

“Measuring Resistance: Comparing and Contrasting the Kayapó and  
Xavánte Indigenous Groups of Brazil”

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## Chapter 1

### *A distinctive beginning*

The life of the Indians before the appearance of the Portuguese was one that resembled most civilizations of that time, but in a smaller scale. Most of Brazil's Indians were semisedentary tribes instead of fully sedentary groups such as the ones found in Spanish America (Chasteen, 26). In other words, they lived in small communities and were constantly on the move. Although there were no economic resources, most of the tribes had more than enough to survive and to continue their rich way of living with the help of their natural surroundings. For example, they would hunt, fish, and plant their own food by practicing "slash and burn" (Chasteen, 27).

More than five hundred years have passed, yet the present traditional gender roles are cultural aspects that were practiced by the Indians of that time. For example, the men were the ones in charge of the hunting and fishing while the women would plant, harvest, and cook foods such as manioc, corn, and fruits. Other typical aspects were also practiced such as domesticating certain animals and making pottery (Capistrano, 11). The Indians were very peaceful among their nuclear groups and they honored the word of the elders (Salvador, 53). Still, the Indians were engaged in a lot of wars with neighboring tribes. Many of them were captured and had to abide to the consequences. Cannibalism was present at that time and practiced by the majority of the tribes. Women were taken as prisoners while the men were eaten as part of their common rituals.

Spirituality was an important traditional aspect of that time and it is still present today. Even though each tribe had a chief, the spiritual leader was the main figure that everyone went to for help and advice. The Indians also "believed in luminous beings, good and inert, who did not

require worship [and] believed in evil, shady, and vindictive powers” (Capistrano, 12). The people also worshiped and gave offerings to their ancestors in order to be guided and protected by them. Furthermore, the Indians had knowledge of medicinal herbs and plants that were used in times of sickness.

### *An ominous encounter*

The indigenous tribe’s encounter with the Portuguese was the event that marked the beginning of their struggle with an imposed government. The Tupiniquim Indians and the Portuguese met for the first time on Thursday April 23, 1500 in Terra da Santa Cruz, today is the city of Porto Seguro in Bahia. Pero Vaz de Caminha, one of the Portuguese sailors traveling with Captain Pedro Alvares Cabral, described these natives by writing:

a feição deles é serem pardos maneira de avermelhados de bons rostros e bons narizes bem feitos. Andam nus sem nenhuma cobertura, nem estimam nenhuma coisa cobrir nem mostrar suas vergonhas, e estão acerca disso com tanta inocência como têm a mostrar o rosto (2).<sup>1</sup>

At first, the Portuguese decided to Christianize the people in order to gain advantage over the Protestants and Muslims. Very quickly, however, the economic interests on the red dye in brazilwood sparked a deeper association between the Portuguese and the natives. Originally, both groups had an amicable relationship and helped one another through the exchange of gifts. The Indians would receive glasses, weapons, gun powder, and axes, while the Portuguese would receive their wood. An important factor that contributed to the relationship was the forming of alliances between the Portuguese and the native groups. This, along with the help of the Jesuits

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<sup>1</sup> Their features were of a dark, reddish complexion with good faces and well made noses. They are naked, without anything to hide their ‘embarrassments,’ and they are so innocent about it that it is the same as showing their face (self translation)

priests, enabled for the Indians of the region to have one main *lingua geral* (general language) understood by the majority on the coast from Paraíba to São Vicente (Capistrano, 14). Before, the Indians in Brazil spoke over one hundred and seventy languages before the arrival of the Portuguese (Caldeira, 8).

Subsequently, this so called “alliance” that lasted around seventy years (Bueno, 90) quickly terminated once the Portuguese began to enslave as many natives as they could in order to export some of them to Europe, and principally, to use them as workers for the first sugar plantations established in Brazil. Many of them were able to escape, but some of them, especially the women, were stuck having their children. Unfortunately, the diseases brought by the Portuguese, such as small pox, measles, and the flu, had terrible consequences. The majority of the indigenous population died. The lucky ones to evade slavery or disease, however, found themselves, after hundreds of years, still resisting integration with Brazil’s globalized society.

#### *The modern shift and its effects*

Since the colonization period, many of the indigenous tribes had to flee and disperse across Brazil. The majority of the groups that fled are concentrated in what we now recognize as the northern and central-west regions of Brazil. Some of the indigenous groups continued their nomadic way of life while others, such as the Kayapó and Xavánte, live in reservations created by the government. However, the rise of globalization and Brazil’s endeavor in becoming a globalized society, has presented many social issues that deal with the status and overall survival of the indigenous groups. Issues such as intrusions, warfare, diseases, etc. are affecting not only the group’s populations, in terms of deaths, but the overall survival (Committee, 7).

Globalization is a term that has gained importance over the past few years and houses a lot of ideas and interpretations. However, globalization can be defined as a process of transformation that involves social relations and transactions that are spread around the world by removing state-imposed restrictions to create an open- borderless world (Scholte, 50-2).

Globalization affects everything from politics and economics to society in general. A globalized society, therefore, is the integration of global cultures and ideals to create one uniformed and overwhelmingly westernized society. Also, it encompasses other aspects such as cross-border relations, international economic integrations, and community relations that are experienced differently by people of contrasting sectors (Scholte, 16-7).

Pursuing this further, it can be seen that all of these aspects are experienced differently by every nation, particularly Brazil. In Brazil, there are two opposing effects to its globalized society when it comes to the identity of the indigenous groups. Integration into society or hybridization<sup>2</sup> suggests that the indigenous group's culture, traditions, language, and parentage as a group are at risk of being lost. This is because there is an economic need<sup>3</sup> by the government to integrate these groups. Nevertheless, the opposite effect, and the focus of this paper, lies on the fact that most of the indigenous groups in Brazil are resisting such integration. For the two groups discussed in this study, the Kayapó and the Xavánte, this resistance can be measured. Consequently, this paper will examine the effects of globalization on Brazil and the indigenous culture, the resistance of both groups measured on short-term and long-term effects, and finally it will inquire into the overall survival of the two aforementioned groups.

