

indigenous Brazil



1992

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PRESENTATION

Protecting the Indian's rights and culture have been one of the main concerns of my Administration.

With humanistic sentiment, and oriented by a clear ethical sense, we began to pay back in a decisive manner a moral and historical debt with the people who make up the base of our ethnic group.

Lack of knowledge of the value of the indigenous people's view of life made our national society on many occasions deny indigenous groups the possibility of maintaining their own culture and traditions.

The basic directives of my Administration's Indian policy are guided by the respect for cultural identity, defense and promotion of their rights according to the Federal Constitution, and commitment to staking out the lands they have traditionally occupied.

Demarcation of the Yanomami lands, determined by my Administration on November 15, 1991, is representative of this new orientation. This group of Indians will have the space for preserving

their traditional way of life assured in an area of 9.4 million hectares.

We understand perfectly that land for the Indians is not restricted to a source of wealth; it is space vital to their social and cultural survival. Demarking and protecting those lands, more than a constitutional duty of the Union, is an unshakable commitment of my Administration.

Brazilian democracy is strengthened by respect for and placing value on cultural pluralism. Defense of the Indian culture is an element vital to the construction of the modern, democratic country we are working for.

I have reiterated that defense of indigenous peoples is the point where the questions of human rights and environmental protection meet. This publication presents, in a succinct manner, a survey of how much we have done in the past two years in favor of the Indian cause.

Following the example of the Brazilian people, the participants of Rio-92 will know how to recognize how correct my Administration's Indian policy has been and our undeniable commitment to defend this part of the Brazilian population.

*Fernando Collor
President of the Republic*

INDIAN LEGISLATION: A RECENT VICTORY

For more than 400 years the indigenous population had no substantial assistance from the State. During the Colonial Period a few legal instruments were produced. However, at the same time those laws gave relative protection, they also let the tribes which had already been contacted be explored and oppressed. Even during the Empire, the Indian policy was based on missionary work aimed at converting Indians to Christianity and "civilizing" Indian peoples.

At the beginning of the XX Century conflicts between white men and Indians in different regions of Brazil had national and international repercussions. The pressure was decisive in founding the Indian Protection Service (SPI) in 1910. At that time, Brazil was going through a process of modernization with modest industrialization, and positivist ideas were gaining expression.

Field Marshall Cândido Mariano Rondon, at that time a young officer in the Brazilian Army, was impressed by those ideas and became one of the main protagonists in the process of creating the SPI.

The SPI mission was to defend Indian peoples against exploration and oppression that occurred when they came into contact with the less enlightened segments of society. One of its priorities was to "pacify" the more recluse groups before they came into indiscriminate contact with other sectors of Brazilian society.

While that work helped avoid extermination of the Indians, it did not keep their territories from being invaded by rubber collectors, ranchers and squatters. SPI employees were impotent when it came to holding back the advance of the economic frontier.

White man's push into the tribal territories caused the Indians other grave problems. Environmental degradation resulted from the dispute for natural resources with non-Indians. That situation made survival difficult and, in some cases, wiped out whole tribes. Epidemics proliferated because of the Indians' lack of immunity to the white man's diseases, which also contributed to the disappearance of many tribes. The imposition of new techniques affected the traditional economic and cultural systems of Indian communities, making them become dependent and forcing them to become part of the work force in the white man's system. Worse yet, there was prejudice and discrimination against the Indian.

From a legal standpoint, the Indian policy was based on a governmental guardianship law in the Civil Code of 1916. Aside from guardianship, other laws were elaborated aimed at integrating the Indian in national society. SPI work was fundamental for creating the tradition of experts in Indian studies. Without it, many groups would have had no chance of survival.

FUNAI

However, during the period after Marshall Rondon's work in the SPI, there were problems that finally led to its extinction and creation of the National Indian Foundation (Funai) in 1967, with approval of Law # 5.371. Funai was put under the former Interior Ministry.

The new agency was given the task of administering, conserving, increasing and adding value to the Indian patrimony; carrying out surveys, studies and scientific research on the Indian communities, and guaranteeing basic education necessary for progressive integration of the Indian in national society.

Toward the end of the 1960's and all through the 1970's, the development policy of the time – aimed especially at incorporating new economic frontiers to the productive process – violently hurt many Indian groups. Many of them lived in places that had been hard to reach until that time – in the states in the Amazon Region. The Indians were surprised as roads were built through their territory, hydro-electric plants were installed on their land and they had to confront conflicts with squatters, farmers, gold prospectors and lumberjacks.

Even though the political and economic scenario was adverse to Indian interests, in December, 1973, the Indian Statute (Law # 6.001) was edited, based on the rights in the Geneva Convention and the ideals of Marshall Cândido Mariano Rondon. Funai began to orient its work according to that Statute and was charged with making protection of Indian communities work in harmony with development programs.

CURRENT SITUATION

The 1988 Constitution brought profound changes in the treatment of Indian issues. With Articles 215 and 231 of the Constitution, Indians were no longer seen as part of a culture that was disappearing. The idea of integration was abandoned, and cultural diversity was assured. Since it recognized cultural diversity and guaranteed the Indians the right to preserve their ethnic and cultural identity, the Constitution gave the State the job of treating those peoples in a differentiated manner. State guardianship which had so far had a restrictive character, based on an authoritarian, paternalistic relationship, was perfected with the objective of creating a more modern and less limited policy.

Within the ideal of respecting Indian peoples and differentiated cultures, Funai tried to develop its work of helping the 250,000 Indians who are known to exist today in the country. The Amazon Region has the largest Indian population today – 65% of the total. The others live scattered through the other states, with the exception of the Federal District, Piauí and Rio Grande do Norte.

The type of contact those groups have with the rest of Brazilian society varies greatly. There are communities like the Terena, in Mato Grosso do Sul, Guajajara, in Maranhão, and Pataxó, in Bahia, who have a very close relationship with regional society. Others avoid that contact and thus manage to preserve their customs and traditions.

The work being developed by Funai – fulfilling the directives established by the Administration of President Fernando Collor – is now aimed at efficient attention to Indian needs in their territories, Indian participation in discussions on the Indian policy and demarcation of their lands.

Meanwhile, a greater commitment by different sectors of society in working with Indian peoples is being sought.

STAKING OUT THE LAND, A PRIORITY

The physical and cultural survival of Brazilian indigenous peoples depends on guaranteeing their lands. Throughout the history of the country, hundreds of ethnic groups have disappeared as their lands were invaded and their social organization destroyed. Of the five million Indians historians estimate existed at the beginning of the XVI Century, Funai has only counted 250,000 (some groups are still isolated and have not been contacted), distributed in 510 Indian areas which cover 895,577 square kilometers, or 10.52% of the national territory.

