

A flight over histories: about indians and historians in Brazil and America.¹

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This article aims to outline a theoretical and ethnohistorical debate on historiographical narratives in Brazil and the U.S. when it comes to indigenous issues. In both cases, the histories of native groups changed the ways of producing knowledge about them, creating and transforming public policy. Games of complex influences guided the ways of dealing with the knowledge about inter-ethnic relations. In many cases, such knowledge served as a fulcrum for the survival of the implicated groups. Historiographical trajectories, here and there, are full of convergence, divergence, dynamism and political complexity. What we are following here are the footprints of the many views of the Indian and its centrality for the construction of concepts such as race, sovereignty, national state, territory, civilization. That said, the purpose of this article is to present a vision of the two parallel processes of construction of historical discourses about Indians and trace from there, agendas and possibilities of mutual contributions.

A flight over the United States of America

The emergence of the study field that deals with historical aspects of the United States native groups can be placed within the context of the expansion to the West in the

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nineteenth century, guided by the idea of a *Manifest Destiny* and the concurrent professionalization of disciplines such as History, Ethnology and Anthropology.²

In May 1830, during Andrew Jackson's presidency, the US Congress passed the Indian Removal Act. It determined that indigenous lands could only be purchased by the State and allowed the executive branch to negotiate with the southern groups, designated Five Civilized Tribes – the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee-Creek, Seminole and Cherokee tribes –, their removal to a federal land located west of the Mississippi River in exchange for their original lands. Under Thomas Jefferson's previous policy, the natives who were able to adapt to civilized life, that is, who turned to agricultural work, could live east of the Mississippi and maintain their nations' autonomy; in case they did not accept to adapt, they could be punished. These lands were widely coveted by southern settlers, who already contended for them with the Indians, especially in Georgia, and thus supported the changes proposed by Andrew Jackson. Some removals occurred by means of treaties, which led to the sale or exchange of territories. Other

2 According to Artur Lima de Avila, the institutionalization process of history as a discipline in the US overlaps with the direct involvement of Frederick Jackson Turner and *Western History* as a central thematic motif, "In his hands, the history of the West, or better, of the border, was the US history" (2006, p.36). The author argues that Turner was responsible for training most of the graduate historians in the United States in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries, acting at the State University of Wisconsin until 1910 and later at Harvard. American history was the result of a continuous process of occupation from the Atlantic to the Pacific, "(...). Turner thesis gave movement to the national space, giving it an identity in this process. The characters in his story were anonymous men and women who moved on the American continent impelled by a fate that predated them [the so-called *Manifest Destiny*]. From the dialectical clash between savagery, represented by the untamed nature, and civilization, symbolized by the settlers, was born the exceptional North American democracy. The material condition for the emergence of this unparalleled political regime were the so-called "free lands" of the West, territories just waiting to be occupied by stoic human beings dedicated to toil on earth. The expansion, however, was over in 1890, when the National Census stated that all of those free lands were occupied. The country was closed in on itself" (2006, p.37). For more information about Turner, American border and *Manifest Destiny*, see: Avila, Arthur Lima de. *E da Fronteira veio um pioneiro... a frontier thesis de Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932)* [And from the frontier came a pioneer ... Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis (1861-1932)]. Master degree dissertation. Graduate Program in History – Department of History, UFRGS, Porto Alegre, 2006.] For information on the institutionalization of Anthropology and Ethnology see: Eriksen, Thomas Hylland; Nielsen, Finn Sivert. *História da Antropologia [Anthropology History]*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2007.

groups have never settled and have been persecuted in long wars (McDonnell, 1991, p.06-19).³

Meanwhile, in older western states like Texas, New Mexico, Utah, Oregon, California and Washington, several indigenous groups and settlers, mostly of Hispanic origin, kept relatively friendly trade relations since colonial times. Most of the conflicts were located in the borders, which were then quite shifting, as showed in the map below (Barnes, 2010, p. 75).



In regions not yet explored by settlers, treaties kept the relations friendly. By means of the *Treaty of Fort Laramie* (1851), for instance, Indians on the plains and north of the

³ For more information on the *Indian Removal Act*, please see: Spence, Mark David. *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks*. Oxford University Press, 2000. This book also brings an interesting analysis on the formation of the National Parks not mentioned in this article.

Rocky Mountains allowed passage to immigrants, the construction of roads and the settling of military camps (Idem, p. 291). A first major immigration *boom* to central regions related to the “gold rush”, which started around 1859. The possibility of quick and easy moneymaking attracted thousands of settlers and railways entrepreneurs, who quickly began building transcontinental roads. Nevertheless, the period with the largest and bloodiest conflicts involving Indians, settlers and the US army, officially known as Indian Wars, took place only during and after the Civil War (1861-1865). Even though all groups got involved at some point in direct conflicts with the newcomers, the Apaches and Sioux were certainly the most “celebrated” in their resistance, so that some of their *leaders*, such as *Red Cloud* and *Crazy Horse*, became well known and had their pictures linked to several North American cultural icons. After the end of the Civil War, the State initiated a group containment policy in reserves controlled mostly by the army. Such reserves would guarantee their safety, which in fact did not occur. Long military battles took place in all States to “accommodate” resistant groups and submit them to the new rules. At this point two marks came to be known as symbols of the violence of the conquest, as well as of the closure of the process.⁴ One is the episode known as “The Sand Creek Massacre” (1864), in the state of Colorado, in which local militia, despite contrary orders, brutally murdered a Cheyenne and Arapaho group. The other is the “Wounded Knee Massacre” (1890), in South Dakota, in which a Lakota group also perished in a barbaric manner.

At that moment, the first pronouncements tried to justify the advancement over indigenous lands representing them as savages, barriers to civilization, passive recipients of religion, beings doomed to the past and to extinction (Shepherd, s/d, p.02).

⁴ As stated above, other large massacres can be identified in American historiography: *Sacramento river*, *Mountain Meadows*, *Marias River*, *Camp Grant* among others. For more information on these events, see McMurtry, Larry. *On what a slaughter. Massacres in the American West: 1846-1890*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005.

In this context, Lewis Henry Morgan, *founding father* of American anthropology, structured kinship analysis parameters out of his study of the Iroquois by setting the comparative method. His interest in this particular group, which was in fact a confederacy of five nations, came from the fact that he lived near a reservation in Rochester, New York. He wrote his first book in 1851 aided by the son of a Seneca chief acting as his translator. He presented in his text concerns about the “manifest destiny” of Indians, defending their inability to survive outside the civilizing parameters. Because of that, their rudeness should be mildly torn from them by means of education and religion. His questions and concerns included doubts as to the government commitment to the guardianship of indigenous ‘races’ beyond matters relating to that time, but rather with “their final elevation to the rights and privileges of American citizens” (Morgan, 1851). Published in 1871, peak period of violence in the West, *Systems of consanguinity and affinity of the Human Family* compiled comparative studies of kinship he undertook in nearly two decades involving groups from the US, India, Oceania, Africa and Middle East. The data collected in the US was obtained through questionnaires sent to missions and official agents in the countryside. He later analyzed the evolution of society, dividing it in stages: savagery, civilization and barbarism. Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier concept, symbolic and theoretical exponent of the conquest of the West, also reflected this view. Coincidentally or not, Turner presented in 1890, year of the “closure of the West”, his doctoral work in History containing a study on the fur trade in Wisconsin: *The Character and Influence of the Indian Trade in Wisconsin*. This work preceded the articles in which he presented his Frontier Thesis. The presentation of the article *The significance of the Frontier in American History* during Chicago World’s Fair, the same stage where *Buffalo Bill* staged his show

on the conquest of the West and the defeat of the Indians⁵, significantly expresses the link between the role of indigenous and the history of the West.

