

## ***AMONG RELATIVES, WHO?***

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Over the last years, peoples marked by a long and violent context of expropriation have been experiencing the retaking of their traditional lands or engaging in struggles to remain in them, a moment that reaffirms their commitment to strengthen alliances with rural and urban groups, whose rights and forms of existence are also being attacked, in Brazil and worldwide.

The short film *Entre Parentes* directed by Tiago de Aragão, from Universidade Federal de Brasília – which placed second in the Pierre Verger Prize at the 31st Brazilian Meeting of Anthropology –, presents us with 30 minutes to breath. The paths travelled by the filmmaker provoke us with the history of an ongoing war that evokes places and positions. War has no middle ground and the context itself says so – the end of April 2017, one year after the impeachment of president Dilma Rousseff, which removed the first elected woman in the country’s history. The same occasion when Brasília received the 14th *Acampamento Terra Livre*, the largest collective mobilization between the indigenous peoples of Brazil and their allies.

However, just a few meters away, the Parliamentary Inquiry Commission (CPI) organized by the agriculture and livestock landowners sector of National Congress (known as *banca ruralista*), sought to approve projects contrary to the interests of indigenous peoples. Indigenous leaders the National Indigenous Foundation (Funai) and the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform (Incra), institutions that operate, respectively, in the demarcation and titling of indigenous and quilombola lands.

The tension between worlds emerge through the lens of the filmmaker, and the documentary’s scenes lead us to the intersection of the two assemblies in progress, despite differences from each other. In the National Congress, the representation of the State (modern, capitalist, western) that emanates as an enemy of indigenous peoples related to agribusiness and large landowners of large monoculture properties, whose power seeks to encompass all differences in order to suppress them; such power can only be sustained by abolishing multiplicity and replacing it with the logic of unification and universalization, as taught by Clastres (2004). The author exemplifies various types of State, with the difference between being the level of ethnocidal capacity of state apparatus. The force used by the “western” State to abolish difference when it becomes opposition. In other words, ethnocidal<sup>1</sup> practice has

1. In the chapter entitled “Ethnocide” in the book *Archeology of Violence*, Pierre Clastres questions whether those who propagate the term are effectively aligned with the constitutive meaning of the word, extracted from a historical demand whose efforts have turned to the field of knowledge of ethnology. In this sense, the author is suspicious of whether the conceptual difference between ethnocide and genocide is, in fact, involved

never seen limits, being more ethnocidal than any other society due to its economic production regime.

In this sense, this film opens up the relations of forces that are in constant dispute, and unveils the Brazilian land issue, informed by the developmental projects of the State, whose side decides who has to die. To its enemies, the provisions of law, bureaucracy, the legal system, the ordered language, and certain regimes of truth are imposed. However, in tireless movements of constant struggle, the bodies marked by history and forcibly kept outside Congress emanate the resistance of those who agreed not to die. When using their instruments of combat through their bodies that sing and dance in the presence of their deities, celebrating the inseparability of the body and the cosmos, they continued to fight against the tragic onslaught of threats and removal of rights that were achieved by the 1988 Federal Constitution.

#### *AMONG RELATIVES, WHO?*

Alliances constitute a fundamental theme in the scenes created by Tiago Aragão – from a political context of intense socio-environmental conflicts, extermination and interdiction of non-hegemonic forms of life. The effect of the images do not evoke so much of a proposal to interpret the different thoughts there, but rather the convocation of an attempt to experiment with them, and therefore with “ours”, such as in the scenes that they ask us on which side of this war we are on. As Stengers (2008) would state about experimenting with the possible, “we learn when we effectively connect and are put in check by the connection”.