Invasion of Indian lands began with colonization of the American Continent and persists even today. Either because of the natural resources that exist on their lands – as is the situation of the Yanomami, Nambikwara and Kayapó –, or because the frontiers of the economy are expanding into their areas – as was the case of the Parakanã and Arara –, Indians continue to pay a high price for the expansion of Brazilian society.

The only way to hold back the advance toward untouched areas and get invaders out of the parts that have already been intruded is to stake out the land and keep watch on it. A total of 124 areas, covering 207,216 square kilometers, have been staked out and ratified during the Collor Administration. That is more than half of all the area set aside for Indians so far. Many of the processes included areas that had already been staked out and had been waiting for ratification since 1974. During the Collor Administration, processing became more agile.

In January 1991, the Capoto/Jarina and Xingu Indigenous Park areas, covering 26,000 square kilometers in Mato Grosso, were ratified. Other areas were ratified in Rio Grande do Sul: Carreteiro, Cacique Doble, Guarita, Inhaçorá and Ligeiro.

Aside from the 94,000 square kilometers the government set aside for the Yanomami Indians in the states of Amazonas and Roraima,

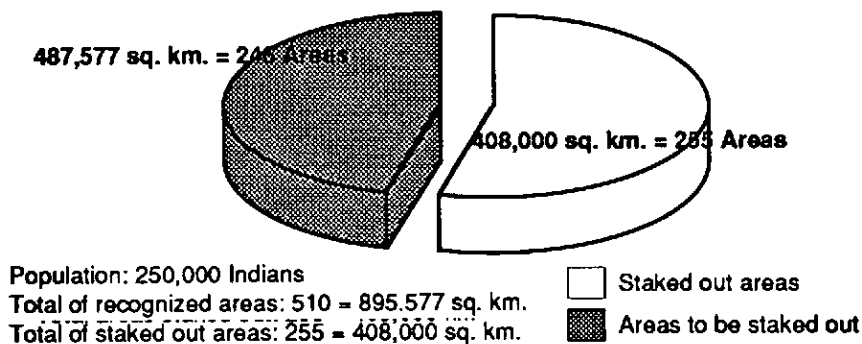
it has staked out 18 other territories, covering 10,690 square kilometers. The Collor Administration also recognized 22 other Indian areas, totalling 192,373 km².. Another 24 areas, totalling 44.233 km², have been identified by Funai and sent on to the Justice Ministry to have decrees written recognizing them as Indian lands.

According to the 1988 Federal Constitution, all Indian lands should be staked out by October 1993, which is a great challenge to Funai. So far 50.9% of the Indian lands in the country have been staked out, covering 408,000 km².

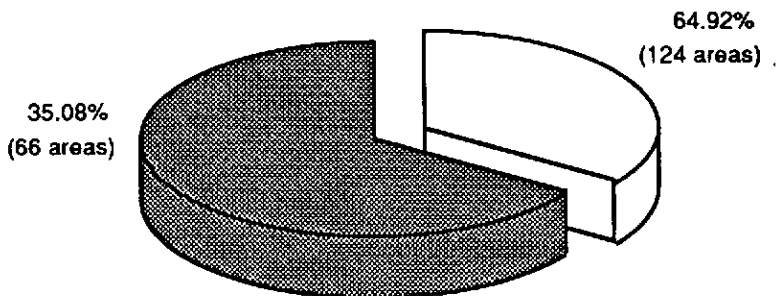
According to Article 231 of the Constitution, the Union should stake out, protect and guarantee the rights of all the riches of the Indian lands, which are included in the patrimony of the Union. Indian areas are defined as the "lands traditionally occupied by the Indians, those where they have lived permanently, those used for their productive activities, those indispensable to preservation of the environmental resources necessary for their well-being and those necessary for their physical and cultural reproduction, according to their uses, customs and traditions." The Constitution also guarantees the Indians permanent possession of their lands, and they have exclusive, unalienable and indispensable usufruct of the riches of its soils, rivers and lakes.

Law 6.001 of the Statute of the Indian is now being revised in light of the 1988 Constitution. The current Statute reinforces protection of Indian lands, adding that they cannot be rented or be subject to any act that restricts complete exercise of direct possession by the community. The same law adds that recognition of the Indian right to possession of the lands they inhabit does not depend on the land being marked as such.

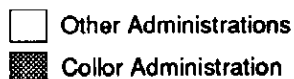
Indian Areas



Numbers of Ratified Indian Areas



Total number of ratified areas: 190



THE DEMARKATION PROCESS

The first step in regulating Indian lands, when the occupation of a group in a certain area is recognized, is to identify it. For that to happen, according to Executive Decree # 022, of 1991, Funai must create a work group that carries out technical studies, gathering anthropological, cartographic and land ownership data on the Indian group in its territory.

From then on the Indian community participates in all the phases of the identification process and recognition of the territory in loco begins. The historical and current occupation of the group on the site is analyzed, together with the group's basic economic activities, its relationship with the environment and with society at large. Once the group's claims and necessities have been detected, Funai has the basis for its proposal for the area that should be staked out.

That territory should include all the places used for the subsistence of the group and places considered sacred, like cemeteries and former villages. To guarantee the ecological balance of the territory in the process of identification, areas which present a risk of being devastated and causing harm to the community – like rivers, their sources and places of importance to the flora and fauna – are taken into consideration.

Once the Indian area to be staked out has been determined and its map drawn up according to existing norms, it is submitted to the Justice Ministry, which issues a decree guaranteeing permanent possession of the land by the group and calling for its demarkation. During this process the Federal land tenure agency, which is currently INCRA (National Colonization and Agrarian Reform Institute), takes the non-Indians who have been identified during the identification stage out of the area and resettles them somewhere else. In cases where good faith in settlement within the area is proven, Funai gives those settlers indemnification for the improvements they have made on the land.

Following the administrative process of demarkation, the Indian lands are submitted to the President to be ratified by decree. The final phase of regulation is registering the area in the appropriate county real estate registrar office and at the Department of Patrimony of the Union.

Funai has no estimates on the total areas occupied by the groups of Indians which are still isolated. The policy for protecting those groups has been to interdict the lands they occupy when they are found, as has happened with the Kurubo, Quixetu and other tribes that live in the Javari River Valley in Atalaia do Norte in Amazonas, the Awá-Guajá in Maranhão, Avá-Canoeiro in Goiás, Marimã in southern Amazonas and Poturu do Cuminapanema in Pará.

YANOMAMI LAND IS GUARANTEED

After being confronted with systematic invasions by gold prospectors of their land for almost two decades, the Yanomami Indians on the border between Venezuela and the Brazilian states of Amazonas and Roraima had their territory recognized by the government on November 15, 1991. The work to stake out their land began on January 27, of that same year and was concluded in May, 1992.