The productions that followed made believe that the history of Indians ended in 1890, with the latest military battles against the Apache and the symbolic defeat of the Sioux at the Wounded Knee Massacre. As a result, anthropologists such as Franz Boaz, James Mooney, and Alfred Kroeber undertook the role of cataloging for national museums and universities groups doomed to disappear, creating a genre that became known as *salvage anthropology* (Shepherd, s/d, p.2), consistent with the assimilation stage lived in reality. A new moment began only after the publication of *And Still the Waters Run* (1940), by the historian Angie Debo, with reports of plundering of indigenous lands by various sectors, with extensive collusion of the State, and of the violence of these processes. Her text boldly explained the westward expansion grounded in the exploration of Indians and their lands, and not based on *manifest destiny*. Nevertheless, her *denunciation* style placed the Indians in a role of passive victims and herself in the academic margins, as she was never able to establish her place in higher education institutions. Along the same line of Angie Debo, Alvin Josephy (1965) and Donald Berthrong (1976) works⁶ contributed to show how the action

5 From May to October 1893, the city of Chicago hosted the World's Fair that celebrated the 400th anniversary of Columbus' arrival to America and put the United States symbolically within the group of countries that could celebrate and point the future, presenting technological, scientific, gastronomic, and sociocultural innovations. Among the attractions, the already famous spectacle of the entrepreneur and artist William Frederick Cody, Buffalo Bill, *Wild West*, stood out. It had the participation of several indigenous groups, including the leadership of *Sitting Bull*, as well as shooters, military, Turks, Mongolians, Cossacks, Arabs. In stagings which told a story of the West, the show took to the US and to Europe that which intellectuals tried to solve: what America was made of. Simultaneously with the fair, a congress of historians took place, in which Frederick Turner presented his frontier thesis. An excellent analysis of this "meeting" is made by Richard White in the essay *Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill*, In *The Frontier in American Culture*, ed. James R. Grossman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

6 Josephy, Alvin M. *The Nez Perce and the Opening of the West*. Boston: Mariner Books, 1997. Berthrong, Donald J. *The Cheyenne and Arapaho Ordeal: Reservation and Agency Life in the Indian Territory, 1875-1907*. London: Oklahoma University Press, 1992.

of the State and the Church undermined the autonomy of the communities through aggressive attempts of incorporation. However, they did not include indigenous voices, and their interpretations were not able to critically grasp how Indians have adapted and incorporated the changes taking place around them, providing a single view of their past (Shepherd, s/d, p.04).

Much of what was written later falls within this *school* of the “victimized Indian”, but the prospects were expanding as a result of an intense dialogue with movements for civil rights and against the Vietnam War. As Denise Bates (2012) asserts, it is striking to realize how the role of indigenous activists in discussions over race and discrimination, struggles for education and material improvements to critically poor groups in the 1950s and 1960s has been minimized either before the black racial movements or by the invisibility of these people to American society⁷. Nevertheless, although victimized in historiography, during the 1960s and 1970s indigenous cultural elements were prominent counterculture forms of protest: indigenous culture inspired the clothing, hairstyles and ways of the hippie community⁸. In the late 1960s there was a more significant input movement of indigenous students in Universities and the creation of Colleges inside the reserves, controlled by the communities themselves. The formation of organic intellectuals, by their own parameter and not as part of an integrational project⁹, was part of the demands for the right to self-determination claimed at that time.¹⁰

7 The author concentrates its work in the southern United States (Louisiana and Alabama), where the racial clashes were clearly polarized between white and black. One of the main criticisms made at the time and with permanent consequences is that racial issues in the United States tended to black answers to problems and demands that were much more diverse.

8 For more information about the connections between counterculture movements and indigenous issues, see: SMITH, Sherry L. *Hippies, Indians & the fight for Red Power*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

9 As Phillip H. Roud (2015), in the nineteenth century, there was a America's indigenous Reading Revolution, which followed a general educational movement in the pursuit of modernization and civilization, in which the Indians were

With the works of Vine Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (1969) and Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (1971), the idea of resistance was added to the *victimization*. In the former, we can see the practical result of the growing organization of the indigenous movement and its organic intellectuals in the late 1960s (*Red Power*). Written by the Sioux activist, besides dealing with matters concerning the history of the group to which he belongs, the book addressed issues such as racial discrimination and the consequences of expropriation, in a blunt accusation to American culture, anthropologists and the Christianity (Shepherd, p.4-5). The best seller of Dee Brown, in turn, besides fitting the victimization-resistance key, eventually contributed to the strengthening of the *noble savage* myth.

After World War II, anthropologists were also engaged in producing knowledge about the indigenous past: by combining the methods of anthropological and historical research, mostly attending to the archives in the case of the latter, they ended up creating a hybrid methodology known as ethnohistory. It was the beginning of a period of great interest on the perspective of indigenous groups about the events (*agency*), on how they processed change and permanence over time (Axtell, 1979, p.03). A new generation of scholars on indigenous issues emerged in the 1980s from the uses of this methodological renovation. Influenced by the works of the 1960s, they combined the ethnohistorical method, arising from the theory of social history, with studies and theories on cultural symbolism by Clifford Geertz and Marshall Sahlins, in order to

at the center of that cultural transformation. Proof of this, notes the proliferation of materials and teaching methods toward this specific audience, whose challenges were exciting in a particular way. The indigenous schooling also came from the sharing of a common curriculum, essentially racist and exclusionary. Phillip H. Roud. *America's Indigenous Reading Revolution*. In: Stevens, Scott Manning *et all* (ed) *Why you can't teach United States History without American Indians*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015, pp. 165-180.

10 The Native American intellectuals remain very attentive to advances the higher education, particularly to the limits of access and permanence. For more information about contemporary discussions see: Devon Abbott Mihesuah Angela Cavender Wilson. *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities*, Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004.

place indigenous people at the center of history as active agents of change. A “New Indian History” emerged, a designation that brings together a very diverse body of themes and goals.

By placing the perspective of the indigenous people themselves in focus in analysis centered around the agency rather than on an understanding of their actions as reactions, these studies gave way to questioning the traditional narratives of American history. In the words of Shepherd, the “Indians had an impact on the course of American development, not as an obstacle, but as an active shaper of history” (p.7). We can name as exponents of the “New Indian History” James Merrill, James Axtell, Gregory E. Dowd, RD Edmunds, Richard White, Colin Calloway, Jean M. O’Brien, Daniel Richter and Theda Perdue¹¹. Most of these studies cover the colonial period and the nineteenth century, and contain discussions on gender, labor, environment and urbanization processes. In a kind of reinterpretation of mainstream colonial histories, they show that by including native populations, there can be completely different understandings than those hitherto presumed. James Axtell (1985), for instance, emphasizes how colonial indigenist policies have been outlined by indigenous actions, which orchestrated commercial and land-use rules to which non-Indians had to submit to ensure the dominance of areas. Indians could often prevent, even though temporarily, the colonial expansionist designs. Axtel demonstrates how Indians were able to incorporate European cultural elements while maintaining their previous

¹¹ The following is a list of some works of the mentioned authors that could not be treated in the article body: Axtell, James. *The invasion within: the contest of cultures in Colonial North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.; _____. *Natives and newcomers: the cultural origins of North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.; Dowd, Gregory E. *A spirited resistance the North American Indian struggle for unity, 1745-1815*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.; Edmunds, R. David. *Tecumseh and the Quest for Indian Leadership*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1984.; O’Brien, Jean M. *After King Philip's War: presence and persistence in Indian New England*. Hanover University Press of New England, 1997.; Richter. Daniel *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.; Perdue, Theda. *Cherokee women: gender and culture change, 1700-1835*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.

references. James Merrill also worked on this idea in *The Indians New World: The Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact to Removal* (1989), which introduces the concept of “new world” for Europeans and Indians. Collin Calloway focuses on this issue as well on *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early America* (1997). These authors show how diseases, trade, the settlers, the settlements, the crowns, the market, resources and religion interacted to create a “new world” that was neither Europe nor the pre-contact America.

