingang living in Estrela but were also used occasionally by families located in other settlements of this political unit. For example, on one of the visits to conduct ethnographic research, Francisco dos Santos, Cacique of the Morro do Osso village, was in the region gathering a type of vine that is rare in his area. After gathering it, he wrapped it in a plastic bag to take on the bus and carry to his village.

Expectations of compensation were held for the possible impacts of the widening of BR-386 on the village of Estrela. Moreover, this settlement had not been recognised as an IL. For these reasons, and taking into account that the caciques considered the villages to be acting in contempt of the demarcated areas, these caciques justified a possible intervention in Estrela. This situation reinforced the ties of the kaingang villages in the Vale do Taquari and Porto Alegre regions,

showing how this group came to define itself as a unit against the old demarcated areas in the north of the state.

The account below illustrates how this situation emerged:

[...] this widening that is happening in the village is not a widening on some white property. Because when a BR passes through a white property, that property has an owner, it has a proprietor and the proprietor sets the price, he accepts, and then the property is paved, the BR goes through... However, it is different for us. We indigenous people, we communicate with the leaders in our midst ... we are indigenous people, so when it happens, we have to bring together all of the leadership in that region. This is what has happened for decades... (Francisco dos Santos, Cacique of Morro do Osso Village)18

This comprehensiveness is not only confined to the political discourse of mobilisation but also reproduced in its impact on social and political organisation. As such, the discourse of kinship that ties individuals in one village to those in another and the discourse of the economic usage of the forest areas throughout the edges of the region where the BR-386 is located are used by the Kaingang of Porto Alegre to legitimise political-territorial unity, pragmatically constituted, as the account below illustrates:

[...] yesterday I was gathering materials close to Estrela. I used to live in this area some years ago. So we come and take material there. I've taken material from there to Porto Alegre, where my family members are working. This route of ours is never going to end, and it [the road] is going to harm it, it is going to harm my son, it is going to harm my

¹⁸ Translated from the portuguese speech, recorded y the authors: "... ontem eu estava coletando material aqui perto de Estrela, eu morava há anos nessa área. Então a gente vem já aproveita e já leva material pra lá. Eu já levei material dali pra Porto Alegre, lá minhas famílias tão trabalhando. Essa trajetória nossa nunca vai acabá e ela [a estrada] vai prejudicá, vai prejudicá o meu filho, vai prejudicá a minha família. Eu tenho um filho que tá ali na área do Dilor [Aldeia de Lajeado]. Esse trânsito nosso nunca vai parar ... Lajeado aqui, antes da cidade de Lajeado se formá a cidade não tinha branco aqui, os índios já conviviam aqui em Lajeado. Ia no Rio Pardo busca pinhão ... (Francisco, Cacique de Aldeia Morro do Osso). O prejuízo é total, ele não fica só centralizado em Lajeado e Estrela porque ele afeta todo mundo, porque nós temos parente em Estrela, nós temos parente em Lajeado. Tem parente de Lajeado que tá em Porto Alegre..." (Eli Fidelis, Cacique do Morro de Santana).

family. I have a son who lives in the area of Dilor [Lajeado Village]. This movement of ours is never going to stop ... Lajeado here, before there was a city of Lajeado, there weren't any whites here. The Indians already lived here in Lajeado. I would go to the Pardo River to look for pine nuts... (Francisco, Cacique of Morro do Osso Village)

The damage is everywhere. It doesn't just stay in Lajeado and Estrela because it affects everyone because we have family in Estrela. We have family in Lajeado. We have family from Lajeado that are in Porto Alegre... (Eli Fidelis, Cacique of Morro de Santana Village)¹⁹

Although there is a collective unity, each village has its own autonomy, with specific demands, in terms of the chieftaincy, as the account below illustrates:

[...] each community has its different realities. We are forming a collective so that Maria [then the Cacique of Estrela] doesn't also lose and so that she might even have a partnership. Because right now when the leadership does not come together to seek its objectives, for example, the demarcations of land, people don't accomplish anything going it alone. When she asked in the first meeting, people supported her. She said, "I am not going to leave you, I need you". And we have always supported each other since she started out. [...] We are one people, but the reality of the suffering of each group is different. (Jaime, leader of Lomba do Pinheiro in 2009)

Several current phenomena reveal the diversity of situations experienced by the Kaingang in their multifaceted relationships with cities. To better illustrate these historical processes, we compare certain examples: the presence of the Kaingang in the city of Londrina and in the city of Chapecó.

