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Countercolonial autonomies against the Capitalocene in Amazonia: the Lower Tapajós Indigenous movement

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Introduction

We see the indigenous movement on the Lower Tapajós as a form of countercolonial autonomy in the face of the Capitalocene. This movement comprises 20,000 people belonging to 14 groups (see Vaz, 2010; Peixoto; Arenz; Figueiredo, 2013; Ioris, 2014; Lima, 2015; Peixoto, 2017; Pereira, 2018; Zuker, 2022). These people only became recognized as fully human through the 1988 Constitution which extended to them a specific set of "differentiated" rights to education, health, and territory. The resistance on which the Lower Tapajós indigenous movement is based can be traced back to the origins of mercantile capitalism and colonialism in the region from the sixteenth century onwards. This contradicts colonialist claims that indigenous peoples on the Lower Tapajós "disappeared" centuries ago (Harris, 2010, p.36). Indigenous peoples are still here despite having lived through the "end of the world" twice: with the beginning of the Capitalocene in the sixteenth century, and with the ongoing end of the modern world (Krenak, 2020).

Bispo dos Santos (2015) uses "countercolonisation" to refer to native peoples' defence of their territories including ways of life practised within them against colonisation, which he understands as all ethnocentric processes of invasion, expropriation, ethnocide, subjugation and even replacement of one culture by another. We use "countercolonisation" rather than "decolonisation" because the former has a sense of resistance, confrontation and struggle. De--colonisation implies that colonisation is something that can be undone, which is obviously impossible. Colonisation is a process that, in the Amazon and other parts of Latin America, has never ended, from 1500 to the present day. The only difference is that it became internal colonialism after independence (Casanova, 1965). Hence, it makes more sense to talk about being against colonisation than undoing it.

We understand "countercolonial autonomy" as autonomous family farming centred on manioc (*Manihot esculenta*), practices of self-recognition and self-

governance, and in indigenous cosmovision, in the presence of enchanted, non-human beings who inhabit the waters and forests. The families who live in the territories have taken as their carbohydrate staple an "escape crop," manioc, a tuberous root of little interest to the state and/or capital (Roman; Westengen, 2022). In terms of self-organisation, the "umbrella" organisation for the indigenous peoples of the Lower Tapajós – the Tapajós and Arapiuns Indigenous Council (Cita) – is significant, along with, the councils of the region's indigenous territories and associations. Together they demand territorial recognition using innovative grassroots practices such as autodemaraction (Vega et al., 2022). They resist the "coloniality of knowledge" (Quijano, 2007), maintaining indigenous culture by continuing native practices, such as the use of animal teeth and feathers as protection, body painting and shamanic rituals.

Colonialism is a constitutive and specific element of the global pattern of capitalist power, and deeply embedded in the structures and practices of the Capitalocene. The racialised classification of global populations has been a cornerstone of this configuration of power. The conception of the modern/colonial world system as a racialized matrix of power emphasises the ways in which colonialism and capitalism intertwine and reinforce each other (Quijano, 2000). This matrix of domination is constituted by the systematic control of labour, sex, subjectivity and authority, and these structures of domination are interconnected and articulated globally by Eurocentric political, economic, social and cultural institutions. A key aspect is the "Eurocentric rationality" of the epistemological structures that have historically been used to justify European domination over other cultures and to marginalise alternative forms of knowledge (Cusicanqui, 1987).

We adopt the term Capitalocene in response to the call for this special issue entitled "Amazonia against the Anthropocene", because we consider the beginning of capitalism in the colonisation of the Americas after 1500 to herald the beginning of the Anthropocene (Moore, 2015; 2016; Patel; Moore, 2018; Lewis; Maslin, 2015). For Fraser (2022), Moore (2015; 2016), and other scholars, the capitalist frontiers that have expanded around the world through imperialism, colonisation and globalisation must be seen as cultural and territorial projects to make possible the expropriation of unpaid labour/energy of "women, nature and colonies" (Mies 2022). Working alongside the direct *exploitation* of workers for surplus value in commodity production, *expropriation* refers to extra-economic ways of pressing land, resources, labour and energy into the service of capital accumulation. It is a zone of incredible violence and cultural domination. The Amazonian Capitalocene has then always been characterised more by expropriation, by sheer plunder, than by exploitation of paid labour, from mercantilist capitalism of the early colonial period to military dictatorship, which saw the consolidation of the modern state and the entry of industrial capital into the region.

We focus on the Tupinambá people of the lower Tapajós. The first author is Tupinambá and is coordinator of the Tupinambá Indigenous Council of the Lower Tapajós Amazon (Citupi), a socio-political organisation that represents 27 villages on the left bank of the Tapajós River, around 4,000 people. Recognition of identities and territories are two fundamental objectives and helping people find the courage to "assume" an indigenous identity, reflecting similar processes that have taken place in the Brazilian Northeast.