Until then, we can see that the “New Indian History” seemed to have a tendency to focus on *positive* aspects of the indigenous past, even though the analysis do not deny the practical results of the circumstances analyzed: the groups losing their autonomy and independence, or being wiped out. Thus, in addressing these points in *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnee, and Navajos* (1983), Richard White presents a new historiographical perspective to indigenous studies. This striking work addressed topics such as the possibility of a utilitarian view of the environment by Indians in contrast to the myth of the “Indian ecologist”, and discussed how these groups participated in colonial trade, in view of the limited control they had about their own insertion. In his best-known work, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (1991), Richard White explores how Europeans and Indians forged a universe where forces were equated, and how it fell apart after the era of revolutions. In that universe, everyone could see the “other” as foreign, and thus based on these parameters build an understandable world, which was sustained for 200 years. The *Middle Ground* would be a place (the “edges of the empire”, or the Great Lakes region in this particular case) where the looseness of the guidelines arises either by distance, either by the unwillingness of the parties to apply the rules; at the same time, it would be a state of mind in which adjustments and misunderstandings produced a new model for

solving complicated situations. According to White, there is no distinction between indigenous and white history nor any marked prevalence of forces on each other.

With the collaboration of other authors, the “New Indian History” addressed several regions and periods, such as the early days of the National stage and what became known as “*Indian Removal*”. Old themes were revisited, such as State policies and their legal implications, the assimilationist intentions and the scientific support in which they were based. Issues such as the State responsibility for the loss of land by indigenous people and the effects reallocations brought to communities were on the agenda in the 1980s and 1990s. In this period, many studies emerged focusing on gender issues, education, and borders. There was also a formidable advance in knowledge of the history of the latest twentieth century, which undermined, once and for all, the idea of disappearance or complete assimilation of Indians. Instead, they showed the growth of communities and their continued quest for rights and recognition. Also as part of this scenario, native scholars developed considerable historical production¹².

Ned Blackhawk (2005) considers that, during the 1990s, in the context of celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the Conquest and revisiting the past, indigenous studies had great prominence. He states that “gone now are the days when historians could so casually dismiss or ignore the continent’s constellation of diverse and powerful Native populations”. According to Blackhawk, studies have shown how there was, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an increase in the American government capacity to approve, control and put into practice indigenous

¹² The publication in 2011 of *Native historians write back: decolonizing American Indian history*, gathering essays and articles by native authors from different groups sums up how native perspectives can point to ways which renew American history. Miller, Susan A., Riding James (ed). *Native historians write back: Decolonizing American Indian history*. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2011.

policies. Other historians have deepened the understanding of the assimilationist policies focused on children, confined to religious boarding schools (2005, p.15).

According to Pekka Hämäläinen (2012), historians of the (now old) New Indian History sought to put the Indians in the center of things, in an attempt to reshape the official narrative which had “locked the native populations on the wrong side of modernity”, and they have been quite successful in this endeavor. Studies have revolutionized US history during the last quarter of the twentieth century. The colonial period suffered the biggest impact of these studies, so that intellectuals started calling it “*indigenous turn*”. However, the author ponders that for some scholars that success would be precisely the first sign of exhaustion of the “creative moment” of the field. The indigenous history became the mainstream, along with studies on borders, environmental history and imperialism. It already has a solid body of scholars and there are perspectives on studies to deepen knowledge on specific topics such as gender, slavery, sexuality, and mixed marriages, to name a few.

During the last decades, American Indian communities were able to restructure their organization and achieve demographic, economic and social advances. This strengthening, accompanied by a substantial increase in the formation of native intellectuals, enabled their voices to raise broader flights, claiming space in the construction of historical narratives and even challenging the legitimacy of others. The field became a terrain of contestation, where production of knowledge and its reception have become as important as the impact that these studies produce in practical life of communities. To Hämäläinen, this dialogue is already generating results through studies produced by indigenous and non-indigenous scholars, who overcome the gaps between the expectations of indigenous communities and established academic practices. In his words, “scholars now write directly about the pain and psychological trauma of Native peoples, sensitizing us to the human dimensions of racism and

dispossession and forcing us to come to terms with the pervasive violence of American history". Indeed, taboo topics have been put on the agenda, such as the relationship between African and indigenous slavery, ethnic cleansing, and cultural genocide. These and other lines of work have been realigning the Native American history and can change the way we understand multiculturalism, democracy, sovereignty, as well as the role of the nation State in modern American society. The indigenous history became an international theme and for some time, especially after the five hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Columbus, indigenous issues have received the attention of intellectuals, activists, and governments worldwide, fueling the expectation that the talks on the theme will be increasingly comparative and transcontinental. The creation in 2008 of the *Native American and Indigenous Studies Association* is a great symbol of that.

Even with quite optimistic views, there is still room for dissatisfaction on scholars who study the theme, especially regarding the lack of recognition and inclusion of the results of the researches in the curricula of American universities, not to mention the school curricula. In May 2013, the Newberry Library – one of the largest documentation centers on Indians history in the world – promoted the symposium *Why You Can't Teach U.S. History without American Indians*. The meeting brought together Native and non-Indian researchers from all over the country in various periods of study. Their common complaint: lack of interest from other researchers to recognize the importance of including the history of Indians in the narratives of North American history¹³.

The event poster displays a well-known painting by Benjamin West. It depicts a scene of interaction between Indians and Europeans in 1683, when William Penn

¹³ All the impressions on this event were the result of the understandings of the authors, who had the opportunity to participate in it, as researchers associated with the Newberry Library at that moment. The image of the event poster is available at: <http://www.newberry.org/past-american-indian-studies-seminars>. Accessed on 09/15/2014.

negotiated a peace agreement with the head of the Lenape group (Delaware) near a village in Pennsylvania (Barnes, p. 145). Completed almost a century later (1771-1772), the painting was inspired on a picture made from memory by an eyewitness of the meeting. Playing with images, the event's creators 'deleted' the Indians of the work, causing it to be incomplete so that the history portrayed becomes meaningless. The realization that one cannot explain and understand the setting without the Indians is immediate. On the other hand, its deletion leaves such deep marks on the original work of art that, with only their shadows, it is possible to realize not only the meaning of the absence of Indians in History, but also the presence of signs that indicate that something indispensable for the understanding was left out. This makes scholars think of strategies on how to handle situations where not only hypothetically, but in fact, Indians are seen as unimportant in the historical process.



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For generations U.S. historians wrote the nation's story as if Indians did not exist, or at best, they marginalized Indian peoples as unimportant actors in the national drama of revolution and democratic expansion. Despite the large number of faculty trained in American Indian history very little has changed and most college level students who enroll in large survey courses in U.S. history learn about Indians during the initial stages of encounter and then, Indians are often depicted as succumbing to epidemic diseases or being pushed off their lands by westward expansion.