The Yanomami, one of the most interesting ethnic groups on the Continent, now have a continuous, marked area that covers 94,000 square kilometers. When the work of staking out a perimeter of 1,700 km. was finished, President Fernando Collor's promise to guarantee the land of the Yanomami Indians had been fulfilled, after a succession of advances and retreats by previous Administrations.

In 1988 the area was even cut into 19 "islands" and two national forests by a presidential decree, opening corridors through which more than 40,000 gold miners invaded the reservation. They brought a series of diseases and deaths to the Yanomami and caused serious social degradation. Attracted by the prospectors, many groups of Yanomami abandoned their traditional activities and became dependent on the miners who were spread around the area – especially along Mucajal River and its tributaries, and the Parima and Surucucus mountains.

The first attempt to remove the invaders was made at the beginning of the Collor Administration, when dozens of clandestine air strips, where the prospectors landed to take machines and fuel to areas of difficult access, were exploded. The energetic action first made the prospectors give in, but they soon rebuilt the air strips and got around the attempts to control the area. The Yanomami area contains as yet uncalculated deposits of gold and cassiterite. Since the North Perimeter Road was built during the 1970s, it has been the apple of the eye of prospectors.

In June of last year, there was a lot of prospecting movement in the region together with a critical health situation among the Yanomami, resulting from the introduction of white man's diseases like malaria, as well as serious cases of malnutrition. Twenty-two vigilance posts were created in the area, equipped with radio transmitters. Most of the prospectors left the Indian area spontaneously. By the end of September, only a few groups continued to prospect, especially in places that were difficult to reach, in the dense forests and high mountains along the border.

In October, there was a serious confrontation between members of Funai and the Federal Police with the prospectors near Surucucus. Despite the resistance, on November 15, 1991, President Collor announced the delimitation of Yanomami territory in a ceremony held in Brasília. Right afterwards, bids were opened to begin the work of staking out that territory.

The land was staked out by opening a six-meter wide path all along the 700 km of dry borders, putting signs every two kilometers. The other 1,000 kilometers have borders on geographical lines, like riv-

ers and streams. The work carried out in that area is beginning to give the Yanomami back the peace they need to return to their traditional activities like planting gardens and building community huts, which many groups had abandoned because they were living near the prospectors.

WHO ARE THE YANOMAMI?

According to historical data that dates back to 1787, various Yanomami sub-groups lived in the Parima Mountain Range on the border between Brazil and Venezuela, between the Branco and Orinoco River Basins. The migratory movement from Parima which resulted in the current Yanomami territory began in the middle of the XIX Century. However, the first contacts between Yanomami and local society only took place early in the XX Century.

The Yanomami belong to an isolated linguistic family and are the largest tribal group recently contacted in the Americas. Some groups are still totally isolated both in Brazil and in Venezuela. They have an extremely rich culture and speak various dialects, which leads anthropologists to believe that they once inhabited an even bigger area.

Families live together in large communal huts, the Xaponos, which have an uncovered area in the middle. They are hunters, gatherers, fishermen and raise gardens, activities which many Yanomami abandoned when the prospectors arrived.

The mythical universe of the Yanomami is extremely complex. Using its ideals, shaman David Yanomami, from Demeni Village, gave a moving testimony of the drama his people were going

through as a result of the invasion of their lands. Below are fragments of the testimony the shaman gave to anthropologist Bruce Albert, in 1990, telling about the troubles of the Indians.

"We call these epidemics xawara. It is xawara that kills the Yanomami. That is how we call epidemics. Now we know where xawara comes from. Our forefathers had kept xawara hidden for a long time.

"Oname - creator of Yanomami humanity and of its cultural norms - had kept it hidden. He had hid it and did not want the Yanomami to uncover it. But now the nabebe, the white men, after they discovered our forest, were possessed by a frenetic desire to take the xawara from the depths of the earth where Oname had hid it. Xawara is also the name of what we call booshike, the metal substance that you call "ore". We are afraid of it. The xawara of the ore is the enemy of the Yanomami and of you, too. It wants to kill us. Like this, first you get sick, then it kills you. That is why we Yanomami are very disturbed.

"As long as gold is in the cold deep in the earth, everything is fine. Everything is really fine. It is not dangerous. When the white man takes the gold from the earth, they burn it and mix it over the fire as if it were manioc flour. Then the xawara wakexi, this "smoke epidemic", spreads through the land of the white man, everywhere. That is why we are dying, because of that smoke. It turns into measles smoke. It becomes aggressive, and when it does, it puts an end to the Yanomami.

It makes the white men die the same way. It is not just the Yanomami that die. The white men may be numerous, but they will all die, too. And that is what the Yanomami say among themselves ...

"When that smoke reaches the lungs of the sky, it will also begin to get very sick, it will be attacked by the xawara. The Earth will get sick. We do not want to die. We want to be numerous. But now that the prospectors have seen us and come to us, even though Oname hid the gold in the depths of the earth, they are taking a lot of it out, making holes in the forest. That is why the xawara has grown so much. It is very high in the sky ... and the sky will end up cracking.

"If the prospectors continue to walk in our forests and don't return to their own place, the Yanomami are going to die, they are really going to be wiped out. There will be no one to cure us. When the prospectors wipe out the Yanomami there will be no one else to take their place ... no, no, no. Omame went away from this world to a very far place and will not create other Yanomami ... no, no, no."

A POLICY FOR ISOLATED INDIANS

Brazil is one of the few countries in the world where there are still ethnic groups which have not had contact with society at large. They are what we call isolated Indians. According to a Funai survey, all of them are located in the Amazon, with the exception of the Avá-Canoeiro in Goiás.

A few indigenous groups managed to reach the present day maintaining their autonomy despite pressure on their territory, and they receive special protection from Funai, through its Isolated Indian Department. The most recent survey on those groups relates 75 isolated groups. All of them, in one form or another, have begun to feel the impact of pioneer fronts – especially prospectors, lumberjacks and settlers who are encroaching on their land. The expansion of national society has led those groups to try to find strategies to guarantee their survival, from holding their ground and fighting to looking for new areas where they can maintain their autonomy.

Funai has a policy based on the 1988 Federal Constitution aimed at securing the autonomy of these peoples and rejecting any attempt at integrating them. Thus, contrary to former policy, the

isolated groups are not seen as those which should be "attracted" or "contacted" for pacification to be incorporated into Brazilian society whenever that society decides it is time to expand its economic frontiers and occupy untamed lands.

Contact has only been made with the isolated groups when there is a threat to their physical and cultural integrity, or when they feel compelled to find a new habitat, almost always meeting up with Indian groups that have already been contacted or conflicting with segments of national society that have already installed themselves in the Amazon.

That is what happened with the Awá-Guajá in Maranhão and possibly with the Sirionó, who live on the right bank of the Guaporé River in Rondônia. The latter group's traditional territory is being invaded by lumbering outfits. In a dramatic attempt to stop the invasion, the Indians are putting wooden spikes along the paths in the jungle to keep the trucks and tractors from entering.