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<sup>2</sup> Here, the term hybridization refers to the integration and meshing of ideas and cultures.

<sup>3</sup> The government and private corporations are in great need of the indigenous lands due to the economic resources that they represent. This will be further examined in chapter 2.

## Chapter 2

### *Globalization*

Globalization is a term that has gained importance in the present and modern times. Even in his book *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, Brazil's former President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso "has affirmed that the implications of global consciousness are as great for the present day as was the Copernican revelation, five centuries ago, that the earth revolved around the sun and not vice versa" (Scholte, 18). Generally, globalization can be defined as a process of becoming global, as a process of standardization and homogenization, or the uniformity in dispersing various objects and experiences worldwide (Scholte, 14-8). In fact, it can be summarized in four words<sup>4</sup>: internationalization, liberalization, universalization, and westernization. Internationalization basically means "a growth of transactions and interdependence between countries" (Scholte, 54). In other words, economics, politics, and even culture are part of international relations that cross borders. The second word, liberalization indicates "a process of removing officially imposed constraints movements of resources between countries in order to form an 'open' 'borderless' world economy" (Scholte, 56). Globalization as universalization is "a process of dispersing various objects and experiences to people at all inhabited parts of the earth" (Scholte, 57). In more simple terms, it means to take everything from objects to ideas all over the world. Finally, the last word has the greatest importance due to its relationship to my study. Jan Aart Scholte's definition of westernization is as follows:

As westernization, globalization is regarded as a particular type of universalization, one in which social structures of modernity (capitalism, industrialism, etc.) are spread across all of humanity, in the process destroying pre-existent cultures and local autonomy.

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<sup>4</sup> Of course, globalization should not only be defined by these words. As I stated before, globalization is a term that houses many ideas and interpretations.

Globalization understood in this way is often interpreted as colonization, Americanization and (in the vocabulary of the Iranian intellectual, Ale Ahmad) ‘wextoxification’...contemporary globalization has often inserted patterns of modern, western social relations more widely and deeply across the planet. Sometimes this westernization has involved violent impositions that could indeed warrant descriptions as imperialism<sup>5</sup> (58).

Globalization is also a term with many views and forces that “drive” it. For example,

methodologically idealist accounts have regarded globalization as a product of mental forces such as imagination, invention, metaphor, identity and ideology. Examples of theories that tend towards idealism include social constructivism, postmodernism and postcolonialism. In contrast, methodological materialist have treated globalization as a result of concrete forces such as nature, production, technology, laws, and institutions. Examples of theories include liberalism, political realism, Marxism, and social ecology... Methodologically individualist arguments regard globalization as an outcome of decisions made by social actors, such as business people, citizens, officials and politicians. In contrast, methodologically structuralist perspectives treat globalization as a product of forces embedded in the social order like capitalism, the states system, nationalism, rationalism, and so on (Scholte, 21).

Basically, these words reflect concepts such as globalization altering the established cultures of a country or region due to its approbation of western culture. Also, these words demonstrate the various views, concerns, and observations of globalization from different analytical perspectives.

Furthermore, issues of identity and neoliberalism arise because of globalization.

Identity<sup>6</sup>, a term related on an anthropological and sociological basis, can be altered by globalization. In other words, globalization causes for the identity of individuals to enter a process of transformation or amalgamation. Consequently, one must ask, to what point is a mixture of identities functional? This, of course, will be the focus of my study in terms of the indigenous groups focusing on the integration between indigenous identity and Brazil’s

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<sup>5</sup> Imperialism in this case means the policy of extending the rule or authority of an empire or nation over foreign countries (Websters Universal College Dictionary). In other words, it is the policies of the west being imposed on other countries.

<sup>6</sup> Can be defined as an association with being a member of a cultural group.

globalized identity.<sup>7</sup> The issue of neoliberalism, which will be further discussed, is also important to examine due to its connection to indigenous resistance and Brazil's globalized society.

*Brazil's case: Globalization as Brazilianization*

The scholar Tomas Larsson opens his second chapter 'Brazilianization' of his book *The Race to the Top: The Real Story of Globalization* with the following statement: "Brazil enjoys a special position in the debate over globalization" (9). So special that in Brazil "globalization is then Brazilianization" (Larsson, 9). This is because Brazil is one of the many countries where the majority of the population is in poverty, and it is the country with the biggest economical gaps in the world.<sup>8</sup> This is due to the fact that as Brazil increases their economic integration with other countries, they are failing to take into account the size of the population as well as questioning the economical resources being offered to them.<sup>9</sup> Brazil and other countries tend to view globalization as a possible way out of economic dependence. It brings them hope for prosperity, riches, but above all, assimilation into all things westernized where "trade and investment, democratization, rock stars, and Hollywood blockbusters [are] the manifestations" (Larsson, 9). Moreover, Larsson believes that if the ideas of globalization are given a chance to function freely

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<sup>7</sup> Discussed in detail in chapter 3

<sup>8</sup> Raphael Kaplinsky in his book *Globalization, Poverty, and Inequality* (Polity Press, 2005), states that the concept of poverty has two central themes. The first is the absolute standard of living, reflected in satisfying the minimum basic needs required for survival, and the second is relative poverty, which is, the gap in incomes between the rich and the poor.