One of the obstacles to the realisation of countercolonial autonomies by the indigenous movement in the Lower Tapajós is the conflict with those who do not self-recognise as indigenous, even when their ancestry would permit this (Vaz, 2010; Lima, 2015). This situation is exacerbated by the differential recognition that the Brazilian state gives to different categories of identity: indigenous peoples have rights differentiated from those of non-indigenous people. Therefore, in the same territory, those who do not recognise themselves as indigenous end up not benefiting from policies aimed at indigenous people (Fraser, 2018, Vega et al., 2022). We advance a new approach to recognition – the anthropological universalism of forest peoples – which emphasises the importance of recognising human personhood as a whole, providing a basis for ethical and political critique that transcends identity categories. This can help move beyond the divisive discourse of identity politics by promoting a more universal understanding of recognition. But rather than a Eurocentric universality, we draw on the idea of "insurgent universality" emanating from the periphery such as the universalisation of *Liberté, égalité, fraternité* by the Haitian Revolution (Buck-Morss, 2009; Toomba, 2019). By emphasising collective action of marginalised forest communities, insurgent universality offers a way to build a more inclusive and just society that recognises the universal humanity of all people.

This paper is organised into five sections, including this introduction. Section two examines how indigenous people have resisted the Capitalocene during colonial and modern periods. The third section focuses on the forms of resistance of the Tupinambá and other indigenous peoples of the lower Tapajós, taking a look at personal involvement in resistance by the first author. Section four discusses solutions to the problems caused by excessively identitarian conceptions of recognition, which are causing conflicts between "indigenous" and "non-indigenous" peoples in Brazilian Amazonia, looking at four possibilities to resolve the situation. The fifth and final section looks at the future of indigenous resistance in the region.

Resisting the Capitalocene on the Lower Tapajós

Throughout the different phases of colonisation making up the Capitalocene on the Lower Tapajós, from the missions to the military dictatorship, in addition to physical violence, indigenous peoples suffered epistemic and ontological violence. This consisted of the systematic repression of beliefs, ideas, images, symbols that did not serve colonial domination, as well as forms of knowing,

being and knowledge production. At the same time, colonial (i.e. Catholic) beliefs and images related to the supernatural were imposed (Cusicanqui, 1987; Quijano, 2007). Forest people were constructed as objects, and not subjects, they are in fact placed outside of humanity, "in the zone of non-being" as Fanon (2008) put it.

One aspect is the denial of indigeneity by colonisers, scholars and the state (and by other "non-indigenous" forest peoples), which has the effect, intentional or not, of helping to make colonial and scientific knowledge hegemonic, as well as denying other worldviews, including indigenous knowledge, and denying the existence of the non-human beings of the forests and waters. This is visible in the historical record of the declarations of "extinct" native peoples in the Lower Tapajós region and in the contemporary post-Constitution period, reflected in the denial of the rights to indigenous peoples and claims that they are "false Indians".

Resisting colonisation on the Lower Tapajós (ca. 1600-1950)

The Lower Tapajós was colonised by at least two groups of Europeans, traders and Jesuits, each using forced indigenous labour to extract forest products and for agricultural production during this initial period. In the sixteenth century, the Lower Tapajós was inhabited by the Tapajó, Arapiun, Tupinambá, Corariense, Iruri, Borari, Maytapu and Mawe peoples (Nimuendajú, 1948; Reis, 1979; Menendez, 1992; Ioris, 2014). In 1740, the Jesuit mission known as Santo Inácio, or Tupinambá, was founded where the village of Boim is today, on the left bank of the Tapajós River, about 80 kilometres as the crow flies from the present-day city of Santarém. The mission referred to the Tupinambá people who inhabited the region at the time. At the time, the Tupinambá were an ethnic group present on much of the east coast of Brazil, and in other regions, including the Tapajós/Madeira region. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Jesuits had become so strong and autonomous that European monarchs were alarmed by this quasi-state formation concealed behind religion. This resulted in the Jesuits being expelled from the region in 1759.

The Portuguese state then instituted a more direct colonialism called the "Directorate". A policy devised by Francisco Furtado in 1755 and influenced by the Iberian Enlightenment, it came into force in 1758. The directorate created an indigenous elite to run villages alongside a director; daily life was secularised and marriage between settlers and indigenous people was promoted as a form of domination (Harris, 2010, p.106). The aim was to bring the indigenous peoples under secular control, "replacing" the slave system by incorporating Christianised natives into the colonial structure, making them subjects of the crown (Little, 2001, p.21). Francisco Furtado had travelled extensively in the Amazon and had a good idea of what worked under the Jesuits' "missionary-mercantile complex" (Harris, 2010, p.107). Policies included a ban on speaking native languages (including *nheengatu*, a language that had emerged from Tupi

during the initial period of colonisation), forced labour and miscegenation (a population control strategy).

This situation lasted until 1799 when the Directorate was abolished, having failed to achieve its aims and caused the death of many natives, a decline of around 39 per cent of the population (Parker, 1985 cited in Ioris, 2014, p.71). This population decline had allowed the Munduruku people expand from the Upper to the Lower Tapajós and, in 1773, they attacked the fortress of Santarém. This led to the dominance of the Munduruku in the region, who then terrorised both the colonisers and other indigenous peoples (ibidem, p.71-2).

Brazil became independent in 1822, and soon after a great insurrection called the Cabanagem (1835-1840) took place in the Amazon region in the states of Pará and Amazonas (Harris, 2010). The protagonists were indigenous people, blacks and mestizos, men, women and children that rebelled against the imperial forces in the period 1835-1840 (Ioris, 2014). This conflict deeply affected the region and led to strong repression, with many natives killed in the confrontation between the Cabanos and the Portuguese (Vaz, 2010).