The first steps are taken by the System for Protecting Isolated Indians, under the the Indian Protection Department, to gather information on the existence of Indians in a specific region. Formed by experienced Funai employees, the teams determine the probable point of their location through the information and go to the site. If the information is true, they study the territorial situation and land tenure problems the Indian groups are facing.

Only after a criterious and precise field survey do they decide whether it is better to try to protect the Indian territory at a distance or contact them. Contact is only considered when the environment is so devastated or the social structure of the Indian group so destroyed that it threatens their survival.

WORK FRONTS

The Rio Madeirinha (Mato Grosso) Contact Front: *The team has a fixed base on Branco River, a tributary of the Roosevelt River in Mato Grosso, where an isolated group wanders. The Madeirinha contact group has been having difficulty carrying out its activities since the lack of financial resources has made it impossible to re-equip the front. It is far from everything and the rivers are hard to navigate, causing excess wear and tear on the boats and their motors, as well as on the team which is confronting a region where there is a lot of malaria.*

Guaporé Contact Front: *This group is working between the Cautário and Corumbiara Rivers (in western Rondônia), which are tributaries on the right bank of the Guaporé River. Their work has confirmed the presence of isolated Indians, possibly belonging to the Sirinó ethnic group. The front has tried to stop lumbering activities in the area where the group wanders.*

Iriri (Pará) Contact Front: *The activities of this front are carried out in the middle of the Xingu River, and precariously on the Iriri River and its tributaries. The area has fallen under the influence of the Trans-Amazonic Highway between Altamira and Itaituba.*

Cuminapanema (Pará) Protection System: *There is a post to contact the Cuminapanema on the banks of Cuminapanema River, in the Cuminapanema/Urucuriana Indian area in the Oriximiná municipality of Pará.*

Funai mounted the post in 1991 when it took out NTB (New Tribes of Brazil) missionaries. The work has been aimed at helping the Indians control diseases (malaria, typhoid fever, leishmaniasis and typhus) while helping the tribe recuperate and reorganize its social and cultural structure. In that work a program to control diseases acquired in contact was implemented together with territorial vigilance and protection to defend the physical and cultural integrity of the Poturu ethnic group.

Awá/Guajá Protection System in Maranhão: There is a support group working with the Awá-Guajá, a contact front and three Indian posts to help protect this group which is having difficulties with lumbering groups, isolated Indians and Indians that have already been contacted.

Jordão River Attraction Front in Acre: The Funai team is working on Envira River, on the border with Peru. Last year it was only able to continue its activities due to a pact signed with SEMAM-PR.

Rio Purus Contact Front in Amazonas: Created through an agreement signed with SEMAM-PR to find isolated Indians around the Purus River, this front has been working in the following areas: a) Piranha and Riozinho Rivers which are tributaries of Cumiwá River (which in turn flows into the left bank of the Tapauá River in Amazonas); b) the middle of the Mucum River (which flows into the right bank of the Purus River); c) from the middle of Pacia River to Mari River (which flows into the right bank of the Purus River); d) the sources of the Tumã, Seruini and Sepatini Rivers (the latter flowing into the left bank of the Purus River). Their work has not only confirmed the presence of isolated Indian groups but also has guaranteed its program for this year by elaborating another agreement with SEMAM-PR aimed at continued localization studies and learning about specific areas where the groups wander.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE IN INDIAN AREAS

Funai has had an Indian Lands Environmental Service (SEMATI) since 1989. In 1991, it was transformed into a Coordination responsible for administering all the activities aimed at protecting the environment in Indian territories.

A preliminary survey led the Environmental Coordination to estimate that 176 Indian areas have been affected by railroads or highways, 28 have been affected by mining endeavors, 54 suffer from exploration of forest resources and more than 120 are endangered by future interference from electrical plants. It should be noted that this survey also includes data on industrial wastes, garbage dumps, landing strips, rural settlements and exploration of natural resources in the area around Indian lands. It is constantly being updated as data arrives from different areas. The data so far collected probably does not represent more than 60% of white man's interference in Indian peoples.

While it is hard to set priorities regarding the environment of Indian territories given the devastation of their natural resources and the importance of an ecological balance to the survival of these groups, Funai has chosen a few types of action as the first essential steps to revert this scenario. They are: environmental education both for the Indian communities and Funai employees and for society at large; a diagnosis of environmental problems in order to locate them, know how grave they are and what their causes are to be able to identify measures to solve the problems and prevent others, and recuperation of degraded areas in order to restore the balance which has been lost by activities that have affected the environment.

Funai has been carrying out environmental protection activities in Indian lands and intensifying the participation of other governmental agencies that are involved with environmental issues, like the Brazilian Environmental and Renewable Natural Resources Institute (Ibama), Forest Police and State Environmental Secretariats, as well as by interested non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

THE INDIAN MUSEUM

Planned by anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro when he was head of the Indian Protection Service Study Section, the Indian Museum was inaugurated on April 19, 1953 in Rio de Janeiro as the maturation of experience in the Study Section during 10 years (it was created by Marshall Rondon with the original name of Ethnographic Section).

To be employed by the Study Section, a person had to be intellectually and politically in harmony with the institution, which was committed to upholding Indian rights and getting to know their culture. The SPI Study Section had important cultural leaders like anthropologists Darcy Ribeiro and Eduardo Galvão, linguist Max Boudin, musicologist Helza Cameu and movie producer Heinz Foerthman, to name a few.

Originally located in a house belonging to the Agriculture Ministry on Mata Machado Street, the Museum increased the investigative activities of the Study Section and gave it consultation, producing relevant projects and scientific and cultural literature, like systematic collection of Indian artifacts, recordings of sounds, photographs and movies.

The Museum was responsible for introducing anthropology as a professional activity in Brazil, having an important multiplier effect on activities being developed in an isolated manner in other institutions. Just in its first year of existence, there were studies by Darcy Ribeiro among the Urubu-Kaapor in Maranhão, by Eduardo Galvão among Indians on the Negro River, and by Max Boudin among the Maxacali in Minas Gerais, while the Museum of the Indian offered support and financial stimulus to research projects at other institutes, like that of Herbert Baldus among the Terena, Egon Schaden among the Kaiwá and Kaoro Onaga among the Guaporé Indians.

There was also a series of studies in the area of medicine, ethnobotany and ethno-zoology carried out by Noel Nutels and Leão da Motta among the Xavante and Karajá Indians and tribes on the upper Xingu River, and by Paulo Emílio Vanzolini among the Canela Indians in Maranhão. The Museum also promoted innumerable other studies through programs to collaborate with the SPI and other institutions.