<sup>9</sup> In other words, has the Brazilian government provided enough stable jobs for the entire population? Have they treated every social sector equally? Are people of indigenous or African heritage still being marginalized in the job sector? (The latter having serious consequences due to its overabundance and proliferation in Brazil).



in other third-world countries, soon, all of them might have serious effects such as the case of Brazil.<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, within Brazilianization, Brazil's elite are the ones responsible for this economic discrepancy between social classes due to their "affluent western world appeals" (Larsson, 11). In the same way it is the "winner-takes-all" domain that exists within countries, and "the more that different markets get globalized and become winners-take-all markets, the more inequality expands within countries and, for that matter, between countries" (Larsson, 12). Clearly then, in Brazil, the global economy controlled by the elite has generated a "new social stratification in which wealth and liberty are global, while poverty and constraint are local" (Larsson, 13). This last statement rings a bell with regards to the lower-class population and the indigenous groups. The Brazilian economy is seeking a global position, yet at home the ones affected the most are the ones that technically hold the economy in their backyards. In other words, Brazil's economy relies mostly on the raw materials present on the indigenous lands. Sadly, the wealthy, or as Larsson calls them, the elite see the multi-million dollar profits obtained through the suffering of others.<sup>11</sup>

### *Neoliberalism and the beginning of Brazil's globalized society*

John C. Crow's words in *The Epic of Latin America* vividly summarize Brazil's reason to globalize. He states:

Throughout her history [Brazil] has been like a giant dinosaur, a colossus in her own right, large and powerful-looking, yet except for her great size almost defenseless. So far

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<sup>10</sup> Many countries in Latin America already suffer from this repercussion.

<sup>11</sup> We also need to consider the middle and below average social classes who profit from the exploitation of the rainforest for example, through rubber tapping and mining.

has been defense enough. She awaits immigration and industrialization on a vast scale to achieve her destiny (225).

This destiny began a little before the market crash of 1929 where Brazil was arduously fighting to obtain a position on the global economy. However, it did not get a break until World War II. The manufacturing of ammunitions boosted the Brazilian economy as well as the alliance with the United States. This was the beginning of industrialization in Brazil. The first to declare this idea was Getúlio Vargas, the man of the people, and soon thereafter the military regime (1964-1985) embraced his same idea of developing the country. Their goal was to utilize expansion in order for Brazil to step into the global scale. This is because the military had a modernized, authoritative, anti-communist ideology in which their main focus was to centralize, industrialize, and urbanize the country through their basic economic policy of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI). What they saw was “endless soybean fields, thousands of grazing cattle, sugar mills, light industry, burgeoning towns, highways, dams, mines, and tree plantations” (Rabben, 15). With the help of the World Bank, the military leaders were able to make their dreams happen. As long as the land and the people were used as an economical gain, rich industrialists and agriculturalists were in every right to invade (Garfield, 24).

What they could not foresee was that their eagerness began to affect the people that technically are the original owners of the land. The first roads, for example, brought disasters to the indigenous population. Diseases, prostitution, malnutrition, environmental degradation, and crimes nearly decimated the few tribes that were left (Garfield, 15). A perfect example of this is when the ‘Xavánte-Cachimbo’ highway was built as a capital gain to increase the financial and industrial regions in Mato Grosso<sup>12</sup> (Garfield 114). Through this highway many of the money-hungry intruders arrived. These intruders were looking for lands to raise their cattle and trees to

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<sup>12</sup> This was one of the first highways expedited by the military government to open up the Amazon to development.

get their wood or rubber from. Once these non-indigenous people arrived to the Xavánte territory, they did not stop until they stripped them of the majority of their land using the only thing they knew, which was violence. This caused for the Xavántes to be deprived of their natural resources, to have high infant mortalities, and large epidemics of diseases. Furthermore, the new “landowners” strongly believed that the Xavántes needed to integrate into civilization and become fully Brazilian, and in that practice civilize, or westernize, the country. Not only did this notion strip them of their culture, caused shame, and affected their self-confidence, but this onslaught of development and need of becoming a globalized society forced a small group of Xavánte to wear Western clothes and to travel to towns were no longer real Xavánte lived (Garfield, 115).

As a result, many of these peaceful tribes literally went to non-existence and succumbed to the Brazilians because of many factors such as disease. Also, because of development, there have been many more conflicts that affect the groups directly. Guerrilla warfare, assassinations of peasant leaders by hired gunmen, and large-scale devastation of forests and reserves by settlers, loggers, and miners affect the indigenous groups at a larger scale (Garfield, 17). So far, the government has not done much about the problem and has not respected the laws established by previous presidents as a protection to the indigenous groups.<sup>13</sup> Their eagerness to develop an infrastructure in the Amazon through mineral extraction and hydro-electric power, for example, is creating a world of fraud, force, and corruption where the only victims are the poor, malnourished indigenous groups that cannot confront so much stealing, hostility, and violence. Also, “Brazil’s military government was especially eager to populate the country’s remote

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<sup>13</sup> Laws established at first through the help of *Serviço de Proteção do Índio* (SPI) or the Indian Protection Service.

Amazonian borders, which it regarded as a security risk, with ‘real Brazilians’ rather than indigenous people” (Chasteen, 325).