According to Moreira Neto (1988), two distinct types of indigenous peoples emerged from the colonial process. The first "tribal Indians", were those who maintained an autonomous social structure, spoke their own language and held their own territory. These groups were often located far from the lower reaches of the main river channels having successfully fled the Europeans. The second type was those who had been captured by settlers or Jesuits and forcibly settled in villages. They were called "tapuios", described as "detribalised and deculturated Indians" who had lost their ethnic identity (Moreira Neto, 1988, p.16, p.46, cited in Little, 2001). Certainly, the Tupinambá and other groups inhabiting the Lower Tapajós region would belong to this second group from Moreira Neto's perspective. Yet what is entirely missing from his depiction of this second group is indigenous agency, rather they are seen as passive victims of the colonial process.

It has been common for researchers, starting with Nimuendajú, to announce the "extinction" of the indigenous peoples of the Lower Tapajós (Nimuendajú, 1948 cited in Lima, 2015). Ideas of extinction persist in contemporary literature about this period. Harris (2010, p.36, our emphasis), for example, writes:

> At first, the missions were the main kind of settlements along the rivers. Typically built on bluffs along the river, missionaries and *cunhamenas* forced Indians to participate in colonial life, often at some distance from their homeland. By the late seventeenth century, many Amerindian nations who had peopled the banks of the Amazon River – such as the Tupinamba, Tapajos and Conduris – *had disappeared*.

We shouldn't take the pronouncements of colonisers (including Nimuendajú) about the "disappearance" of peoples like the Tupinambá as fact, not least because such pronouncements are part of the very apparatus of modernity/

coloniality through which Amazonian peoples are subject to expropriation by the capitalist state. Yet facing colonisation, catechisation and the end of their world as they knew it, is not the same as ceasing to be. The problem with the historicist approach is that it attributes too much objectivity to colonial sources and erases indigenous agency. The pronouncements of colonial observers about the disappearance of certain groups may actually point to their transformation into a position of resistance after catechisation. The Tupinambá prefer the term "resistant" indigenous peoples to "resurgent" indigenous peoples (Zuker, 2022, p.32), because "we have always been indigenous" (see Zuker, 2022, p.29-30).

Resisting expropriation by the modern capitalist state (1950-)

Perhaps the most important period in galvanising indigenous resistance on the Lower Tapajós was the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1985), when the Amazon was subjected to "integration" policies by the military. The Tapajós National Forest (Flona) was created on the right bank of the Tapajós River near its mouth by the state through Decree n.73.684 in 1974 with the central aim of promoting industrial logging (Ioris, 2014). Prior to becoming a conservation unit, the area was inhabited by indigenous peoples, many of whom suffered the genocidal policies described above since colonisation. These people were disregarded in the processes of creating and implementing the Flona Tapajós.

On the left bank of the Tapajós River – part of which is Tupinambá territory – violent expropriation by capital centred on claims by two logging companies, Amazonex Exportadora and Santa Isabel Agroflorestal to an area of 200,000 hectares. The residents became aware of the situation in 1978, when the National Institute for Colonisation and Agrarian Reform (Incra) went to measure the land to hand it over to the owners of the companies in São Paulo (Oliveira, 2012). These events mobilised the struggle for land rights leading to the creation of the Resex Tapajós-Arapiuns in 1998. The loggers and farmers who had already occupied the area were removed. Yet pressure from logging companies continues on the upper Arapiuns River, in the Nova Olinda and Mamuru regions, to the west of the Resex Tapajós-Arapiuns and to the south of the Lago Grande Agro-Extractivist Settlement Project (PAE). In the region, several State Agro-Extractivist Settlement Projects (Paex) were created as a way of making logging viable through concessions (contracts between residents and loggers) brokered by the state of Pará.

This struggle against expropriation by capital facilitated by the state saw the full flowering of the indigenous movement on the Lower Tapajós in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, which has been intensifying over the last 20 years. The beginnings of this movement lie in the Munduruku struggle for the demarcation of the Takuara and Bragança-Marituba Indigenous Lands (TI), territories that overlap with the Flona Tapajós (Ioris, 2014). This struggle was provoked by the creation of the Flona in 1974, which culminated in an attempt by the Brazilian state to forcibly remove the natives who lived in the

area that became part of the conservation unit, as well as the nonrecognition of the social organisation and identity of the communities, the categorisation of the populations as "traditional", as a way for the state to allow them to remain within the conservation unit. Against this, the indigenous peoples' movement gave rise to the process of reclaiming indigenous identities, which began in 1998 among the natives of Takuara, Marituba and Bragança (Ioris, 2014, p.241).

Although the creation of the Flona and Resex galvanised the indigenous movement, it also had the unfortunate side effect of creating conflicts between neighbouring indigenous and non-indigenous communities (Vaz, 2010). One of the fundamental reasons for this lies in the differentiated rights conferred on indigenous peoples that do not include non-indigenous people in the 1988 Constitution. This is therefore a problem associated with the dynamics of recognition. We deal with this in section four. The following section discusses how the indigenous peoples of the Lower Tapajós are resisting the Capitalocene.

Countercolonial autonomies on the Lower Tapajós

The previous section showed how the Lower Tapajós has been constituted as a zone of expropriation of the unpaid labour of nature and forest peoples through extractivist economies, from the early forced collection of forest products to modern industrial extractivisms: legal and illegal (e.g. logging, gold mining, industrial agriculture, land grabbing). However, the Capitalocene is something that has expanded unevenly along different types of Amazonian frontier across time and space, rather than a phenomenon that is evenly distributed. For many indigenous and traditional peoples in Latin America, including the peoples of the lower Tapajós, the Capitalocene manifests itself today mainly as a zone of expropriation (plunder) rather than exploitation (paid labour).