Among those some of the most important were Alfred Métraux's ethnological studies of the Kubén-Kran-Ken/Kayapó Indians for the UNESCO Social Science Department, the documentation of language, song and musical instruments of various Jê Indian groups carried out by ethno-musicologist Simone Dreyfus-Roche from the Museum of Man, and the study on the Tupari Indians of Amapá carried out by Franz Caspar from Hamburg University.

While carrying out its task of studying the Indians and collaborating with or elaborating programs and research projects of great importance to the SPI, the Museum of the Indian was also responsible for elaborating the project to create the Xingu Indigenous Park and the plan to attract timid or mistrustful Indians from Pará. It was also responsible for creating the Center for Training in Cultural Anthropology in 1955, which was also directed by Darcy Ribeiro.

ETHNOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION CENTER

The Museum of the Indian did not manage to maintain its importance in Indian studies when SPI decadence began in 1957. Powerful political and economic interests caused a profound crisis in the SPI and caused the graduate course in Anthropology to be closed, while all the specialized personnel left the institution.

When the SPI was closed in 1967, the Museum was turned over to inept administrators who lost a large part of its archives and artifacts. Even when Funai was created and the Museum was put under the new Indian agency, it did not function better. After all, the first administrators of the new governmental Indian agency, with a few rapid and sporadic exceptions, all had an authoritative attitude toward the Indians, turning the Museum into a static exhibition of Indian artifacts, making it useless as a consultative agency and inoperant in producing knowledge about Indian reality.

Finally, in 1976, there was an attempt to recuperate the original attributes of the Indian Museum with the creation of the Ethnological Documentation Center (CDE). That initiative resulted from an effort to gather documents on Indian groups and Indian studies that were spread around the different Funai units all over the country. The objective was to recompose an historical archive on Indian culture and rights, since the original one had been completely destroyed in a fire at SPI headquarters in Brasília in 1967.

At any rate, documents from all the Funai regional offices, the Rondon Committee and the National Council for Protection of Indian (CNPI) rights were brought together at CDE. Work with those documents together with outside sources of information – like the large archives, libraries and historical institutes in Rio de Janeiro –, was one of the main activities developed at the Museum. It now uses its Documentation Center to council Funai on Indian policies and in administrative and legal issues regarding Indian lands and other properties of the Indians.

Late in 1977, the Indian Museum was transferred to Botafogo neighborhood. It was installed in a large house built in 1880 that had housed the Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies (ISEB) and declared part of National Historical Patrimony. The building covers 2,000 sq. meters and the Museum of the Indian currently has a permanent display of Indian artifacts, a documentation center and a library, as well as technical sectors.

Among its collections the Indian Museum has some 10,000 ethnographic artifacts. There are artifacts Marshall Rondon collected among the Bororo Indians as well as priceless collections orga-

nized by experienced anthropologists and ethnologists during their field work in the 1950's, like the collections of artifacts from the Rankokramekra Indians of Maranhão. Indians from Xingu Park are represented by various artifacts like the Waurá zoomorphic pans, Kamayurá and Yawalapiti arms, masks and musical instruments.

There are also ceramic artifacts collected among the Baniwá Indians of Amazonas, the Terena Indians of Mato Grosso do Sul and the Karajá Indians of Tocantins, feather art from the Urubú Kaapor Indians of Maranhão and more contemporary artifacts. Ethnographic collections include those collected during the work of teams who attracted the Waimiri-Atroari, Parakanã and Krenhacacore Indians during the 1970s as well as artifacts from the Krahô Marubo and Menkragnoti Indians.

As documentation, the archives are priceless. The Marshall Rondon Library was created by gathering the book collections from the former SPI, the National Council for Protection of the Indians and part of Rondon's own library. It has some 30,000 Brazilian and foreign publications on anthropology and Indian studies and is one of the most complete specialized library of its kind in Brazil.

The Documentation Center has more than 500,000 microfilmed documents including those that came from the SPI central archives, the CNPI and newspaper clippings, maps and manuscripts. There is also a large amount of photographic documentation, including the 1,800 glass negatives from the Rondon Committee, showing Marshall Rondon during his first Indian studies. The Museum also has important ethnographic movies.

The association between anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro and movie producer Heinz Foerthman rendered films of great beauty and ethnographic value, like "A Day in the Life of Urubu Indians" and "Bororo Funeral" which have won prizes and international recognition.

In short, the experience of the Museum of the Indian over its almost 40 years of activities has shown that when a minimum amount of normality has been restored in its buildings, archives, technical

staff and program of activities, it can become an efficient instrument for advising Funai and a great support in helping Indian peoples in their fight to preserve or recuperate their material and cultural heritage. During the Rio Conference (UNCED), the Museum hopes to contribute to improved understanding of the concepts linked to "Environment and Development", offering the public an opportunity to have contact with Indian culture in all its diversity and sophistication, with emphasis on its close links to Nature.

THE FORCE OF INDIAN CULTURE AND ART

Throughout the existence of indigenous peoples, nature has been an unfailing source of inspiration for the art of men and women who find the pride of their ethnic identity in their own life histories. By transforming raw materials into marks of their physical and cultural survival, they are giving an authentic example of human sensitivity.

Indian art includes everything from handicraft artifacts generally destined for practical use to the creative way they express themselves in music, painting and dance. The goods they manufacture are elaborated with the diligence of people who see beauty as an equilibrium between human actions and the laws that rule the universe. Thus, in order to understand how Indians live and organize their societies, the most important parameter is their relationship with the physical area they inhabit, which is directly reflected in their artistic creations.

From that point of view, we can recognize two types of Indian culture, characterized by those who live in the forests and those who

have the savannahs as their home. The first type includes the largest number of communities and have stable agriculture. They have diversified types of arts and crafts due to the large quantity of natural resources. They make ceramics, weave baskets, weave hammocks and other types of cloth and make feather adornments of rare beauty. The savannah dwellers base their subsistence on hunting, fishing and gathering and show their talent in basket and mat weaving.

All the handicraft productions, including their houses, work instruments, animal traps, fish traps and other items which take on their physical form based on Indian knowledge, make up the material culture of each of the nearly 180 tribal groups in Brazil. That culture resulted from the interpretation their former generations made of the natural phenomena and elements, like rain, thunder and jungles, whose relationship to Indian life is explained through myths and rituals.

The handicrafts which have daily utilitarian use form a harmonious group of domestic utensils and work tools, like chisels, little knives made of animal teeth and bones, small brushes to paint with, canoes and hunting and fishing traps. The ceramic work characteristic of sedentary Indian societies presents highly aesthetic art which expresses their social order.

In the Amazon region there are cultures which produce ceramics, like the Assurini, Wayana-Apalá, Wai-Wai and Baniwa. However, the Karajá, who live in the Central-West region of Brazil, have some of the most interesting ceramic artifacts. They make animals and create dolls (called "litxikós") which are placed in scenery to show the whole social context of the tribe. In Xingu Park the Waurá Indian women make huge pots, called "mapukúlo" to process manioc. The Kadiwéu in Mato Grosso use a cord to make impressions on the wet clay to make designs in relief.