After the rise of globalization in the late 1980’s, neoliberalism, or neo-liberal economics, has taken its toll among the indigenous groups. John Charles Chasteen defines neoliberalism as “an updated version of liberalism that swept Latin America in the 1990s, following the period of cold war reaction and [post-Vargas era] military rule” (335). In other words, the newly democratic regimes, with ideologies of free market and “globalization”, adopted neoliberalism to accommodate the transition from military to civilian rule (Prashad, 13). Furthermore, Scholte states that “neoliberalism builds on the *laissez-faire* convictions of classical liberalism, which promise that unconstrained market forces will ‘naturally’ bring prosperity, liberty, democracy and peace to society... [and] according to neoliberalist tenets, globalization should be approached with large-scale removal of official interventions in the market, especially through measures of liberalization, deregulation, privatization and fiscal constraint” (38). Neoliberalism and the policies that “Latin America suffers and struggles with [are] promoted by the U.S. government in Washington D.C., by the banks in New York City, London, as well as Madrid, and by Latin America’s own oligarchies” (Prashad, 13). This is because during the 1980s Brazil and other Latin American countries were struggling to pay off their debts, and temporarily stopped payments. Still, through neoliberal policies foreign capital was encouraged. As a result of neoliberalism, the poor, which includes the indigenous population, were once again left out of the picture, and the only ones to benefit from these changes were the upper and middle class people. This latter group, of course, became the manifestation of Brazil’s globalized society.

*Globalization, Neoliberalism and Indigenous Identity*

The link between globalization and a globalized society is the word globality. To Scholte, globality “refers to social links between people located at points anywhere on earth” that transcend the actual geographical borders (61). Moreover, globality involves different activities, objects, entities, and customs. Coca-cola, Barbie, the latest fashions, cell phones, text messages, Disney, automobiles, television, Donald Trump, etc., all of these idioms or names have one general global definition, and have one thing in common: they are the ‘global’ (and to a certain point westernized) ideas that people look up to. As previously defined, a globalized society can be an integration of various cultures and ideals to create one uniformed global or westernized society. Also, such society encompasses many other aspects such as cross-border relations, international economic integrations, and social relations and transactions that are spread and transformed at a global scale (Scholte, 16-7). In Brazil, these ideas resound and have an effect on its society. Moreover, the vocabulary of internationality and globality tends to ignore, marginalize and silence other modes of organization, governance and identity that exist and are highly valued by, for example, indigenous peoples, regionalists, and various kinds of cosmopolitans (Scholte, 56).

At present, many people, especially the poor, seem to feel that the ‘much-touted’ return to democracy, the celebration of civil society, and the incorporation of Latin America into the globalization process has left them marginalized both economically and politically. These reestablishments of democracy have caused many scholars, critics, and people to question if the process is working (Vanden, 283). With regards to this issue, Harry Vanden states that

by the time neoliberal economic policy became more widespread in the 1990s, it was becoming evident that the extant political systems in Latin America were

unable to meet the needs of the vast majority. Indeed, in the eyes of most Latin America popular sectors, the structural adjustments and neoliberal reforms advocated by international financial institutions like the IMF threatened their security and well being (285).

In fact, people who oppose the movement of globalization and the incorporation of neoliberal economics argue that a “*laissez-faire* world economy produces greater poverty, inequality, conflict, cultural destruction, ecological damage and democratic deficits” (Scholte, 56). But, many governments believe that through globalization they are able to compete with the rest of the world governments, and at the same time, integrate universal aspects of culture, economics, and politics. However, is this what people really want? The generalized idea of diversity and multiculturalism empowers some, and marginalizes others, yet unfortunately the indigenous groups do not see any of this. Citizen rights are given to the people only if they conform to a diverse or *mestizo* cultural idea and “this progressive ideology... gave the political project to assimilate Indians and marginalize those who refused its hegemonic appeal” (Hale, 268). Indigenous demands only affect neoliberalism when they stop relying on the government and only depend on themselves. For example, if they are given a property, it is better if they just took to live in it, but if the group begins to support alternative ways of production by undermining state authority, then that’s a problem (Hale, 273). Also, “as globalized economic change continues... growing numbers of indigenous peoples are leaving rural communities for urban areas, where education, jobs, and some hope of upward mobility can be found...rural Indian households are most likely to remain stuck in a cycle of critical poverty” (Hale, 275-76).

This last statement thus brings the idea of the indigenous groups resisting integration. If they leave their communities for urban, civilized areas, their traditions and cultures will be forgotten. If they stay, the ‘cycle of critical poverty’ would be among them. Still, the groups take

many aspects and issues into account as they decide to resist or integrate. One of the principal factors is their land. Will the groups give it up, or have they found ways to resist such integration? Studying the Kayapó and the Xavánte will provide an indication.

### Chapter 3

#### *A look into the indigenous culture*

Brazil's natives can best be described as people who “vivia[m] da caça e pesca, não conhecia[m] outras armas de indústria ou de guerra senão o arco e a clava e andava[m] em completa nudez. Entregues à natureza, os índios não conheciam Deus nem lei”<sup>14</sup> (Ribeiro, 48). Also, they were of brown skin color without beards and only distinguished themselves by being more or less barbaric than others (Do Salvador, 57). Moreover, Thomas Skidmore states how these natives were nomadic tribes who slept in hammocks, and had no need to create an army or a hierarchy.

There were many distinctions between the different groups. For example, “se distinguem pela diversidade dos costumes, sempre incultos, pela índole pacífica ou feroz ou ainda pelo hábito de comerem a carne humana, o qual não era de todas as tribos; e distinguem-se igualmente pela variedade das línguas”<sup>15</sup> (Ribeiro, 49). Many of the earlier descriptions depict the majority of the natives as being savages and cannibalistic. However, there is present evidence by anthropologists through the analysis of bone remains that this is not true (Skidmore, 15). Cannibalism was an issue that captured the Portuguese attention. This was because at the time of their arrival some indigenous groups were at war with each other and practiced the ritual using the members of the defeated groups (Caldeira, 17).

In addition, the communion within the group was very important to the natives. In other words, they shared everything such as food, water, and places to sleep. Furthermore, many of the natives rendered great veneration to the elders. In fact, when they moved from villages, they

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<sup>14</sup> Lived out of hunting and gathering, did not know of other weapons of industry or of war instead the bow and arrow and were in total nakedness (self translation).