In the north of Paraná, women leave to sell their handicrafts in the cities of the region. They stay for a week or two and return to their ILS. The case of the

¹⁹ Translated from the portuguese speech, recorded by the authors: "... cada comunidade tem suas realidades diferentes, nós tamos fazendo coletividade pra que a Maria [então Cacique de Estrela] também não venha a perder e com isso ela até tendo parceria. Porque no momento quando as liderança não se unem pra busca seus objetivos, por exemplo, as demarcações de terra, sozinho a gente não consegue nada. Quando ela pediu na primeira reunião, a gente apoiou, ela disse: "eu não vou deixa vocês, eu preciso de vocês". E sempre nós apoiamos desde o começo da história dela. (...) Somos um povo, mas a realidade do sofrimento de cada grupo é diferente (Jaime, liderança da Lomba do Pinheiro na época"

families from Chapecó, Santa Catarina state, who built an *emã* in the middle of the city, is different. This is the situation described in the analysis of Kondá Village, which is a reoccupation or contemporary territorialisation. Because this group never ceased frequenting the city that was built on their *Ngá* (Traditional kaingang Land), it was never abandoned. However, kaingang territoriality has remained completely invisible to the whites, and the City Council has frequently joined forces with the FUNAI to “repatriate” families to their ILs “of origin”. At one point in 1998, an expert anthropological opinion was even sought to identify the families from Kondá Village (TOMMASINO, 1998).

Data from various studies on the Kaingang in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná allow us to verify that in the absence of space to expand their territories, the Kaingang have continued to experience fissures, be they as a result of either population growth or internal conflicts among factions, since the final decades of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. They have ended up occupying cities, highway margins, or sites on private properties located within their traditional ancient territories.

Analysing the current facts on Kaingang populations, it is interesting that not only urban villages but also those that are being established along highways and other spaces can only be thought of in the broadest context of the reality lived by the Indians in both space and time. The ILs can no longer support so many families living in all types of precarious conditions within their borders. Therefore, the *vãre* that they constructed in the city went from being temporary to permanent and became known as *emã mág* or *vãre mág*. In fact, these urban villages may continue to be a *vãre*, sometimes growing or becoming an *emã*, characterised by its definitive permanence, depending on the perspective from which it is viewed, as they form a broader whole. Aside from being the dwelling of families who remain there permanently, the urban village serves family members who live in the ILs and frequently travel to the city to sell handicrafts or take care of other issues, staying with family members who reside in the city. Movement occurs in the other direction as well: families in the city end up returning to their home villages for numerous reasons, such as searching for medicinal plants, visiting family, obtaining documents from the FUNAI administration, receiving treatment at the local health post, and being treated by a *kuiã* (“shaman”). This reality, as we have seen, now extends to the villages on the shoulders of highways and follows the same structural logic.

Recent history shows that the Kaingang were and continue to be capable of adapting to the adverse conditions created by the conquistadors and showed

themselves skilful and creative in the solutions they devised. Shut out of the territories necessary for their survival, they were able to reinvent new space and structures to ensure both their physical and cultural survival. The new kaingang time (*uri*) contains the old time (*vãsy*) and, in the former, a historical update of the latter because, as Sahlins tells us,

The improvisations (functional revaluations) depend on the choice of meaning given, if only because they are otherwise unintelligible and incommunicable. Hence, the empirical is not known simply as such but also as a culturally important meaning, and the old system is projected forward in novel forms. It also follows that different cultural orders have their own distinctive modes of historical production (SAHLINS, 1990, p. 11)²⁰

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this article, we have sought to demonstrate how the Kaingang have faced different junctures of history since the conquest and have been able to reinvent themselves, creating their own policies against every indigenist policy imposed. They were forced to remain confined within demarcated areas. They broke through these borders and went to “hunt and gather” in the areas that became farms and cities.

The twenty-first century has seen the Kaingang break through social and geographical boundaries, with technology contributing to the increased levelling of the field among the thousands of young people – Indians and non-Indians – tied together through social networks. Virtual social networks have made it fundamentally possible to recreate concrete webs of communication among different localities, analogous to the movements that the Kaingang performed among villages and the “meeting” bound within the ritual event. Social networks also enable connections among groups and, in pragmatic terms, the formation of political units dedicated to reclaiming a dialogue-based interaction when dealing with the State. However, while many challenges remain, the most recent facts

²⁰ Translated from the portuguese version: “As improvisações (reavaliações funcionais) dependem das possibilidades dadas de significação, mesmo porque, de outro modo, seriam ininteligíveis e incomunicáveis. Daí o empírico não ser apenas conhecido enquanto tal, mas enquanto uma significação culturalmente relevante, e o antigo sistema é projetado adiante sob novas formas. Segue-se daí que ordens culturais diversas tenham modos próprios de produção histórica”. (SAHLINS, 1990, p. 11).

seem to indicate that the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the first groups who accepted living in settlements have been able to reach a threshold that will be decisive for their self-determination.

In the interinstitutional meetings in which we have participated, we have noticed the presence of indigenous youths taking the reins in the movement for their rights, surprisingly revealing the connection process of a pan-indigenism. This brings together different ethnic groups through communication and the exchange of ideas at regional, national, and international events. From there, a more participatory exchange with the State begins, along with a broadening of the networks of institutional connection at the governmental and non-governmental levels. Various tools were used in this process, with an emphasis on those of the digital universe for communicating and disseminating their political activities. This is a movement that is still barely visible, although we could be on the threshold of a brand new time, not only for the Kaingang but also for indigenous people throughout the country.

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