The Capitalocene began in the lower Tapajós, as in much of the Amazon, with the entry of merchant capital into the region, combined with the Jesuit missions after 1500. While the Jesuits – and, much later, modernisation projects – tried to turn indigenous and traditional peoples into exploitable labour, it is the violent appropriation of people's unpaid labour, especially women's, together with the labour of Amazonian nature, that constitutes the particular character of the Amazonian Capitalocene. So today, refusing to become exploitable labour and fighting against industrial resource extraction is fighting against the Capitalocene. Resistant indigenous peoples are reaffirming their indigeneity and fighting for territory, building forms of autonomy against the Capitalocene.

The indigenous movement of the Lower Tapajós is an example of resistance to modernity/coloniality and the Capitalocene, and has been the subject of a growing number of doctoral theses. A key refence is Vaz (2010). From Pinhel, on the Tapajós River, an indigenous member of the Maytapu people, he is a signal activist of the movement in the region. Peixoto (2017) and Garcia (2018) reveal the conflict between the Maró indigenous people and the advance of the economic frontier among loggers in the Nova Olinda Gleba. Lima (2015)

studied the Arapiun, Jaraqui and Tapajó peoples in the Cobra Grande Territory, on the Arapiuns river, which overlaps with the PAE Lago Grande occupied by *ribeirinhos*, showing indigenous recognition can cause contemporary conflicts in the region between indigenous and traditional peoples. Pereira (2018), conducted an ethnography of Borari territory, Alter do Chão, a tourist village near the city of Santarém, where property speculation predates on indigenous territories. The most recent is by Zuker (2022), who presents an ethnography of the resistance of indigenous peoples (mainly Tupinambá) against the capitalist frontier.

Our contribution to this literature is to investigate the indigenous movement of the Lower Tapajós as a form of countercolonial autonomy. The rest of this section deals with the material and political dimensions of countercolonial autonomy, and ends with a personal story from the first author.

The material and cosmological basis of countercolonial autonomy

Forests, rivers and streams are central to Tupinambá culture, because it is from Mother Earth that what heals and feeds them comes: fish, game, plants, fruits, seeds, herbs that are present in the spiritual rites linked to native medicine. The Tupinambá people, who live on the left bank of the Tapajós River, are stewards of the forest, the river and the land, which provide a great diversity of products that are used in food and in the production of traditional medicines. In the river, there are the fishing spots, the dwellings of the enchanted, whilst on the land there are the dwellings, the manioc flour processing huts, and the gardens, which are managed all year round. Hunting also takes place within the territory, both during the day and at night, and various techniques are used to capture small animals. Large animals are hunted in the forest with rifles. In the interior of the territory there are areas where certain species are hunted seasonally, but these areas are very far from the villages, about 30 kilometres from the riverbank. In the summer animals go down to look for water in the lakes and streams, and end up being captured by the hunters. The culture has a lot to do with the river and the forest and the animals that inhabit them, the enchanted, who are non-human "friends and enemies" that inhabit the territories. In this way, they we reaffirm the epistemologies and ontologies of our their ancestors, including shamanism and relationships with other than human beings.

The indigenous peoples and their territories on the Lower Tapajós are similar in terms of their socio-political formation, customs, predominant economic activities and the characteristics of the landscape in which they are located. Most families practise swidden cultivation of manioc (*Manihot esculenta*) (Chaves et al., 2018), they also produce food in homegardens and gather it from *capoeiras*. Plants hold wide variety of uses, such as medicinal, handicraft, house building, firewood, attracting game, etc.

We understand manioc as central to countercolonial autonomy because it is an "escape crop" (Scott, 2009, p.197-205). Writing about Southeast Asia, for Scott, swidden is an escape in itself, since it is mobile and less likely

to be captured by the state or invaders. Escape crops themselves are similar to those with characteristics that facilitate evasion of expropriation by the state: adaptation to marginal environments, staggered maturation, comparatively low labour requirements, rapid growth, easily hidden, requiring little care, of little value per unit of weight and volume, and growing below ground. Manioc fulfils these requirements, which is why Scott calls it the "champion escape crop" of the Americas. One could add that bitter manioc, more common in the Amazon, is even more interesting as an escape crop due to the specialist knowledge needed for processing to remove the cyanide and make it consumable.

Roman and Westegen (2022) contend that manioc is an escape crop among the *quilombolas* of the Brazilian Amazon. They show that while manioc was important to the colonial project by providing calories for labour, it has been equally important in the resistance of these groups. In the lower Tapajós, manioc cultivation, including working groups and community processing, also seems to foster a strong sense of collectivity (Chaves et al., 2018). As in Roman and Westegen's case among the *quilombolas*, due to the difficulties of standardisation, manioc is a "reluctant commodity".

Countercolonial autonomy by self-organisation

On the lower Tapajós, different organisations emerged during the 1980s and 1990s in the struggle for land rights. The Association of Agro- Extractivist and Indigenous Residents of the Tapajós (Ampravat) was created in 1994 by community members from Vista Alegre do Muratuba and Vila do Amorim, localities that lie within the Tupinambá territory. Ampravat and other inter-community associations from that period were central to the struggle for the creation of the Resex Tapajós-Arapiuns in 1998. The Tapajós and Arapiuns Indigenous Council (Cita) was created in 2000 with the aim of strengthening the indigenous movement in the region, based on social, territorial and political organisation.