<sup>15</sup> They distinguished themselves by the variety of costumes, always coarse, by a pacifist temperament or fierce or yet by the habit of eating human flesh, something that was not of all tribes; and they distinguished themselves also by the variety of languages (self translation).



would choose the correct spot “com o parecer dos mais antigos,” which is “with the judgment of the elders” (Do Salvador, 58). Joseph Page also describes how

the most important figure in tribal society was the *page*, or “medicine man,” who interpreted the supernatural for a people who entertained no doubts about the omnipresence of spirits affecting every aspect of their lives. The *page* also foretold the future and cured the sick. He performed the latter function by the prescribing of jungle herbs and, more often, by faith healing (90).

Moreover, the natives were great *curandeiros*,<sup>16</sup> especially during Brazil’s colonial period.

People relied on their knowledge of herbs and plants to heal the majority of the sicknesses.

Magical healing was also a very prominent ritual among them (de Mello e Souza, 99). Following this further, natives took pride in their cultural traditions and rituals. Jorge Caldeira states that the groups

tinham uma identidade própria, transmitida de uma geração a outra por meio de histórias sobre a origem do mundo, o cultivo das plantas e as regras sociais. O momento em que se contavam essas histórias era uma ocasião especial, preparada com muito cuidado e na qual se reunia toda a tribo... as reuniões aconteciam sobre tudo em ocasiões determinadas pelos ciclos naturais... eram momentos sagrados. Para se ouvir os mitos era preciso que a audiência saísse do âmbito cotidiano. Usavam-se vestimentas especiais (mantos, penas coladas ao corpo, máscaras de madeira e palha), algumas restritas a determinados membros da tribo<sup>17</sup> (13).

They also had rituals for weddings and childbirths, and family, or the idea of a group, was one of the most important aspects of their culture. To Page, all of these myths, rituals, and ideas have traveled to our present times, and are even part of the Brazilian culture.

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<sup>16</sup> Healers

<sup>17</sup> They had a personal identity, transmitted from one generation to the other through stories about the origin of the world, the cultivation of plants, and social rules. The moment that these stories were told was a special occasion, delicately prepared in which the whole tribe would come together... these meetings would take place during special occasions determined by the natural cycles... they were sacred moments. In order to hear the myths, it was necessary for the audience to go out of the ordinary. They used special regalia (cloaks, feathers hanged to the body, masks of wood and straw), some even restricted to some members of the tribe (self translation).

Originally, the natives were divided into four great nations that have persisted throughout time with little change. These are the Tupi, Tapuia or Gê, the Nu-Aruaque, and the Cariba. Initially, the Gê group, which is the focus of this research, lived near the eastern coast of Brazil. Because of Portuguese settlement and enslavement, the Gê had to move and disperse west into the interior of the country (Ribeiro, 52). João Ribeiro, one of Brazil's first ethno-historians, describes the Gê's as the following:

Essa nação (os Gê)... é a mais interessante de todas as que povoam o Brasil, até por ser aquela que mais nítidas nos revela as fases de sua cultura. Os gês de Leste são os mais primitivos; caçadores rudes e primevos, não conhecem a agricultura, não praticam a navegação, não sabem construir casas, desconhecem a cerâmica e a tecelagem, não conhecem o uso da rede... a cultura dos gês se desenvolve, ao passo que se caminha para Oeste... os gês decompõe-se em várias tribos, todas ferozes e em todo o tempo encaradas com terror pelos colonizadores<sup>18</sup> (56).

In general, many of these native tribes managed to escape civilization. Likewise, the pathway of resistance began since the earliest natives “dwindled” away from the Portuguese settlers as the first sugar plantations took place (Skidmore, 16). Indians were not good slaves because their nature was one of leisure and they were not accustomed to doing tough work. Consequently, “by the end of the eighteenth century, Indians were hardly visible in the Northeastern coastal sugar society,” (Skidmore, 16) and “others, supposedly converted to Christianity and western values by the missionaries, eventually slipped back into their native cultures” (Page, 92). Interestingly, many of the customs discussed are still followed by the majority of the indigenous groups in Brazil.