The mission of this symposium is to change how historians teach U.S. history. Today, we are fortunate to have a large number of faculty who teach American Indian Studies and the knowledge base that these scholars possess in professional, interdisciplinary, and separate. These new perspectives need to be better incorporated into the interpretation and writing of history. Regularly, we hear faculty proclaim that they would include Indians if they were more central to mainstream history. This symposium intends to challenge that perspective and to provide a new expanded resource for college level faculty.

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The Treaty of Penn with the Indians, óleo sobre tela (1771-1772). Benjamin West [1738-1820].

A flight over the lowlands

Brazilian historiography has flourished in the nineteenth century. The indigenous issue has been confused with the practices and the production of discourse. In 1839, the State assumed the role of “creator” of a national and official history by opening the *Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Brasil* (Historical and Geographical Institute of Brazil) (IHGB)¹⁴. Its first major and symbolic act was launching the competition *Como Escrever a História do Brasil* (How to Write the History of Brazil). The winner was the botanist and ethnographer Carl Friedrich Philippe von Martius, who had researched indigenous language and culture in a part of Brazil and claimed that Indians were doomed to extinction. Von

14 For more information on the IHGB see Schwarcz. Lilia Moritz. *Os Institutos Históricos e Geográficos. Os guardiões de nossa história oficial* [Historical and Geographical Institutes. The guardians of our official history]. São Paulo, Editora Vertex / Idesp 1989.

Martius' history of Brazil presented the Indians in a romantic way, almost confused with nature, happily welcomed by the Portuguese settlers in their civilizing intelligence. He showed how the white man moral influence on the Indians magnified the nation, and in less than fifty pages he exposed ideas such as "the Portuguese blood, in a mighty river, shall absorb the small confluents of the Indian and Ethiopian races" (Martius, [1854] 1982, p.88).

Von Martius' winning project for writing the history, founded in the presence of the three races in the constitution of Brazil, did not work out. Between 1854 and 1857, Francisco Adolpho de Varnhagen published under imperial patronage the work *História Geral do Brasil (General History of Brazil)* in five volumes. In the first volume, of 1854, he consented: for the Indians, "people in childhood, there is no history: there is only ethnography" (Varnhagen, 1962 [1854], V.1, p.42). It was a notion that excluded Indians of historiography, detracted them when they were mentioned and indicated their enslavement and physical extermination. The project concerning the history of Indians was the result of a culture of a time and served very different interests. Moreover, it was not unanimous and clashed with milder views. Works such as that of João Francisco Lisboa, Capistrano de Abreu, Couto de Magalhães, Gonçalves de Magalhães, and Gonçalves Dias produced ethnographic works defending the "rescue" of those populations, or resulted in celebrated literary productions over Indians. Gonçalves de Magalhães, for instance, is the author of *A Confederação dos Tamoios (The Confederation of Tamoyos)* (1857), an epic novel that takes indigenous sacrifice and heroism as a founding framework of the Brazilian nation through the death of Aimberê, the last survivor of the Tamoyo nation, which was massacred by the Portuguese settler. Inspired on the literary work, the painting *O Último Tamoio (The Last Tamoyo)*, by Rodolfo Amoêdo (1857-1941), was exhibited in 1884 at the Fine Arts General Exhibition in Rio de Janeiro (Scrich, 2009).

Even though there were different visions and projects on Indians in the nineteenth century, all of them excluded them from history as an assumption. Since the end of the colonial period, the Portuguese monarchy had to perform a series of political adjustments with respect to Indians, considering there were not only different theoretical projects, but also different practices spread throughout the provinces, depending on the history of the relations concerning territorial occupation, miscegenation and use of labor. There were broad fronts of discussion about what to do with the contemporaneous Indians. They could constitute the body of workers so dear to the nation; be delivered to the religious missions and properly brought into the bosom of civilization (also by means of work); or serve as border guards, pursuant to Gen. Couto de Magalhães' project, through the military colonies; and there was of course the extermination proposals. In São Paulo, for example, Indians were still widely persecuted and enslaved in conformity with the royal charter of 1808. Many Indians have been kept in this condition even after the 1831 prohibition law. In other cases, such as in Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, there were major disputes between former settlers and Indians over settlement lands formed along the colonial period.

In July 24, 1845, the Decree 426, also known as "Regulation for the Catechetical Missions and Civilizing Indians", or simply Regulation for the Missions, has been approved and became the Indigenous Law of the Empire. It put the General Managers in charge of administering ancient Indian settlements and creating new ones to attract the backlands hostile Indians. The mission of civilizing indigenous people, educating and assimilating them to the nation fell to the priests, mostly the Capuchins. Indians, being legally incompetent, had their Citizenship denied, as they also had had their participation in history denied by the *founding fathers*. By the 1850 Land Act, indigenous territories became property of the State, and it also defined occupied or vacant lands; their rights were bound to the status of "settlers". This established the historical setting

for the largest territorial expropriations and clashes between the Nation, Indians and foreign immigrants¹⁵. This is the case of the *Companhia de Comércio e Navegação do Vale do Mucuri* (*Commerce and Navigation Company of Mucuri Valley*), founded in the province of Minas Gerais by Teófilo Ottoni between 1850 and 1860. Deputy elected by that province, Ottoni encouraged the development and colonization of the region where, he said, “I will build my own Philadelphia.” He wrote at least five books and two reports on the company, the importance of its privileges, the scope of its project and the relationship with the 'savages'¹⁶. After the 1850 Land Act, the government started to

15 For more information on the subject of the Land Act see: Ligia Silva Osorio in *Terras Devolutas e Latifúndio [Vacant Lands and Latifundium]*. Campinas: Editora da Unicamp, 2008. Although the author focuses on the process that took place in São Paulo, one can get an overview of the process in legal terms and considering Indians rights over land.