However, the artistic and cultural manifestations of the Indians are not restricted to handicrafts. There are also the myths created about their forefathers. For example, every year the tribes on the upper Xingu River hold the Kuarup Feast to pay homage to the illustrious members of their communities who have died, liberating

their spirits from living in the tribe. Based on stories passed down from generation to generation and unanimously accepted by all the village, these rituals have been a custom for thousands of years. It is common for Indian tribes to believe that sickness is a blight of the gods. Thus, they ask shaman to perform a ritual to drive off the evil spirits.

INDIAN ART PROGRAM

More than 20 years ago, as work on attracting isolated or timid Indians became more intense, the need to sell artifacts obtained in the exchange of objects arose. Those exchanges are seen by the Indians as a demonstration of friendship and a desire to get closer. After that ritual, the Indians return to their villages, taking the "prizes" that were left for them, leaving behind their own artifacts, which completely filled up the Museum of the Indian.

That was how the Indian Art Program was born. The objective is to save, promote, fortify and divulge diverse artistic manifestations of the Brazilian Indian societies. To meet the objectives of the program Funai opened Indian Art shops to divulge and sell Indian artifacts in the biggest Brazilian tourist cities like Rio and São Paulo, and in the capitals of states where there are the greatest number of non-aculturated Indian groups, like Manaus, Belém and Cuiabá. Furthermore, the agency has been holding and participating in several exhibitions and fairs.

Incentives to handicraft production reduced the economic dependence of tribes that were going through the process of acculturation, when it is common to see a gradual increase in industrialized goods. Therefore, continued production of traditional artifacts was

important in preserving cultural customs, maintaining the organization of the group and fortifying its ethnic identity. Work carried out in a few free hours in the village, with everyone participating, offers complete involvement among the community, nature, work, art and cultural values.

This system implanted by Funai raised the living standards of several Indian groups, especially because returns were immediate. Selling handicrafts is still an important economic activity for many tribes as well as being a way to make their cultural representations known in the rest of society. Realizing that problems related to Indian handicrafts need to be solved at the grassroots, the Indian Art Program is trying to find a way of assisting Indian producers more adequately to preserve and enhance their ethnic identity and meet their new consumer needs.

HEALTH AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Health programs for the indigenous population are based on a policy aimed at controlling endemic diseases, training human resources, offering basic sanitation and creating appreciation for traditional Indian medicine. Emphasis is placed on primary attention at the Indian Posts. That work is facing a series of difficulties. Not only is there a lack of financial resources, but the communities which most need help are found in areas that are hard to reach and have low resistance to white man's diseases like the flu, measles and tuberculosis.

Due to Indian vulnerability to diseases they have no hereditary immunology to, vaccination is the main goal. Funai also tries to follow the nutritional condition of the Indians since contact with white

people and breaks in cultural patterns have grave reflexes on the balanced diets the communities had before contact.

Either because the animals they hunted and other food sources disappeared or because new eating habits have been introduced that are insufficient to guarantee a balanced diet, some Indian groups have serious nutritional problems. Physically debilitated, they suffer acute respiratory infections, get intestinal parasites, acute gastroenterocolitis, skin diseases and malaria.

In places where isolated groups of Indians live, the policy has been aimed at controlling epidemics by treating the non-Indian population that lives around them, so they cannot transmit the diseases through casual contacts with those groups. To treat Indians, Funai has created and maintained a support infrastructure that includes nursing stations, Indian Houses, sanitary installations, and teams of professionals in Indian areas. It has also tried to engage public and private health agencies in this effort.

They have been collaborating through accords or even informally. Several of the entities which collaborate with Funai are from the Health Ministry, like the National Health Foundation, SUCAM (the national malaria control program), INAMPS (the national health service) and the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation. Other agencies, like the French Médecins du Mond institution, federal universities, medical schools, religious missionaries, the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil, the Air Force Ministry, the Army Ministry, state and municipal health secretariats and public and private hospitals, have also collaborated.

In its attempt to integrate the actions of different sectors of society in health work with the Indians, Funai wants more value to be placed on traditional Indian medical practices. Whenever possible, it directs its work respecting the cultural peculiarities of the group. In that sense, the goal is to train more Indian health monitors who can interfere in a less aggressive manner in the psychological and social equilibrium in the communities.

Funai's health teams are composed of 344 female nurses, 114 nurses' aides, 24 laboratory technicians, three sanitation engineers, five

pharmacists, 50 male nurses, 35 dentists and 40 doctors. This professional staff, which is still too small to meet the basic needs of Funai, is responsible for the basic health actions. In the Northern Region, they are confronted with malaria, oncosarcosis, blastomiyosis and leishmaniasis. In the Northeast, there is schistosomiasis, leishmaniasis and alcoholism; in the Central-West and Southeast Regions there is also alcoholism and schistosomiasis, Chagas' disease, pemphigus and tuberculosis. In the South, the main diseases are tuberculosis, alcoholism and chronic degenerative diseases.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

It is estimated there are 46,900 Indian students studying in 878 schools. This part of Funai's work is extremely complex. Not only are there many languages and cultures to be dealt with, but there is also the problem of the location of the Indian territories, which are often hard to reach. Article 210, Paragraph II, and Article 231 of the Brazilian Constitution assure the indigenous population the right to scholastic education in their own language that respects and reinforces their customs, traditions, language, own learning processes. There is a staff of 727 educational programmers, primary school teachers, teaching aides and Indian teachers working at Indian schools. Besides the Indians who study at the Indian schools, 2,730 students have scholarships to study in the cities.

The educational program is aimed at fortifying the process of each group and is not centered on formal education. In that sense, UNESCO formulated specific proposals for indigenous groups in 1988, stating that inter-cultural bilingual education is extremely important not only to meet the demands of indigenous populations, but to help them mobilize other groups in society and defend their cultural values.

Bilingual education is defended in the most ample sense, involving everything from evaluating the curriculum and content, to systems of knowledge, their production and reproduction, to cultural schemes and ways of seeing and conceiving reality to the traditional social practices of indigenous people.

Emphasizing the fact that indigenous education is the mark of a heterogeneous, pluri-lingual, multicultural society, the UNESCO document adds that didactic material and other components of the system should correspond to that reality by using indigenous resources. The material should reflect the characteristics of the society, using its social and cultural activities and its institutionalized knowledge. Human resources should be trained according to current theories on inter-cultural, bilingual education. The population should have real participation in the different stages and aspects of the educational system (investigation, training, evaluation) no matter what level of formal instruction the people have.

Being a country with 180 known ethnic groups that speak 170 different languages, Brazil has difficulty in efficiently meeting the needs of all the communities. The languages spoken represent tiny minorities as compared to Portuguese. Many of them have disappeared and others are threatened with extinction. Of the known languages, 70 still have not been studied, which makes bilingual education impossible.