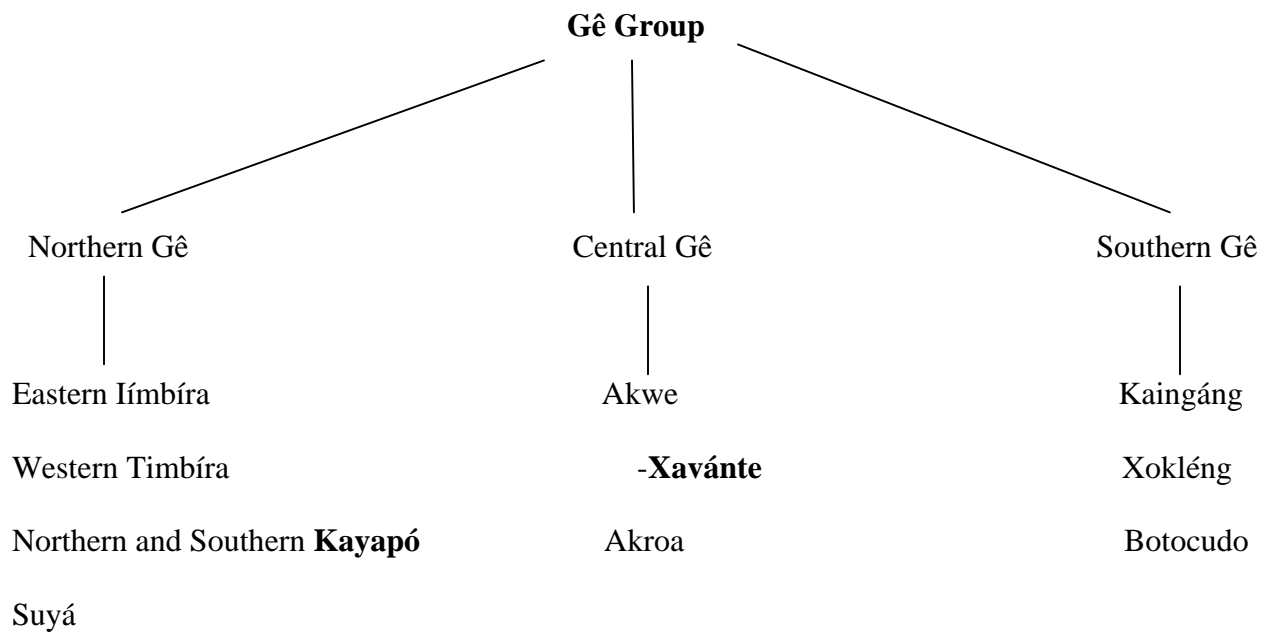
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<sup>18</sup> That nation (the Gê)... is the most interesting of all the others that populate Brazil, because it is the one that more distinctly reveals the phases of their culture. The Gê's of the East are the more primitive; rude hunters, did not know agriculture, did not practice navigation, did not know how to build houses, did not recognize ceramics or weaving, did not know the use of the net... the culture of the gês develops as they travel to the West... the gês break down in various tribes, all fierce and all the time stared at with fear by the colonists (self translation).

*The Kayapó and Xavánte*

The Kayapó and Xavánte are two of the many groups that still abide to the traditions of their ancestors mentioned above. Also, their culture is revealed to a great extent at glance of them, or through photographs. The men and women, for example, still paint their bodies and use traditional clothing and regalia. Unfortunately, their culture is in jeopardy if these groups fully integrate into Brazil's society. In other words, their cultural customs in the way they dress, their language, rituals, spirituality, and subsistence patterns all can disappear.

The earliest accounts by Portuguese settlers, such as Ribeiro, have categorized both groups, the Kayapó and the Xavánte as being part of the same cultural group, the Gê, due to their similarity in language and culture. The Kayapó belong to the Northern group while the Xavánte belong to the Central group. A visual representation is as follows:



The Gê tribes since early on have lived between the Araguaia and Tocantins rivers, in a land of “low mountains, wide savannahs, and thorny vegetation. Six months of rain and six months of dry season twist vegetation into contorted shapes, while the spring months cover the trees with yellow, purple, and orange flowers” (Karasch, 79). Moreover, these groups through time were able to “build large, nucleated villages, with houses forming a circle around the central plaza where communal events take place. They have elaborate social structures, with organizational units that may include lineages, clans, nondescent moieties, age sets, age grades, and men’s societies... [Also] many Jê<sup>19</sup> groups practice ceremonial log racing in which two teams carry heavy logs over a distance of several miles, rolling the log successively from the shoulder of one team member to that of the other” (Coimbra et al, 27). Furthermore, the groups rely mostly on hunting, foraging, and agriculture, and abide by the land resources that surround them. Rituals are also an important aspect of their lives.

The first group, whose resistance will later be examined, are the Kayapó. They occupy a large land between the Tocantins and Araguaia Rivers (Rabben, 48). Only half of the original Kayapó have survived the elapse of time. This is because internal wars with other indigenous nations and external wars with the “white” men wiped out the Southern population. Also, the Kayapó have been the most feared and sought after group of the Gê tribes because of their brutality. Furthermore, they are a hunting and gathering group who rely on their natural resources. Curiously, it was around the time of the Portuguese discovery that the Kayapó became agriculturalists and would plant potatoes, manioc, corn, bananas, and tobacco (Rabben, 22). The

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<sup>19</sup> This is another way of spelling Gê used by some scholars.

Kayapó are now separated into smaller groups due to inner conflicts among them because of the disputes that arise among the men's houses<sup>20</sup> (49).

The second group to be discussed are the Xavánte. The majority of the Xavánte today are living in the present state of Mato Grosso where they have become accustomed to the *cerrado*<sup>21</sup> environment. The *cerrado* soil is not prominent to agriculture. Corn and pumpkins are the few crops that the Xavánte actually plant by using slash-and-burn agriculture. Most of their food comes from hunting and foraging. Like most of the indigenous groups, hunting is reserved for the men, while the women care for the children. Traditional rituals, such as the male initiation ritual, are also of great importance to the Xavánte (Garfield, 70). Moreover, what is most interesting of the Xavánte is that they live in response to nature. In other words, they move according to their natural habitat circumstances. Periodically, they change villages due to a decrease of production due to the soil, or when there is overabundant rainfall. Furthermore, the most influential persons in a Xavánte village, and the ones who make the decisions on important aspects, are the *warã* or the council of elderly men (Garfield, 76). Just as the Kayapó, the Xavánte maintain their cultural identity through the use of traditional clothing and practices.

### *Resistance*

The majority of the indigenous groups in Brazil are essentially resisting to cultural contact, a situation where “one society politically dominates another” (Spradley, 385). With this contact comes change, and with this, “changes in social structure and values may occur, along

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<sup>20</sup> Men's houses are places where Kayapó leaders and chiefs come together to discuss various concerns such as intrusions, welfare of their groups, and warfare.