16 Ottoni, Teófilo Benedito & Ottoni, Honório Benedito. *Condições para Incorporação de uma Companhia de Comércio e Navegação do Rio Mucuri, precedidas de uma exposição das vantagens da empresa*. [Conditions for Creation of a Trade and Navigation Company in Rio Mucuri, preceded by an exhibition of the company's advantages]. Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Imperial e Constitucional de J. Villeneuve e Companhia, 1847; _____. *Notícia Sobre os Selvagens do Mucuri [(News About the Mucuri Wild)]*. Organized by: Regina Horta Duarte. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2002; _____. *Circular dedicada aos Srs. Eleitores de senadores pela província de Minas Gerais no quadriênio atual e especialmente dirigida aos Srs. eleitores de deputados pelo 2º distrito eleitoral da mesma Província para a próxima legislatura*. [Circular dedicated to Messrs. Voters of senators by the Province of Minas Gerais in the current period, and especially addressed to Messrs. Voters of deputies for the 2nd electoral district of the same province to the next legislature] Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro. Tomo LXXVIII, Parte 2. Rio de Janeiro: 1916; _____. *A Colonização do Mucuri*. [The colonization of Mucuri] Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Brasileira de Maximiano Gomes Ribeiro, 1859. In: Valdeí Lopes de Araujo (org.). Teófilo Benedito Ottoni e a Companhia do Mucuri: a modernidade possível. [Teófilo Benedito Ottoni and Mucuri Company: the possible modernity] Belo Horizonte: Secretaria de Estado da Cultura; Arquivo Público Mineiro, 2007; _____. *Companhia do Mucuri. História da empresa, importância de seus privilégios, alcance dos seus projetos*. [Mucuri Company. Company history, importance of its privileges, scope of its projects]. Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Imperial e Constitucional de J. Villeneuve e Companhia, 1856. In: Araujo, Valdeí Lopes de (org.). Teófilo Benedito Ottoni e a Companhia do Mucuri: a modernidade possível. [Teófilo Benedito Ottoni and Mucuri Company: the possible modernity] Belo Horizonte: Secretaria de Estado da Cultura; Arquivo Público Mineiro, 2007; _____. *Breve Resposta ao Relatório de Liquidação da Cia. Do Mucuri, por parte do Governo* [Quick Response to Liquidation Report of the Mucuri Company by the Government]. Rio de Janeiro: Tip. de M. Barreto, Mendes Campos e Comp., 1862; _____. *Discursos Parlamentares [Parliamentary Speeches]*. Selection and introduction by Paulo Pinheiro Chagas. Brasília: House of Representatives, 1979. _____. *Relatório apresentado aos acionistas da Companhia do Mucuri por Teófilo Benedito Ottoni em 15 de outubro de 1857*. [Report submitted to the shareholders of Mucuri Company by Teófilo Benedito Ottoni on October 15, 1857] Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Imperial e Constitucional de J. Villeneuve e Companhia, 1857. (Coleção Assuntos Mineiros) In: Araujo, Valdeí Lopes de (org.). Teófilo Benedito Ottoni e a Companhia do Mucuri: a modernidade possível. [Teófilo Benedito Ottoni and Mucuri Company: the possible modernity] Belo Horizonte: Secretaria de Estado da Cultura; Arquivo Público Mineiro, 2007; _____. *Relatório apresentado aos acionistas da Companhia do Mucuri no dia 15 de maio de 1860*. [Report submitted to the shareholders of Mucuri Company on May 15, 1860] Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia do Correio Mercantil, 1860. (Coleção Assuntos Mineiros) In: Araujo, Valdeí Lopes de (org.). Teófilo Benedito Ottoni e a

exercise more control over the colonization companies. Still, the plans of Teófilo Ottoni ran without oppressive barriers.

This constancy as to the “Indian problem” seemed to reconcile violence and philanthropy, both relevant to the project of civilization, with representatives in the hinterland and in the offices (Monteiro, 2001, p.147-157). All these dilemmas are found in IHGB *Quarterly Magazine* articles, in the systematic research on indigenous races held by the National Museum since the 1870s and, of course, in the 1882 *Anthropological Exhibition* held in Rio de Janeiro. The new and international discussions about race and evolution could find there a deep echo into an already complex debate about the meaning of the past and present Indians. How to accommodate this class of men with such undefined values while building the nation? The lack of interest in their historical participation in various processes was carried out by means of linguistic, craniometrics and ethnographic studies.

Contrary to what many think, it was during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that expansion and occupation of most of Brazilian midland took place, and not in colonial times. During the 1840s, the borders demarcation began with the help of IHGB members, through the analysis of documents spread over the provinces – borders which weakness became evident during the Paraguayan War. Yet in 1891, São Paulo, one of the richest states in the country, still had in the maps of over one third of its territory the expression *unknown land*, to the authorities’ chagrin (Cavenaghi, AJ, 2004, p. 193). The same kind of disappointment could be seen during the insurrection of Itambacuri (Minas Gerais) indigenous settling in 1893. It called into question the effectiveness of the settlements policy, established with so much expectation in the 1845 legislation and fought with such fury during the Second Empire by unbelievers who

Companhia do Mucuri: a modernidade possível. [*Teófilo Benedito Ottoni and Mucuri Company: the possible modernity*] Belo Horizonte: Secretaria de Estado da Cultura; Arquivo Público Mineiro, 2007.

thought that indigenous civilization should be solved with “bullet and gunpowder” (Monteiro, 2001, p.165). There have been clashes between the expansion fronts and indigenous groups in unknown hinterlands across the country. Brazilian nationals and immigrants, small and large landowners, all motivated the killings and truly tragic persecution of Indians – such as in the emblematic cases of the coffee plantations in São Paulo and Paraná and the extraction of rubber in the North. It has also occurred during the advent of public and private enterprises, such as the construction of railways and the installation of telegraph lines.

Within this context of overall instability, the alternatives to the “Indian problem” were again put in place. One would be the search for a more humane treatment of these groups. This alternative emerged within the army, especially from troops participating in the exploration of the hinterland to install the telegraph lines. This trend could also be observed in the proposals of the Positivist Apostolate who saw indigenous as beings in the lower stage of human progress, but who could reach civilization with the help of those who already lived it. Cândido Mariano Rondon was the intellectual exponent and synthesizer of the new ideas. He became a well known media figure in the turn of the century, with practical results in the feasibility of treating Indians without violence. The other possibility was still extermination: in 1908, the publication of Herman Von Hering article in *Revista do Museu Paulista (São Paulo Museum Review)* showed once again that the life and future of Indians was uncertain. What is certain is that at that time there was increasing pressure for the creation of an agency for protecting and civilizing Indians. Some general aspects constituted this demand in which positivist influence clearly prevailed: the demarcation of indigenous lands; the protection and guarantee of their lives; the punishment of crimes committed against them; laicization of civilization. The Republican State finally took responsibility for the fate of Indians when it created in 1910 the *Serviço de Proteção aos Índios e Localização de Trabalhadores Nacionais*

(*Service for the Protection of Indians and Location of National Workers*) (SPILTN). According to Gagliardi, with virtually no resources and living under constant threats of closure, it did not manage to put into practice most of its objectives. The organization contributed to the containment of groups in small and improper territories, which continued under dispute with other segments. The Indians were victims of forced labor, diseases, prostitution and social stigmas, such as their incapacity for work.

In intellectual circles, on one hand there still was a general desire to understand and establish what would be the national identity; on the other, there was an effort to better understand indigenous societies regarded as endangered. This can be exemplified by the *Modern Art Week* of 1922 and through the professional career of Curt Unckel Nimuendajú and its network of relationships. In the *Modern Art Week*, held in São Paulo, the big question was *Tupi or not Tupi?* In connection to it, Oswald de Andrade presented in 1928 the *Cannibalist Manifesto*, extolling Brazilian identity and creativity through cultural manifestations. The document is considered a landmark of Modernism in Brazil. “Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question” is one of the metaphors of the manifesto, which states that “Without us, Europe would not even have had its paltry declaration of the rights of men”¹⁷. Also in 1928, Tarsila do Amaral portrayed the Brazilianness in *Abopuru*, the painting that symbolizes Modernism in the lowlands. The figure with giant feet firmly planted on the ground and a tiny head that reaches the sun's height seems to value the legwork and suggests the idea of wild, native man, planted in Brazilian ground; a cannibal who feeds ritually from other men's flesh to acquire its strength, as indicated by the name *Abopuru*, which means in Tupi-Guarani “the man who eats human flesh”. The German ethnologist Curt Unckel Nimuendajú dedicated to indigenous militancy and ethnological research over the first four decades

17 Andrade, Oswald de. O Manifesto Antropofágico [Cannibalist Manifesto], available in <http://serantropofagia.wordpress.com/about/>.

of the twentieth century. His work produced valuable ethnographic records both on Jê and Tupi-Guarani groups, one of which baptized him with the indigenous name¹⁸. Nimuendajú maintained dialogues with the Americanism that was arising in ethnological museums in Europe and the USA, while performing a hard fieldwork collecting and cataloging objects and artifacts of the material culture of Indians, data on their language and kinship relations. He took in his writings a tragic tone concerning the future of the indigenous people. Still, “his commitment in the ethnography of the complex social organization of the Jê groups contributed, in turn, so that modern ethnological reflection of David Maybury-Lewis and Claude Lévi-Strauss could proceed on secure foundations in the decades of 1960 and 1950”¹⁹.