The Tupinambá Indigenous Council (Citupi) was created in 2012 and represents the 27 villages of the Tupinambá territory. It has recently carried out an autodemarcation of the territory and developed guidelines for differentiated indigenous school education. A growing focus on health has included concerns about mercury exposure in the Tapajós basin as a result of illegal mining. Young people and women have been fundamental to the struggle. At regional and national level, the movement articulates with the Coordination of Indigenous Organisations of the Brazilian Amazon (Coiab), and the National Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil (Apib).

In order to move forward with the demand for demarcation of the territory, in 2022 Citupi organised a working group: Identity, Resistance and Autodemarcation of the Tupinambá Territory, made up of leaders from the territory, indigenous academics and NGO partners. In 2023, the National Indian Foundation (Funai) was given a document containing information on

the Tupinambá and their territory, in support of demands for demarcation (SEI Process n.08600.001083/2019-87), with a request to begin the process of Identification and Delimitation of the Tupinambá Indigenous Land of the lower Tapajós.

The struggle of the Tupinambá people for their territory is a way of life, a cosmovision, identity, a countercolonial autonomy, and a claim for historical reparation in the face of genocide. Resistance against colonisation is a process of confrontation, often, contradictorily, with the people of the territory themselves. Some people who live in the territory and have native ancestry have yet to align themselves with indigenous struggle.

A personal story of resistance

This section is based on the first author's experience and the oral histories of her family members. Rather than submit to the culture of the colonisers, the survival strategy of various native groups who lived on the banks of the Tapajós River was to migrate into the forest, following the smaller rivers or streams. These stories are told by the elders who heard them from their ancestors. The first author's father, Manuel Ferreira Chaves, now 67, says that when he was a child, he heard stories from his grandparents about their ancestors (parents, grandparents and family) hiding in a "hilly area" in the forest at the time of the war. Only years later did they return to the banks of the larger rivers. The first author's two great-grandmothers lived until very recently with little interference from European culture, which made it possible to maintain a strong relationship with the forest and ancestral knowledge. They lived at the head of a stream in the middle of the forest. One of her great-grandmothers tells us that she often wore only a skirt and walked around with her breasts uncovered, while her great-grandfather wore only a loincloth on the front of his body, with his buttocks uncovered. Because of this, they were considered inferior to other people who were already more immersed in the coloniser's culture. However, we maintain that this is precisely an example of countercolonial autonomy. The first author's ancestors refused European dress and thus resisted the seductive attraction/assimilation of the coloniser's gaze. Thus, they refused this aspect of coloniality and remained as separate or autonomous from the colonial economy as they could. They collaborated far less than other people or groups who were heavily involved in the extractive (e.g. rubber) economies.

The Tupinambá suffered the processes of identity denial when the state and academia said that "there are no Indians here". It's important to say that there was no benefit in openly identifying as indigenous in this context. For many years, denying their origin was also a survival strategy. In order to provide a greater understanding of what it means to be a resistant indigenous person in the lower Tapajós, we now present a narrative form of the first author of this paper, in which she explains her process of becoming aware of her indigenous identity.

> Deep down, I've never doubted my origins. Our relationship with the land, the forests and the waters has always been central to our culture. The enchanted, non-human beings who inhabit the waters and forests, part of our history, are both "protectors" and "enemies" in this coexistence. There's also the phenotype I carry, which has often led others (non-natives) to call me *índia*. However, it was only in 2014 that I became closer to the indigenous movement here on the lower Tapajós. This approach was also influenced by conversations with indigenous intellectuals in the state of Amazonas, who were at university in that state, such as João Paulo Lima Barreto and Dagoberto Lima Azevedo, indigenous anthropologists from the Tukano people, among others. That same year I took part in the first caravan in defence of the Tapajós and against the construction of the hydroelectric dam in São Luís do Tapajós. There I had contact with the Munduruku people from the Upper and Middle Tapajós and some indigenous leaders from the Lower Tapajós. Since then, I've taken a different view of the indigenous issue.
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> It was only at the end of 2016 that I began to be counted as indigenous by the Brazilian nation-state, as part of the census, in the register of people who recognise themselves as indigenous, for the village of São Pedro do Tapajós, Tupinambá people, where my grandparents and maternal uncles live, and I was able to access the rights guaranteed to indigenous peoples. In this sense, my admission to the Ppgas/UNB in March 2019 is part of this process of struggle and resistance by indigenous peoples and my commitment to my people. I am indigenous, I was born in Surucuá, where I still live today, on the left bank of the Tapajós River, Tupinambá Territory. It was on this journey that I met many leaders who inspire me to this day, and I also got a taste for the struggle for social justice. Since the end of 2019, when I was more present in the territory, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I have taken on greater responsibilities in this struggle. In 2020, I was at the forefront of the process of admitting Surucuá as an indigenous locality recognised by the state. That's when I took on the role of leader, along with two other women, Zuila Ferreira Chaves and Aldenira Chaves de Sousa, my blood relatives. On 30 May 2021, I became coordinator of the Tupinambá Indigenous Council of the Lower Tapajós (Citupi).