<sup>21</sup> The *cerrado* is an open savannah region with forests and valleys. It also has a hot and humid climate and a large biodiversity. This is where most of cattle ranching, grain and soy bean production take place.

with a resulting social disorganization” (Spradley, 384). Since the early days of Portuguese colonization, a form of prejudice has existed toward the indigenous groups. Frei Vicente do Salvador, a historian priest, writes how the initial colonizers believed that the Indians “não alcançarão gente tão valerosa como são os Portuguezes, que são senhores de todas as cousas boas”<sup>22</sup> (58). This idea along with their “religious”<sup>23</sup> intentions essentially gave the Portuguese a reason to “civilize” the people. In general, “what has amounted to a genocidal process of attrition dates back to the arrival of the first white men, and the abuse and killing of native Brazilians has gained fresh impetus in recent decades as Brazil has opened up its frontiers in an effort to tap the vast resources of the Amazon basin” (Page, 85). In Brazil’s case, it is the government who has control over the poor and defenseless such as the indigenous groups, because these latter live within the land that is being exploited.

The exploitation of land, as it was mentioned in chapter two, is the consequence of Brazil’s integration into the globalization process, which was (and is) mainly to include the economy in the global market. Moreover, with this comes a social integration carried by the ideals of globalization. Integration can be beneficiary to some, but inconvenient to others. David Steigerwald, for example, states that “globalization brings new and faster ways of global communication that allows the destruction of culture instead of binding people to home” (11). Clearly then, globalization has certain effects on the identity of any group. Also, if we return to neoliberal economics, we can see how the expansion of global trade has magnified the role that indigenous land resources have. Moreover, one of the ways for these groups to fight for what is theirs is to create a self-government that intensifies and spreads their cultural identity. Identity

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<sup>22</sup> Cannot reach people as valuable as the Portuguese who are men of all good things (self translation).

<sup>23</sup> In order to satisfy the Portuguese Crown, many of the conquistadores (or colonizers) claimed religion and Christianizing to be their main priority even though their real intentions were economical. In other words, they arrived to Brazil looking for gold, but at first left with brazilwood. Gold was later discovered in 1693.

and culture, for the most part, go hand in hand. Some may say that culture determines identity, while others say that identity produces culture. Still, in the case of the indigenous groups, their culture is their identity. Both of the groups studied, the Kayapó and the Xavánte want their culture, traditions, and community to survive. In order to do this, they need to resist integration, and this resistance can be measured through a comparison of short-term and long-term effects.

There are two main resources that command the Kayapó resistance. The first requires of some contact and integration into Brazilian society that is later used to their advantage. In other words, they use tools, such as learning Portuguese, which enables them to be politically knowledgeable in order to prevent government influence. This is because they are in constant war with the government due to laws that want to strip them of their lands. The government, instead of helping the group, has opted to force new laws that reduce territories, block healthcare, and exploit the land for resources. Therefore, speaking the general language<sup>24</sup> gives them the benefit to defend their rights and lands at legislative meetings. The Kayapó have opted to send delegates that present their position to the government. For example, when the government wanted to construct a dam within Kayapó territory, the Kayapó leaders and delegates explained to the political authorities the destructive consequences of their actions. The dam would only bring floods and pollute the soil that the Kayapó use for agriculture. In general, Linda Rabben states how this resource for resistance “has been important in ensuring their survival as a culture...” (50). Since the Kayapó are becoming alert and accustomed to how society works, they hold meetings and participate in Indigenous Rights Conferences by sending their representatives who reveal their struggles.

The second resource of resistance of the Kayapó is to defend their lands in arms is the most effective, and severe, because political involvement does not pay off quickly. The Kayapó

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<sup>24</sup> Since Portuguese is the official Brazilian language.

warriors, for example, patrol their territorial borders and kill any invaders, loggers, ranchers, etc., that cross their path. In other words, they are using every means available to fight for what is theirs. Ironically, through wars and deaths of some of these intruders, the Kayapó gained access to weapons and small boats for the water ways. If this type of resistance was not exercised, loggers, settlers, ranchers, and miners would eradicate the group through the use of bulldozers, machine guns, poisonous gases, and helicopters.

The second example of resistance studied is the Xavánte. According to Carlos Coimbra et al, the Xavánte have been resisting Western contact for years (1). This is because they have had serious biological, epidemiological, and ecological consequences due to contact with Brazil's society, especially with ranchers and intruders who gain access to their land for cattle grazing. Their infant mortality rates have increased dramatically and diseases, such as AIDS, have affected their population. This is because the intruders use gases or infected blankets thrown from helicopters to kill the Xavánte. Also, after brutal confrontations a lot of the women and children are raped.

The Xavánte resources of resistance are similar to those of the Kayapó. The primary one has been the patrolling of the lands. They use modern weapons, like guns, and their traditional defense weapons of bows, arrows, and shields to fight off the intruders. The secondary resource of resistance comes from a particular example of integration. There have been a few Xavánte leaders who have tried to integrate into Brazilian society in order to become politically active and thus help their group by passing beneficial legislations. However, they have only been ridiculed. The perfect example is Mário Juruna<sup>25</sup>. Page describes how Juruna traveled to Brasília, Brazil's capital, to ask for basic supplies and for territorial borders. In 1983, he was elected into congress with little accomplishments. Even though, he was not able to achieve helpful legislature

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<sup>25</sup> He was the first federal diplomat in Brazil of indigenous background.



to guarantee land protection, he did help his tribe and other native groups by presenting their problems and becoming the spokesperson of government distrust. However, the Brazilian society only cared about his “adjustment to life away from his tribe” (98). Later, he eventually became the object of entertainment and returned to Brasília as a broken man. Moreover, Juruna’s example gave the Xavánte an overall picture of integration. Unlike the Kayapó, the Xavánte prefer to close themselves entirely, and not use tools like speaking Portuguese to actively participate in conferences or in politics because their needs will not be taken care of.