To overcome those difficulties, Funai defends bilingual, inter-cultural education with the help of national and foreign governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations. Priority must be given to training human resources, elaborating the didactic material, research and studies, investments in the physical infrastructure and support to the Indian students, especially those who leave their villages to study in the cities.

TRADITIONAL PLANTING PRACTICES

The Department of Self-Sustained Activities of the National Indian Foundation is working to give Indian communities incentive to begin practicing their traditional methods of food production again. The objective is to reduce the interference of the institution, on the medium and long term, in their productive process and thus assure the independence of the indigenous groups.

During the 1990-91 agricultural year, 41,130 hectares of different crops were planted and approximately 10,000 head of cattle were managed. Regional Funai Administrations liberated Cr\$ 400 million during the year. With those resources, more than a third of the indigenous groups will be able to continue their production of rice, beans, corn and manioc. Besides those traditional crops, some Indian communities in the South plant onions and peanuts. In the North, the Indians also collect Brazil nuts and latex.

Funai also gives the communities orientation on alternatives for planting and managing the soil, eliminating the use of chemicals and the practices of raising a single crop.

In that sense, there has been an effort to promote knowledge on the genetic make-up of traditionally cultivated plants and make a germoplasm bank viable. Likewise, specialists have been working to stimulate knowledge through studies and surveys on traditional use of flora and fauna resources, thus guaranteeing conservation of the ecosystems which have been the traditional source of food for the indigenous groups.

DEFENSE COMMITTEE

Since August, 1991, Brazilian Indians have been able to count on an instrument that helps them in their legal battles. The General Coordination of Defense of Indian Rights (CGDDI) is aimed at receiving, studying, evaluating and forwarding accusations of aggression against Indians and their communities.

To date, the Coordination has received approximately a hundred accusations of aggressions against the rights and interests of Indian peoples from all over the country. It has worked to speed up processing of the cases, especially those which had been in the courts for several years. CGDDI has received a lot of support from the office of the Attorney General, through its Coordination for the Defense of the Rights and Interests of the Indigenous Population. CGDDI can be contacted by telephone (061) 226-7480 or 226-8211, extension 244, or by Fax: (061) 226-8782.

DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION

The Funai Documentation Department is basically aimed at organizing, recuperating and disseminating information about Indians and the Brazilian Indian policy. It has a library with some 12,000 books, pamphlets, periodicals and theses on Brazilian Indians, anthropology, linguistics and other rare books. It also has an historical archive with approximately 300 meters of text, as well as photographs, maps and audiovisual productions by the Indian Protection Service (1910-1967), the Indian Protection Council (1942-67) and

the Rondon Project Foundation. The latter collection is currently being organized and should be open for research beginning in 1994. The Information Center on Indian Issues offers an important service to the community, giving information basically on the phone, by letter, telex or fax. This service should be made more agile with the implantation of its Data Bank. Other important services the Documentation Department offers the public are its special attention for children and teenagers and graphic production of information for the public at large using its own desk-top publishing and off-set equipment. For more information, call or write the Center of Information on Indian Issues / SEUP 702 Sul - Edifício LEX, Mezanino, Brasília/DF, CEP 70.330. Phone (061) 321-8884, extension 67, or (061) 226-8211, extension 227. Telex (61) 1019-1794. Fax (061) 226-8782.

DATA BANK

Universities, researchers and the public interested in getting information on the work being carried out by Funai in different areas will soon have the support of a modern computing system in Brasília. The Information Department is implanting a system that will be used to give historical information on Funai and Brazilian Indians to the public.

To have access to the information, the user only needs to have a personal computer and a modem. The computer center telephone is (061) 223-7720.

Also under study is implantation of a network of personal computers to improve communication and control activities carried out in Indian areas, creating a constant flow of data between Funai head-

quarters and the Regional Administrations. Currently, due to the distances and difficulties with communication, it is hard to accompany the decentralized projects in the areas of health, productive activities and demarkation of Indian lands.

FINAL WORDS

Technology and Humanitarianism

by Sydney Ferreira Possuelo

Twenty years have passed since the Stockholm Conference when, for the first time, ecological questions of interest to Humanity were posed in a worldwide forum. Since then there have been great technical advances which have allowed Man to unmask the mysteries of life, interfering more and more in his relations with the environment.

Now we are arriving at the UN Conference on Environment and Development with more complex challenges to face. The changes Man has lived in the field of technological victories and the way to avoid letting those victories be devorced from moral and ethical principles are put in the spotlight.

We are convinced that simple access to sophisticated techniques will not solve the problems that afflict Humanity but rather privilege only a few nations, if the common good is not taken into account.

In that sense, the significant participation of Indian leaders in the Rio Conference will help form policies oriented toward a better relationship among nations and, especially, between Man and the Earth. The Indians, who twenty years ago were only timidly represented at Stockholm, will now take part in the discussions on the issues that involve the future of the planet.

This is an historical moment when we should reflect on the importance of learning from these peoples about how society can live in harmony with the environment.

It is also a unique opportunity to take a pause in our agitated lives and think about our relationship with the Earth, without nostalgia for the time of the caveman but also without deifying technology, in the search for a fraternal society.