Several questions emerge from this narrative. Consistent with the accounts of other Tupinambá and other actors in the indigenous movement in the lower Tapajós, Raquel always knew she was indigenous, but it was only after a series of events that she felt confident enough to express this publicly and formally register as indigenous with the Brazilian state. She sees the resistance of the Tupinambá as a struggle and sees her entry into the University of Brasilia (UnB) and her doctoral studies in Anthropology as part of this struggle.

One of the most significant problems for the indigenous movement are the conflicts between indigenous and non-indigenous people, mainly around the realisation of indigenous identity that Raquel describes. Why are these conflicts happening and what can be done to resolve them? We deal with this in the next section.

Recognition: from identity politics to insurgent anthropological universalism

A significant impediment to effective resistance and the realisation of countercolonial autonomy in the face of the Capitalocene on the Lower Tapajós are the conflicts between indigenous and non-indigenous people living in the same territory. A central factor in causing conflicts is the denial and disavowal of indigenous identity, a result of the colonial process. The native was long considered inferior and savage, which contributed to the fact that by the end of the 20th century people refused to self-recognise as indigenous. Another issue to be considered for the Lower Tapajós is the fact that rights to live in the Flona Tapajós after its creation, and the formation of the Resex Tapajós-Arapiuns (1998) were first articulated in relation to the legal figure of traditional population, which emerged before the legal figure of indigenous peoples. With the emergence of indigenous peoples in the region from the late 1990s onwards, there was tension over these two legal categories and conflicts arose. A central problem is that indigenous people have differentiated territorial rights guaranteed by the 1988 Federal Constitution, whilst non-indigenous people do not. Indigenous lands (TI) give permanent and inalienable possession of land, whilst sustainable use conservation units (e.g. Resex) are based on legal document called a concession of the real rights of use (Cdru), often with limited validity, needing to be renewed periodically. In this section, we explore four lines of thought in search of a way through this imbroglio: *i*) a new approach to universal recognition, *ii*) the figure of the insurgent universal, *iii*) the idea of "traditionally occupied territories" and *iv)* the Common-Use Territory. But first, let's talk about the situation we're facing.

There seems to be a basic pattern that reappears frequently throughout the Brazilian Amazon. A community or communities recognise themselves as indigenous and demand their rights from the state. Neighbouring communities, often related as kin, are worried that they might be evicted from their land, or that their children will be forced to attend an indigenous school, for example. Rumours circulate and conflicts begin even between communities/people who, before had harmonious relations (see examples in Vaz 2010; Lima 2015; Fraser 2018; Zuker 2022). In several communities, where the "enemy" used to be migrants from the south of Brazil, or large logging companies, the enemy has now become the indigenous or non-indigenous neighbour (Vaz, 2010, p.368). All while the real enemies, such as logging companies, exploit community divisions to advance their endeavours based on accumulation by expropriation.

This situation is complex because, for the indigenous peoples of the lower Tapajós, there is often no defined or essential difference between them and the "non-indigenous" *ribeirinho* or *caboclo* populations (Zuker, 2022, p.44). This is reflected in statements made by the indigenous peoples of the Lower Tapajós about themselves. Take the example of Mr Edno: "My father is of Portuguese origin, my mother is Indian. I was born and grew up in the forest, eating game,

fish and flour. I'm Indian, aren't I?" (ibidem, p.57). Or the statement made by the late Mrs Firmina Carvalho dos Santos: "My father was the son of an Indian, the son of a Munduruku Indian, and my mother was the daughter of a Portuguese," but "we really are Indians" (Vaz, 2010, p.113). Or simply "Indians like us, all mixed up" as a Munduruku tour guide put it (Zuker, 2022, p.44, p.58).

But this lack of definite distinction is also reflected in statements made by the indigenous peoples of the Lower Tapajós about their non-indigenous neighbours (i.e. people who have not publicly affirmed their indigeneity). One indigenous man, Pedrinho, mentioned those he considered to be "our enemies," neighbours who refused to assume indigenous identity and accused those who did of being "false Indians". When asked who his enemies were, Pedrinho replied, "Boy, you look at them, and they're more Indian than us. All little Indians, they live in the bush" (Zuker, 2022, p.90).

Another factor complicating a simple indigenous/non-indigenous distinction is the possibility that currently "non-indigenous" people assume indigenous identity in the future. This is to say that it is possible that part of the "non-indigenous" population is indigenous, yet repress or disavow this fact, but may at some point in the future identify as indigenous. This is evident in another example from Zuker (2022, p.90): "Along the way, Pedrinho listed the communities, explaining which had already declared themselves indigenous and which had not... This one isn't indigenous yet," he said. "This one will be [soon]".

The work of Martinican psychiatrist Frantz Fanon demonstrated the negative effects of colonialism on the psychology of the colonised (Fanon, 2008; 2020). On the Lower Tapajós, the effects of colonialism at the level of subjectivity are described by Sister Emanuela (a Kumaruara indigenous woman and member of the indigenous consciousness group - GCI) "Whitening makes the native want to be white and reject the native as ugly, lazy, black, false, a traitor. But little by little I'm talking about this whitening, which is ethnic cultural death. Death that kills us inside. People remain alive as slaves" (Peixoto, 2017, p1) Sister Emanuela's narrative uses the idea of 'whitening' to capture the corrosive effects of European colonial notions of racial hierarchy on the self-understanding of Amazonian peoples, causing them, according to her, to reject themselves and their culture.