In the decades of 1930 and 1940, though, we found continuities and some renewal in the treatment of the Indians participation in history. The posture of Caio Prado Jr. was an example of the first case. In *Evolução Política do Brasil (Political Evolution of Brazil)* (1933) and in *Formação do Brasil Contemporâneo (Formation of Contemporary Brazil)* (1942), he relegated to Indians a position of victims of territorial and labor disputes and eventually presented explicit prejudices about them:

“Indigenous people in contact with white people are being eliminated, and it is being repeated once again a fact that always occurred everywhere at all times when there were two race side by side presenting very different cultural levels: the lower and dominated one disappears. And if it was not for the intercrossing, which has been

18 Curt Unckel was naturalized Brazilian and baptized by the Guarani-Ñandeva with Nimuendajú name, which means in Tupi-Guarani ‘that who makes his home’.

19 Amoroso, Marta Rosa. Nimuendajú às voltas com a história [*Nimuendajú grappling with history*]. *Revista de Antropologia*, São Paulo, USP, 2001, V. 44, No. 2. Available in <http://www.ifch.unicamp.br/ihb/HZ868-06/MartaNimuendajuRA.pdf>. Accessed on 10/22/2014

practiced on a large scale among us, allowing the perpetuation of Indian blood, this would be strongly condemned to total extinction” (Apud Freitas).

Casa Grande & Senzala, by Gilberto Freyre, was also published in 1933. It again analyzed Brazil’s formation from the merger of the three races, supporting this aspect. An interesting fact relating to this article refers to the great influence of Franz Boas in Freyre’s works, considering he obtained his higher education in the United States.

Historian Sergio Buarque de Holanda represents the second case. In all of his studies he not only included Indians in history, but showed their central role in the formation and implementation of the Portuguese colonial design, made evident in his studies on expansion and territorial occupation. In *Raízes do Brasil (Brazil Roots)* (1936), *Monções (Monsoons)* (1945), *Caminhos e Fronteiras (Paths and Frontiers)* (1957), *Visão do Paraíso (Vision of Paradise)* (1959) and the unfinished *O Extremo Oeste (The Far West)* (1986), the author seems to have increasingly included indigenous groups in his analysis. He discusses trade networks, miscegenation, the use of indigenous ways and paths in the relation with the environment, their participation in the exploration of the hinterland and in the *bandeiras*²⁰. He also participated in the drafting of *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira (General History of Brazilian Civilization)* during the 1960s and 1970s in collaboration with other teachers at the University of São Paulo (USP) – anthropologists and sociologists such as Egon Schaden and Florestan Fernandes. Those presented Indians as little relevant, in a manner not corresponding to the results of Sérgio Buarque’s own work. Even occupying a central role in the studies of one of the

20 The *bandeiras* were expeditions for the capture of Indians undertaken to meet the need for workers of the agricultural enterprises in São Paulo. They aimed mainly Indians concentrated in the Jesuit missions. The main study on the subject is *Negros da Terra [Black people from the Land]*, by John Manuel Monteiro (1994).

most important Brazilian historians, Indians were still not placed in evidence. Why this happened is a question still unanswered.

David Hall Stauffer wrote the most significant work on Indians in Brazil in the 1950s, *The Origin and Establishment of Brazil's Indian Service, 1889 – 1910*, and published it in the US. With a valuable documentary and narrative work, it analyzes the process of expansion into the midlands in the nineteenth century, in addition to the intense debates about extermination of Indians and the creation of SPI, widely valuing Rondon's performance. In Brazil, its publication was incomplete, with some chapters translated on USP History Magazine in the 1960s.

During the 1970s and most of the 1980s, historical studies of Indians amounted to “chronicles of extinction”. This was the result of a real situation of decreasing indigenous population. An example of this approach is the important study by Silvio Coelho dos Santos, *Índios e brancos no sul do Brasil: a dramática experiência dos Xokleng (Indians and whites in southern Brazil: the dramatic experience of Xokleng)* (1973), in which the author, in a denunciation style, reports the story of clashes in the state of Santa Catarina between European settlers, mainly of Germanic origin, and Indians of Xokleng ethnic group. By then, the southern and southeast states of Brazil already denied the existence of Indians, linking them to the Amazon rainforest or the newly opened Xingu National Park²¹. Similarly, though with a less refined analysis, as it presents important historical fonts but does not discuss them, Ítala Irene Basile Becker presents a history of Kaingang group in Rio Grande do Sul (1976)²². Other similar productions are *Red Gold* (1978), by John Hemming, who studied Portuguese America, and Carlos Moreira

21 For further information see: Rocha Freire, Carlos Augusto da Rocha (org). *Memória do SPI. Textos, imagens e documentos sobre o serviço de proteção aos índios (1919-1967)* [*SPI Memorie. Texts, images and documents on the service for the protection of Indians (1919-1967)*]. Rio de Janeiro: Indian Museum – FUNAI, 2011.

22 Os Índios Kaingang no Rio Grande do Sul [*The Kaingang Indians in Rio Grande do Sul*]. *Pesquisas, Antropologia*, n. 29, 1976.

Neto in *Índios da Amazônia: de maioria a minoria (Amazon Indians: from majority to minority)* (1988). Both authors address the exploitation and destruction of Indians by processes of colonial domination, resulting in crystallizing approaches that diminish the changes experienced – such as integration or assimilation – in terms of acculturation, reducing the “degree of Indianness”.

But it was during the 1990s that Brazil witnessed the birth of a “New Indian History”. As the result of a collective effort to put Indians in the center of the studied processes, it sought to understand their “agency” as subjects, and not passive and plastered victims. The rebirth of social movements against the military dictatorship – internationally condemned for acts committed against indigenous populations – resulted in the dismantling of the SPI and the creation of the *Fundação Nacional de Proteção ao Índio* (National Foundation for the Protection of Indians) (FUNAI) in 1967. This turn of events followed the emergence of the indigenous movement in all parts of the country, involving “organic” militants and intellectuals, mainly coming from the anthropology and history fields. With broad participation in the Constituent Assembly and in the approval of the commitment to the demarcation of lands taken over by the *Citizen Constitution*, the production of documentation-based reports and dossiers – especially covering the colonial period – was accelerated, given the reconfiguration of indigenous rights as *historical* (Monteiro, 2001, p. 05). In universities, new theoretical approaches have expanded the possibilities of studies on Indians within anthropology, such as more dynamic views on culture, the use of oral sources, the analytical possibilities of ethnohistory.

The publication of *As Muralhas dos Sertões: os povos indígenas no rio Branco e a colonização (The Walls of the Backlands: indigenous peoples in the White River and colonization)* (1991), of Nadia Farage, symbolizes the renewal in making history. Her documentary analysis equipped with ethnographic sensibility shows how Indians of

the Rio Branco region, disputed by the Portuguese and the Dutch, acted according to their own intentions in building the colonial universe. Other studies published in the 1990s also put the Indians in the historiographical scene. An important example of these studies is *A heresia dos Índios (The Heresy of Indians)* (1995), in which Ronaldo Vaifas discusses an Inquisition process conducted on a syncretic prophetic movement (Christian and Tupi) inside Bahia based on the perspective of cultural history. Ronald Raminelli, in *Imagens da Colonização – Representação do Índio de Caminha a Vieira (Images of colonization – Indian Representation from Caminha to Vieira)* (1996), addressed the issue of indigenous representation using iconographic sources, pointing a “mismatch” between images and colonial accounts.