CREDITS

*This work has been coordinated by the
Indian Affairs Agency — Funai*

*Celio Borja
Minister of State of Justice*

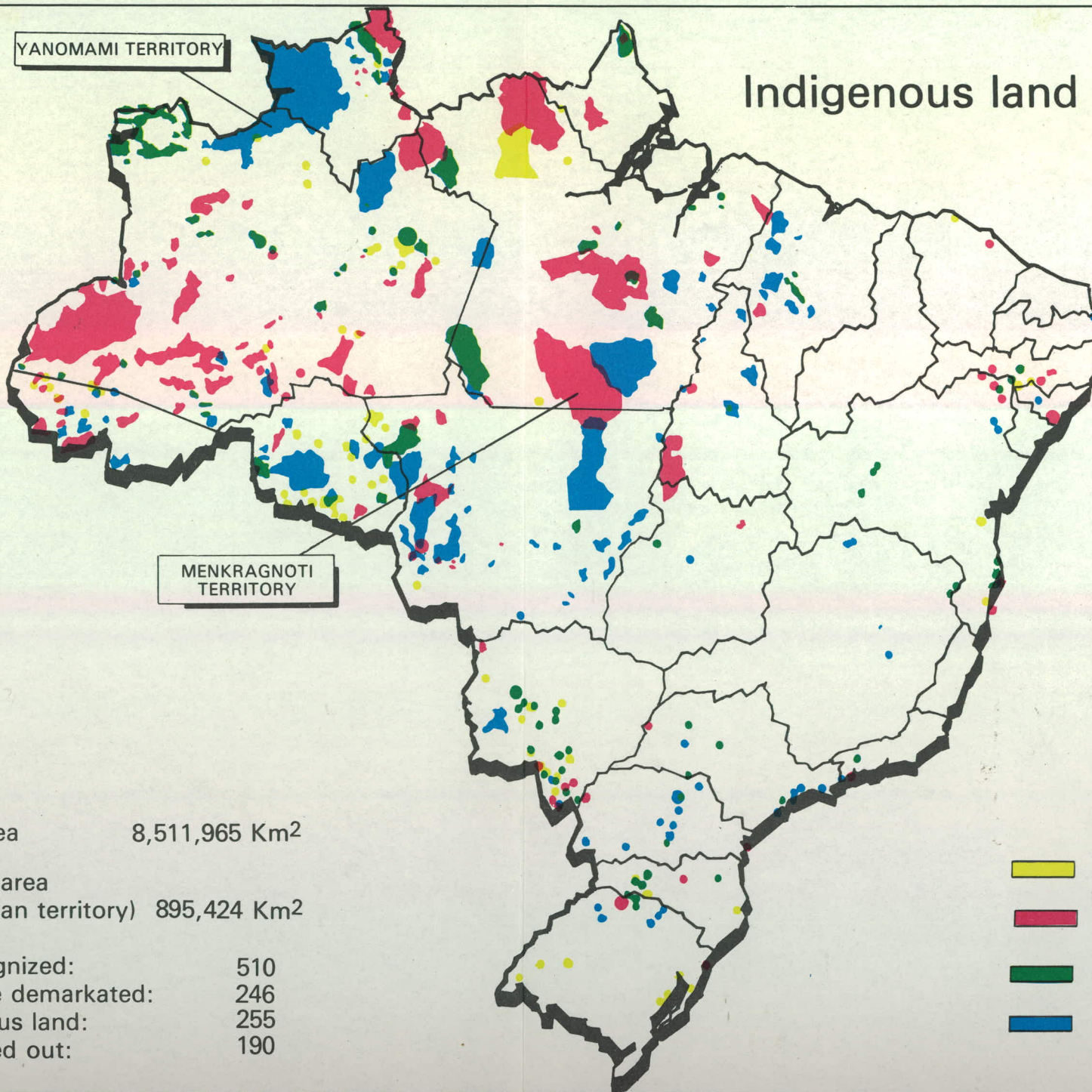
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Indigenous land in Brazil



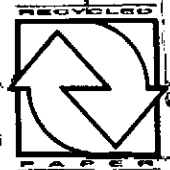
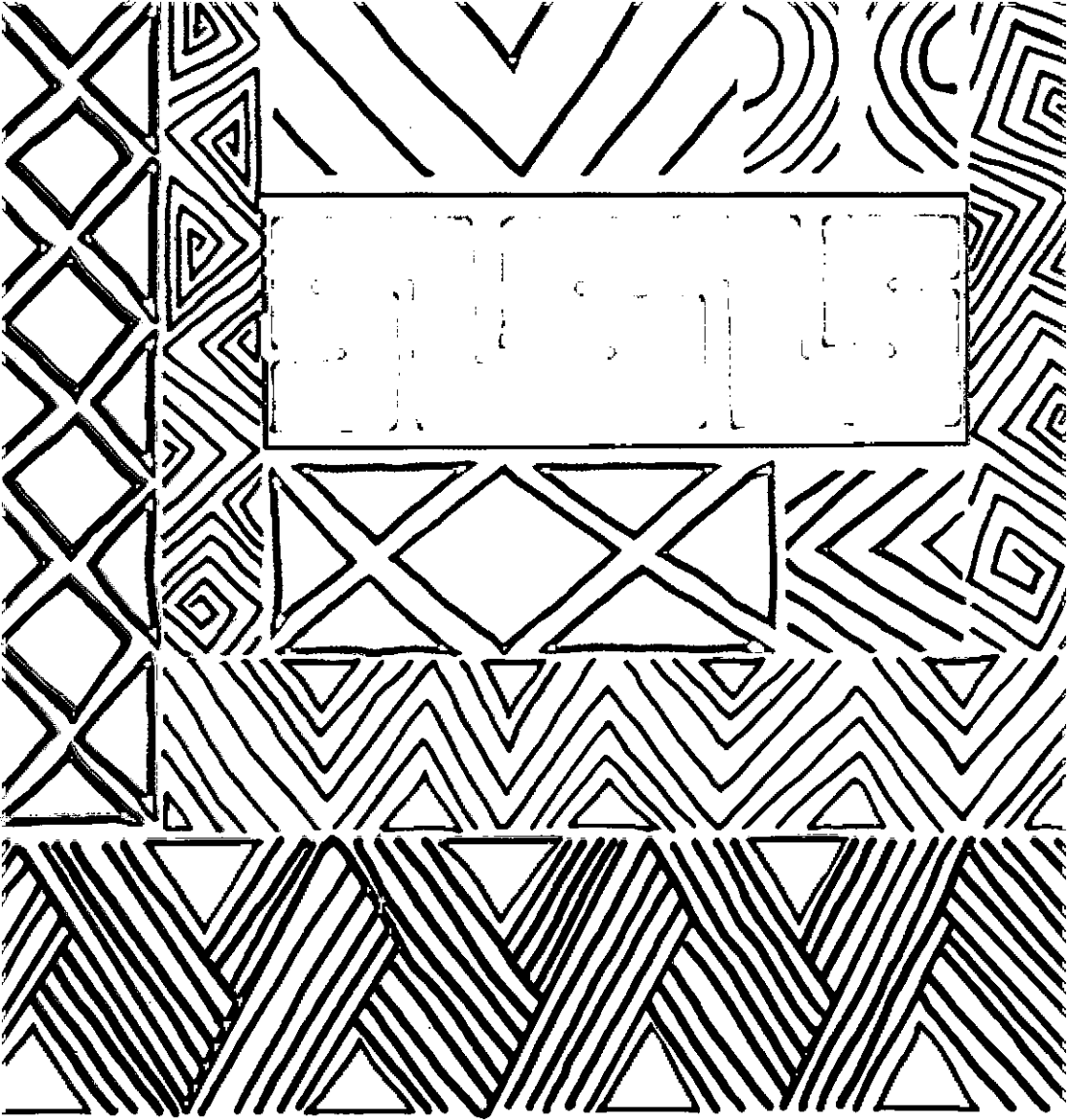
Brazilian territorial area 8,511,965 Km²

Indigenous land total area
(10.52% of the Brazilian territory) 895,424 Km²

Indigenous land recognized:	510
Indigenous land to be demarkated:	246
Demarkated indigenous land:	255
Indigenous land staked out:	190

Situation of the
indigenous land

- To be recognized
- Recognized
- Limited
- Demarkated



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