A universal approach to recognition

This problem of conflict between indigenous and non-indigenous forest peoples is partly caused by the way in which recognition is linked to identity categories in the Brazilian constitution and legislation. One possible way around this is to theorize recognition in relation to the multiple meanings of the term "recognition" for human life. Ikäheimo (2022) elaborates an anthropologically universal theory of recognition that emphasises the importance the term for human life as a whole and not just for specific identity categories. This approach

understands that individual and collective identities are shaped by recognition, but also acknowledges that all human beings share a common humanity, or "personhood".

By focusing on this commonality, a universal recognition of forest-dwelling peoples can provide the basis for ethical and political critiques that transcend the various identity categories ("indigenous", "*ribeirinho*", "*caboclo*", "*beiradeiro*", "*quilombola*" etc.). One advantage of this approach is that it detaches recognition theory from identity politics, which has become increasingly divisive in recent years. Instead, it emphasises the importance of recognition for all human beings living forest lifeways and livelihoods, regardless of their individual or collective identities.

This means focusing on what is shared by forest peoples, without denying the differences. What is shared by all forest peoples are forms of territoriality that centre on the collective management of natural resources, including livelihoods that revolve around small-scale manioc farming, fishing, the extraction of forest products and a land tenure legitimised by collective histories of family or group occupation rather than private ownership and, finally, relationships with other-than-human beings (Almeida, 2006; Affonso et al., 2024).

Insurgent universality

How does this conceptualisation of "anthropologically universal" recognition connect to the forms of resistance to the Capitalocene by forest peoples? Perhaps it can be found in existing practices of so-called "insurgent universality" among subaltern peoples, such as the indigenous peoples of the lower Tapajós. The concept of insurgent universality is consistent with countercolonial autonomy, in that it seeks to theorise on the basis of subaltern struggles (McGowan, 2020; Tomba, 2019; Wilson, 2022; 2023; Buck-Morss, 2009). Insurgent universality challenges traditional universalism as a top-down imposition from the dominant colonial powers onto the marginalized, which in this case would be the universalism of *homo economicus* and industrial extractivism (cattle, soy, logging, mining etc). Rather, insurgent universalism comes from below, from the struggles of oppressed communities, in particular the struggle to for the recognition of collective territory enabling the continuation of manioc farming, fishing, homegardening, hunting and so forth. The need for collective land or territory precisely transcends identity because it is a universal need for all Amazonian forest peoples, regardless of their identity.

We understand the indigenous movement in the Lower Tapajós as a manifestation of insurgent universality realised in confrontation with industrial capital: the need to demarcate land to maintain lifeways and livelihoods in the face of the existential threat of expropriation. This universal humanity is visible precisely at the frontiers where mercantile or extractive capital operates, and therefore universality can be understood not by subsuming facts within comprehensive systems or homogenising installations, but by attending to the

periphery of the world-system. By emphasising collective action and the struggles of marginalised communities, insurgent universality offers a way to build a more inclusive and just society that recognises the universal humanity of all people.

Traditionally occupied lands

Taken together, the two previous subsections show that the Amazonian insurgent universal is orientated towards the guarantee of territory. Here, Alfredo Wagner Berno de Almeida's notion of "traditionally occupied lands" is useful to captures the diversity of forms of collective existence, territoriality and use of natural resources in a single phrase, bringing to light what is universal for all the peoples of the Amazon rainforest. This relates to the term "traditional peoples and communities", which is defined as "culturally differentiated groups who recognise themselves as such, who have their own forms of social organisation, who occupy and use territories and natural resources as a condition for their cultural, social, religious, ancestral and economic reproduction, using knowledge, innovations and practices generated and transmitted by tradition" (Almeida 2006, p.27-8). This definition is contained in Decree n.6.040 of 2007, and so exists in law, but has yet to be put into practice. However, it provides a universal category into which all Amazonian peoples fit, and so points to a form of insurgent universality that we believe could help resolve conflicts between different groups in the Amazon.

Common-use territory

An innovative new territorial form, the "Common-Use Territory" (TUC) shows how a traditionally occupied land could be actualized. The Manicoré River TUC emerged from a bottom-up women-led struggle for the recognition of territorial rights and access to public policies by Caarim, the Manicoré River Agro-Extractivist Association (IEB, 2022), representing 16 communities located within its boundaries. This struggle began in 2006 and culminated in the creation of this new territorial form in 2022. The importance of the Manicoré TUC is enormous: it grants collective land use rights (CDRU) to an area of 390,000 hectares. The Manicoré River TUC is innovative from an institutional point of view because it is managed by a community-based association (Caarim) and not by state institutions, which is common practice in protected areas in Brazil. The TUC admits both indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants, resolving one of the main sources of conflict that "identity exclusive" territories can cause, effectively realising Almeida's "traditionally occupied land" for all forest peoples.

The TUC therefore is universal in that it transcends issues related to identity-based protected areas by focusing on what is shared by all Amazonian peoples, the common use of land for lifeways and livelihoods. It therefore offers a new type of territory that unifies all forest citizens through its concept of forest commons, in which traditional livelihoods practised collectively and shared by all forest peoples can continue in perpetuity. More research is needed into whether this new form of Amazonian territoriality could include a form of universalism

that could unite disparate Amazonian peoples. The TUC model, in emphasizing common-use of territory, could be a more democratic alternative to the Resex or RDS that often merely facilitate capital's entrance, e.g. through forest concessions. Thus the TUC is more consonant with neighbouring indigenous lands also founded on the common-use of territory..