The publishing of *História dos Índios no Brasil (History of Indians in Brazil)* (1992), organized by anthropologist Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, was undoubtedly an important milestone. The work brought together search results in history, archeology, and linguistics linked to USP’s Center of Indigenous History and Indigenism. Although the book is an important contribution to fill empty spaces on the history of Indians in Brazil, the organizer herself recognizes it is a fragmented set of case studies “that allow us to imagine, but do not to fill in the gaps of a frame” that could be more complete. Despite the lack of knowledge on the subject, the fact is that “today it is clearer, at least, the extent of which is unknown” (Cunha, 2006 p .11).

In 1994, another major effort to stimulate work in indigenous history was published: the *Guia de Fontes para a História Indígena e do Indigenismo em arquivos brasileiros – Acervos das Capitais (Sources Guide for Indigenous History and Indigenism in Brazilian archives – Collection of Capital Cities)*. Organized by John Manuel Monteiro²³,

23 The history of the creation of the *Sources Guide* merges with that of USP Center for Research on Indians History and Indigenism. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha coordinated an interinstitutional and interdisciplinary project in an attempt to draw up a guide to this growing field. She was inspired by the *Guia de fontes para a história da África, da escravidão negra e do negro na sociedade atual [Sources Guide to the history of Africa, of black slavery and black*

this research tool aggregates documental information and proposes an interchange of information on Indians. The project gathered researchers linked to universities in several states (only Tocantins, Roraima, and Amapá could not be represented). As well as *História dos Índios no Brasil (History of Indians in Brazil)*, the *Guide* was an attempt to draw up a schedule engaged with the past and the future of indigenous people, rejecting the *thesis of disappearance* and joining forces with the demands of the Indians themselves. In the words of the organizer, this was “an initial step – timid, in some states, strong and determined, in others” (1994, p.07), but that would make it impossible from that moment on to explain the absence of history for lack of documentation.

It is quite significant that, on the same year the *Guide* was published, was also published the main book about indigenous history in Brazil: *Negros da Terra: índios e bandeirantes nas origens de São Paulo (Black people from the land: Indians and bandeirantes²⁴ in the origins of São Paulo)*, by John Manuel Monteiro. The work took on, in practice, the commitments and challenges from the previously announced agenda. Originated on the thesis defended by the author in 1985 at the University of Chicago, the book has been enriched by his studies in subsequent years. *Negros da Terra* consists of a renewed and critical interpretation of social history from the colonial period in São Paulo. The study shows how virtually all aspects of the “formation of society and economy of São Paulo during its first two centuries are essentially confused with the processes of integration, exploitation and destruction of indigenous populations brought in from other regions” (1994, p. 09). The book addresses important aspects of Brazilian historiography, as the relations of indigenous labor with the colonial economy. Still tainted by a kind of myth, a misconception widely reproduced in textbooks that Indians were not fit for work,

people in society today], published by the National Archives in 1988, centenary of the abolition. For various reasons, the project did not materialize by these pathways, but originated the *Núcleo* (Monteiro, 1994, p.07-08).

²⁴ *Bandeirantes* were the expeditioners responsible for the *bandeiras*; please see note 17.

historiography lacked a comprehensive study on Indian slavery, using diversified sources. The book's title also makes evident the problem of the relationship between the history of Indians and the history of black people in Brazil. 'Black people from the land' was a designation used for Indians, referring to the equivalence and, at the same time, the difference between them and the black people from Guinea. These terms simultaneously referenced an equivalence of slavish status and a differentiation of origin (Langfur, 2005).

Another important study is the 2001 full professorship thesis of the same author, named *Tupis, Tapuias e Historiadores: estudos de história indígena e do indigenismo (Tupi, Tapuias and Historians: studies on indigenous history and indigenous movement)*. John Monteiro presents an elaborate set of articles and essays dealing with seminal issues and problems of Brazil's indigenous history, many of them appointed in the discussions presented above. Among the central themes are the "time displacements and slippings" on the use of historical sources; the refracted ethnographic constructions of indigenous past made in imperial times; the establishment of a "bipolar standard" of analysis of the indigenous past, the Tupi / Tapuia standard often disguised in other names and placed in different historical and historiographical times, sometimes analytically, sometimes as a policy to and for Indians (2001, p. 08). In astute analyzes the historian weaves connections and deconstructs myths about Brazilian colonial and imperial periods. The theme of the historiographical and actual extermination of Indians also pervades all the work, but is highlighted in the chapter *Entre o etnocídio e a etnogênese (Between ethnocide and ethnogenesis)*, where the author draws the attention of historians to the complexity of forming new identities which emerged in the colonial period. Such transformations can be seen as political strategies of groups or individuals – the author highlights the work of indigenous leaders in the context of *agency* – "before the demographic catastrophe, the military, evangelizing and economic strategies of the Europeans" (2001,

p.75). So, by locating the problem of the historiographical void on Indians in the nineteenth century as a result of the relationship between their own stories and the emergence of history as a discipline, John Monteiro clarifies issues and contexts and offers clues to the future of the history of Indians in Brazil.

The production of John Monteiro influenced subsequent generations of historians of the Indians. Under his direct guidance²⁵ and in other research centers, several studies advanced in pointing indigenous participation in history and covered different themes and periods²⁶. This first wave of researchers, through extensive documentary research, focused especially on the colonial period. Topics such as the conflicts generated by the interiorization of the conquer, the dependence of settlers on the Indians and the consequent range of generated alliances, disputes on workforce; were the main subjects discussed by Pedro Puntoni (2002) and Glóri Kok (2004). Another problem brought to light by scholars of Indians at that time was the relationship between religiosity and life in the missions, demonstrating the complexity of the cultural translation issue; authors like Cristina Pompa (2003) and Almir Diniz de Carvalho Jr. (2005) are examples of this. The use of documents produced by Indians

25 John Manuel Monteiro taught at UNESP (Araraquara, Assis and Franca) between 1986 and 1991, and at the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) since 1994. He was linked both to the Department of Anthropology and to the Department of History. He was a visiting professor at Harvard University (2003-4), University of Michigan (1997) and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (1985-86). In addition to his experience as a teacher, he was “Directeur d'Études Invité” at EHESS in Paris (1999) and a CEBRAP researcher between 1991 and 1998. His performance with the Brazilian Anthropological Association (ABA), the National History Association (ANPUH) and the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Social Sciences (ANPOCS) are demonstrative of his circulation and openness to dialogue and articulation. He was also the coordinator of the Working Group on indigenous issues at ANPUH bringing together researchers from all around the country. John Monteiro died in March 2013 at age 56 in a traffic accident.

26 Fortunately, as the Indians have become subject of study of a large and efficient group of historians and anthropologists, it will not be possible for this article to consider the totality of old and new works produced after the 1990s. Our criterion was to prioritize studies published or those that have excelled in specific themes. A practically complete list can be found on the website created by John Monteiro, *Os Índios na História do Brasil. Informações, estudos, imagens*. [*Indians in the history of Brazil. Information, studies, images*] In addition to the list, one can find there reviews of the works. Available in <http://www.ifch.unicamp.br/ihb/>.

was explored by Eduardo dos Santos Neumann (2005), demonstrating the Guaranis proper appropriation of the colonial institutions. The thesis of Mariana de Campos Françaço (2009), in turn, shows how the colonial knowledge was built concurrently through the analysis of the movement of persons, objects and speeches between Brazil and the Netherlands.