Policies of usufruct and possession of the territories are consolidated through a national, liberal, ‘appropriationist’ logic; however, there are forms of life intertwined in this arena. The way of life of the Guaraní Amerindian people, for example, constantly evokes the term *retake* and this technique meets a kind of cosmopolitics, in the meaning given by Sztutman (2012) to a policy managed by humans and non-humans,

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in the manifestations that have been added to the public domain. He explains that “genocide” is a legal concept that emerged in 1946, and refers to the first manifestation registered in law of a specific type of racial-based crime, namely, the attempted extermination by the German Nazis of the European Jewish people, and that culminated in one of the greatest systematic massacres in history. The concept of “ethnocide” is formulated faced by such American experience of ethnologists, especially Robert Jaulin, referring at first to the indigenous reality of South America. In denouncing the colonial encounter as not only a meeting of bodies, but one that also establishes an unequal power relationship between cultures, marked by the otherness that pronounces the other in difference – especially a bad one. In this sense, Pierre Clastres teaches us: “If the term genocide refers to the idea of” race “and the will to exterminate a racial minority, the term ethnocide points out not to the physical destruction of men (in which case it would remain in the genocidal situation) but to the destruction of their culture. Ethnocide, therefore, is the systematic destruction of the ways of life and thinking of peoples other than those who undertake this destruction. In short, genocide kills people in their bodies, ethnocide kills them in their spirit.”

which implies a diplomacy with the different beings that populate the universe where they live, be it other peoples, animals, plants, and different domains of what we call nature. Nature is extracted from culture, just as culture is extracted from nature. There is no nature from which we make cultural constructions, so nature is not the cause of culture, states Wagner (2010).

When the cameras occupy the Brasilia's streets, they merge with the bodies wrapped in paintings, corners, bows, arrows, and cameras, whose power was forged in the sense of what Donna Haraway (1999) called powerful collectives, which are not limited to what is understood as a coherent and stable subject – associated with white, male and heterosexual beings – on which the entire agency would reside, but they comprise several individuals, materialities, and discourses. Indigenous populations resist a long history of forced “guardianship” to face powerful national and international representations, of politicians, companies, ethno-democrats, and the alliance of Peoples of the Forest does not reject technical or scientific knowledge, regardless from where it comes. What they reject is the modern political epistemology, clearly represented by the scenes of the National Congress. In contrast, these forest peoples, as the author says, have been regionally prepared for global/local interactions, or in other words, to raise new and powerful human and non-human collectives, both technological and organic, articulating a collective social entity of human beings, other organisms and other types of non-human actors. The fundamental point of Tiago Aragão's film is that, against the policy made by white men, a fearless collective entity of humans and non-humans resists. Following with the intersection between the film and Donna Haraway's thought, her ideas are stimulated: “Nature and justice, discursive objects queued up in bed, in the material world, they will become extinct or survive together”. The “defenders of the forest” are a knot in the always historical and heterogeneous nexus of the social nature from which they articulate their claims. We are all in frontier areas where new forms and new types of action and responsibility are being developed in the world. The indigenous peoples at the 14<sup>th</sup> *Acampamento Terra Livre*, also with their modern equipment, forge a practical statement that guides us, morally and epistemologically. Such statement invites a new articulation, in the terms formulated by the people of the forest. They will no longer be represented as Objects, not because they cross the line into the National Congress, to be represented in “modern” terms as Subjects, but because they form powerfully articulated collectives.

This short film thus affects us via the radical and potent showing of the different ways of doing politics. At one point, tension takes hold in one of the scenes within the Congress, which is attached to the deliberations

of the parliamentary commission of inquiry; while progressive parliamentarians try to use their little speaking time to emphatically disagree with the report produced by the commission's rapporteur. The president of the CPI and his allies restrict the speeches of others, preventing them from speaking out. At the same time – and attentive to the scenes – our ears are taken by the voices that, in resistance, echo and weave their bodies, stomping hard in the vicinity around the Congress building, fighting against violence and dissatisfied with the deliberations and the lack of representation. In tune with their allies interrupted in Congress, they hold boxes in the shape of coffins and move to the front of Congress, denouncing the State's death projects, demonstrating in favor of adequate policies for the demarcation of their lands. Within minutes, they are dispersed by the police with tear gas. The song, however, does not stop. A film to keep the flame of resistance alight, and which gives rise to the inventive ability to find paths, slide through the gaps, and not be caught, even in the face of the biggest of predators.

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