The future of resistance to the Capitalocene in the Lower Tapajós

The Capitalocene manifests through the relentless expropriation of industrial extractivism. In addition to logging in the Resex Tapajós-Arapiuns and the Flona Tapajós, in the region of the Arapiuns and Maró rivers, pressure for timber extraction remains strong, along with the forestry concessions in the Gleba Nova Olinda region. Agribusiness has established industrial monocultures on often illegally acquired land across the Santarem Plateau, causing deforestation and contamination of soil, water and people by agrochemicals. In Alter do Chão – Borari territory – the issue is property pressure due to tourism. In the PAE Lago Grande region, the issue is mining, mainly bauxite. A company operating in the Juruti region is currently requesting 55% of the territory of the PAE Lago Grande for mining. This region is also under pressure from logging. In addition to industrial extractivism, other aspects of capitalist modernity are unfolding. From the expansion of private property to the effects of money, consumerism, Western lifestyles etc. All continues on the Tapajós.

If the land is threatened by industrial logging and agriculture, the waterways are poisoned with mercury and threatened by dams and the Ferrogrão. A major concern is exposure to mercury, which affects the peoples of the Tapajós. This contamination is caused by illegal mining. The peoples of the Tapajós have eaten fish all their lives, but they don't want to die. Should the peoples of the Tapajós have to stop eating fish? Or is the state actually willing to directly combat illegal mining, deforestation and all those activities linked to mining that are the root of the problem? In practice, the people of the river end up paying the price with their health and lives. This is environmental racism: some human lives and ways of life are worth more than others.

We understand that the pressures will increase and there will only be resistance if the people are organised, autonomous and strengthened. We stress the importance of strengthening grassroots organisations, modes of production, differentiated indigenous school education and forms of health care. The Tupinambá, along with other indigenous peoples, organise autonomy on various fronts. They understand the importance of producing their own food in order to be less and less dependent on industrial products sold in cities and supermarkets. Another key front is the defence of territory, which is essential because if there is no territory, there will be no quality of life, no access to income, no empowerment of women and youth and no indigenous medicine. For indigenous peoples, health is closely related to cosmovision, the sacred, the enchanted. One example of defending the territory is the auto-demarcation that

the Tupinambá have been practising. This is becoming even more necessary in the face of pressure from big business, which is only going to increase. The Lower Tapajós is a place of conflict, but also of historical resistance, as events like the Cabanagem and struggles throughout history have shown.

This article has understood the indigenous movement on the Lower Tapajós as a form of countercolonial autonomy, with economic, political and cultural dimensions. We have shown how indigenous people have resisted the Capitalocene from its beginnings in the mercantile capital of the colonial period to the modern state and industrial capital. A key barrier to the success of this resistance is conflict with non-indigenous people. We argue that the theorization of recognition needs to move from identity politics to an insurgent anthropological universalism to ameliorate this situation. We considered the universal land designation "traditionally occupied lands" and a new Brazilian territorial designation "Common use territory" (TUC) together as ways of transcending the division between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples by focusing on what they share the common-use of territory for lifeways and livelihoods. Thus, the future Tupinambá territory must be a space in which all peoples of the forest can continue to live and reproduce their ways of life, even those who don't recognise their indigenous ancestry.

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ABSTRACT – We understand the lower Tapajós indigenous movement as "countercolonial autonomy" against the Capitalocene, focusing in particular on the Tupinambá people. The Capitalocene in the Amazon began with mercantile capitalism in the colonial period, and intensified during the military dictatorship with the consolidation of the modern capitalist state. We conceive of countercolonial autonomy in terms of manioc cultivation, cosmovision and political self-organisation. Conflicts between indigenous and non-indigenous people jeopardize countercolonial autonomies. We explore four possibilities to address this problematic: a new universal approach to recognition; the idea of insurgent universality; the idea of traditionally occupied lands, and common-use territories. In the case of the Tupinambá territory, we argue that all forest peoples who have inhabited the territory ancestrally should have the right to remain, even if demarcated by the state as an Indigenous Land. A future Tupinambá territory should be a space where all forest peoples can continue living their own way, even those who don't self-recognise as indigenous.

KEYWORDS: Tupinambá, Recognition, Coloniality, Insurgent Universality, Common--Use Territory.

RESUMO – Entendemos o movimento indígena do Baixo Tapajós como "autonomia contracolonial" frente ao Capitaloceno, com foco no povo Tupinambá. O Capitaloceno na Amazônia começou com o capitalismo mercantil no período colonial e se intensificou durante a ditadura militar com a consolidação do Estado capitalista moderno. Concebemos a autonomia contracolonial em termos de cultivo de mandioca, cosmovisão e auto-organização política. Os conflitos entre indígenas e não indígenas prejudicam as autonomias contracoloniais. Exploramos quatro possibilidades para tratar dessa problemática: uma nova abordagem universal para o reconhecimento; a ideia de universalidade insurgente; a ideia de terras tradicionalmente ocupadas; e territórios de uso comum. No caso do território Tupinambá, argumentamos que todos os povos da floresta que habitaram o território ancestralmente devem ter o direito de permanecer, mesmo se demarcado pelo Estado como uma Terra Indígena. Um futuro território Tupinambá deve ser um espaço onde todos os povos da floresta possam continuar vivendo à sua maneira, mesmo aqueles que não se reconhecem como indígenas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Tupinambá, Reconhecimento, Colonialidade, Universalidade insurgente, Território de uso comum.

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