Maria Regina Celestino de Almeida deserves special mention, considering that her work has had a significant reach and contributed to the dissemination of the theme. In addition, she is responsible for a whole different wave of guidance at the *Universidade Federal Fluminense (Fluminense Federal University)*, one of the main production centers of historical knowledge in the country. In *Metamorfoses Indígenas: identidade e cultura nas aldeias coloniais do Rio de Janeiro (Indigenous Metamorphoses: identity and culture in the colonial villages of Rio de Janeiro)* (2003), the author studies the place of Indians in Rio settlements and the disputes over the use of their work and land, as well as their role on the decisions over these processes. This study modifies the static and passive vision on Indians by offering a new reading of their roles as leaders, mediators, allies and sometimes enemies of the Portuguese in the construction of the colonial universe. By using different sources from various places, some of them well known, the author shows how interesting processes of reconstruction of indigenous identities and culture were forged in places where at first glance, there would be no loopholes to break with the rigid social hierarchy from colonial times.

The works become somewhat scarcer for the imperial and republican periods as compared to colonial period. Nevertheless, some of them show the rich range of possibilities, whether in the guise of sources, methodology or cutouts. Izabel Missagia de Mattos (2004) proposes the discussion on the subject of the different historicity schemes in the context of the Capuchin peasants. Luisa Wittmann (2007) presents the nineteenth-century immigration problems and possibilities considering individuals

trajectories in contexts of contact through adoption or abduction of indigenous. Lucybeth Camargo de Arruda (2012) shows how the use of photographs can be an interesting source for understanding the indigenous acting in the SPI posts, beyond a vision that placed them as receptacles of government policies during the 1940s. Other studies have been dedicated to understanding the role of indigenous leaders in the struggles for territorial rights, such as the thesis of Edson Hely Silva (2008), which demonstrates the strength of the use of oral sources for the construction of new historical narratives. The use and discussion of indigenous memory was studied by Giovani José da Silva (2009), in the border of Brazil and Bolivia, in an attentive transnational perspective of the processes lived between the 1930s and the 1980s. The number of papers on the Brazilian Indigenous Movement has also grown, and it shall soon count on “organic” intellectual production.

Throughout this reconfiguration occurred in recent decades in the field of Brazilian historiography of Indians, the work and the professional performance of John Monteiro played a decisive role. As we saw earlier, the researcher had his training linked to the transformations suffered by the field in the United States, and incorporated the theoretical and methodological innovations, especially those arising from ethnohistory. His work is the result of a thorough understanding and dialogue between North American and Brazilian indigenous historiography in both countries, central topic of this article. Attentive to images of Indians in history and historiography, the researcher constantly analyzed them in his classes, courses, lectures, and conferences. On more than one occasion he used the “Tapuia Dance” painting by Albert Eckhout. The Dutch painter followed Mauricio de Nassau court during the Dutch occupation of part of the current northeast region of Brazil. He landed in Recife in 1637 as an employee of the West India Company (Brienen, 2006). Eckhout’s paintings carry with them an important set of information on the context of visual culture of the time,

on the Dutch imaginary classification and the ways chosen to portray the Indians, especially the Tapuia Indians, who were relatively marginal from the set of colonial representations focused on the Tupi groups. The analysis of the images provides a better understanding of the types of experiences, materials, ideas, and practices used by Europeans to portray the New World. It also offers ways to rethink the colonial dynamic as they recompose relevant relationships between editorial interference and the political use of these images. However, to achieve all information and issues that a historical source can bring it takes to read beyond words, as the historian warned during the First International Forum of Indigenous Issues, held in June 2010 in Porto Alegre²⁷. Aware of temporalities, the time of production of the work, the time of publication, and the uses made of the image, John Monteiro drew attention to the fact that the *Tapuia Dance* appeared incomplete on websites and book covers, with some of its characters missing. Such erasing was performed by means of a cutout, which in turn took the portrayed history out of context and made it impossible to fully grasp. As part of the understanding of the source made literally by halves, John Monteiro emphasized that with the cuts the historian lost not only important information about zoology, botany, art techniques, and socio-cultural contexts, but also “the return of the look” of one of the characters. In other words, he lost the interaction between the source and the viewer proposed by the author, so important to capture elements of the contact culture and of the Indians action.

²⁷ John Monteiro held the closing conference of the First International Forum of Indigenous Thematic, at the invitation of the authors of this article, also creators and organizers of that event.



Tapuya Dance [Dança Tapuia], ca 1643. Albert Eckhout (ca. 1607 – ca. 1666). Óleo sobre tela, 172 x 295 cm. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, Denmark.
Albert Eckhout, *Tapuya Dance*, oil on canvas, 172 x 295 cm.
Courtesy of the Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen.

It was startling for the authors of this paper to realize that about three years later, on an opposite end of the Americas, historians of the New Indian History used the same argument to demonstrate what sometimes seems so difficult to understand: that you cannot teach the Americas' history without the Indians' history.

According to John Monteiro, in Brazil there have been significant advances in the recovering and interpretation of indigenous past between scholars and from the emerging indigenous movements. However, there is a huge barrier between academic research and indigenous perceptions of their role in history. "Part of the problem lies in the lack of Indian historians with higher education, which departs from the Brazilian case of other experiences in the Americas, in which the contributions of writers and native intellectuals - in the past and presently - has been of the highest importance" (Monteiro, 1999, p.248). In Brazil, the extent of the rights in the educational field is very recent. As in the US, previous education policies had clear goals of assimilation and

integration. Brazilian indigenous reach a place in universities only in the first decade of this century, after a long walk fights for that space and mode of production and dissemination of knowledge (Baniwa, 2006). This was through the institutionalization of the Quotas Act and established a federal project for higher education exclusively devoted to the Indians. This openness has created potential as regards the forms of dialogue between universities and communities.

There is a tortuous way to course, which will decipher the codes used in indigenous speeches and narratives, and relates them in more contextualized manners to processes of identity reconfigurations and elaborations. This will also allow us to raise new flights.

In conclusion

Writing and teaching about the history of Indians in the Americas is not an easy task. In 1987, Michael Dorris, an indigenous researcher of the Modoc ethnicity and then director of the Center for Indigenous Studies at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, pointed out strategic ways so that researchers could perhaps face this challenge with more success. He wrote that a serious consideration of indigenous history should begin with an “initial abrupt, and wrenching, demythologizing”. According to anthropologist Jennifer Brown and historian Elizabeth Vibert, what Dorris called 'demythologizing' some scholars have called “decolonization of knowledge” (Brown & Vibert, 2003, P.12). Knowledge decolonizing means understanding better the colonization project, that is, to seek to understand as deeply as possible the specific historical contexts where different types of narratives about Europeans and *the other* were produced. We must confront the logic of powerful ideas about culture and cultural differences to break with what Daniel Usner considered one of the most enduring and enigmatic legacies of

colonialism: the unfortunate speech that holds Indians between two opposite poles, that of authenticity and that of annihilation, and hides the way by which dynamic and durable societies seek to reconcile tradition and innovation in their accommodation and resistance in face of powerful forces (Usner, 2009). To break this speech in the practice of making historiography opens new ways to make the presence of Indians less discreet – which, in this case, means the same as saying more real – in the studies of social history in different parts of the Americas.

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