### *Short-term and long-term effects*

Overall, the Kayapó resistance requires some contact and integration with Brazilian society. The resources mentioned above have several effects on their survival as a group. For example, the first short-term effect of this resistance is that they keep their lands and territorial borders. In other words, the use of Portuguese instead of their traditional native language, for example, enables them to retain what is theirs by confronting the government politically and the invaders actively. Another short-term effect is the international attention they are seeking and receiving.<sup>26</sup> For example, the United States Congress held a hearing to discuss the various problems affecting the indigenous groups in Brazil. Problems such as disease, poverty, lack of medical attention, rapes, intrusions, warfare, etc., were discussed.<sup>27</sup> This type of action helps present their struggle and helps in the survival of the group(s) in the means of retaining their lands, cultural identity, and traditions. Also, assisting to this type of hearings and conferences

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<sup>26</sup> This is because the Kayapó have affiliated themselves to international organizations which fight for the protection of the Amazon forest. The alliance between them benefits both groups (Turner: 1993, 2003).

<sup>27</sup> The Kayapó did not participate in this hearing. The ones that participated were scholars, representatives of international organizations, and leaders of other indigenous groups.

gives the opportunity to raise awareness and for people across the world to become familiar with the indigenous problems. In contrast, the long-term effects of this resistance can benefit and affect them. For instance, the main benefit is that their cultural identity and their traditions will be passed down through generations. This of course can only be achieved without fully integrating into society therefore such aspects as language will be retained and not compromise an alteration or mixture to it. In other words, the Kayapó, and Brazil's indigenous culture, will not succumb to the general, more globalized society. However, total dissociation from Brazilian society produces long-term risks. For example, it is doubtful that the Kayapó will receive medical or social attention in case of an epidemic or a natural catastrophe. This is because the land where the Kayapó live has a lot of rainfall during the winter season and therefore it is prominent to floods. Without any contact, the Brazilian government will not be able to send help or any rescuing efforts.

In contrast to the Kayapó main source of resistance, which is to integrate at a certain level, the Xavánte main force of resistance is to not integrate at all. In the short-term, for example, this is beneficial because patrolling their borders enables them to keep their lands, and thus retain their way of living. However, what is not beneficial is that without any contact, the general population will not know of their struggles. For instance, anthropologists, who are the first ones to examine and write about their problems, will not be able to contact them. Also, relief organizations would not be able to get to them and offer any medical help or supplies. Differing from the short-term effects, however, the long-term ones bring a rather prosperity to the Xavánte population. In other words, without contact from intruders there would be a decrease in infant mortalities and in deadly diseases. Also, their traditions, rituals, and religious spirituality will be kept alive by the future generations, so long as they continue resisting integration. Nonetheless,

no contact or integration into Brazilian society comes at a price. In other words, the Xavánte cannot depend on social help (if any) provided by the government run organizations of Indian protection.<sup>28</sup> They will only survive through the use of their traditional subsistence patterns, spiritual and medicinal herb healing, and their conventional way of life.

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<sup>28</sup> Although the government is the principal contributor to the majority of the indigenous struggles, Indian Protection Laws previously established do require for government help in matters such as providing healthcare and social assistance.

## Chapter 4

### *Conclusion*

Overall, globalization has had an effect on Brazil's indigenous groups. Furthermore, the Brazilian government's ambition to increase their economy has created a situation where these groups struggle to retain their lands and culture, and overall survival. Brazil not only has such a big economic gap, but their social and cultural unification is lacking stability. The majority of Brazil's society, especially the globalized first class, ignore the fact that indigenous presence is in their past. Joseph Page states it perfectly well:

In setting national priorities, Brazil's elite have always put their own comfort and enrichment ahead of the native Brazilians' struggles to preserve their way of life. In every confrontation between "progress" and the interests of the Indians, the latter have had to yield. Indeed, efforts from abroad on behalf of the tribes have at times been labeled foreign plots to impede Brazil's access to important natural resources and to keep Brazil underdeveloped (86).

The Kayapó and Xavánte groups are two perfect examples of this viscous cycle of intrusions and confrontations. Because of economic reasons, the majority of the indigenous lands are being invaded and exploited. Still, a lot of tribes have learned to fight back with modern weapons, such as artillery, besides their traditional bows and arrows. Also, "some tribes now videotape encounters with government officials, in order to preserve a record of the promises being made to them" (Page, 86). The only way out for some of them is resistance.<sup>29</sup> If the indigenous groups want to preserve their land and culture, they need to fully resist contact with Brazilian society and go into seclusion or in the case of the Kayapó, integrate some aspects of Brazilian culture

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<sup>29</sup> It is all up to the group's decision to resist. Many of them benefit the most if they fully resist, like the Xavánte, or partially resist, like the Kayapó. Others have actually integrated or have had contact with society in order to help in the struggle of the rest of the groups by marching and contacting organizations.

into their lives and use it to their advantage. There are groups, however, that have decided to have contact with Brazilian society and become politically active to raise awareness. This will further be discussed.

In this paper it was argued that resistance retains culture. However, the opposite end of the resistance-integration spectrum must also be taken into consideration. A lot of people and scholars believe that indigenous integration leads to a hybridization of their culture with that of Brazilian culture. This aspect can be positive because it brings multiculturalism,<sup>30</sup> and Brazil is known for having various races living together. However, James Spradley and David McCurdy, in their book *Conformity and Conflict* state that “something [either an innovation or traditions] must pass through a process of social acceptance before it can become part of the culture” (384). In other words, the indigenous group’s traditions need to gradually be included and be accepted into the general public before they can integrate completely. Due to Brazil’s history with African traditions, its society is capable of integrating indigenous culture into their traditions just like *Candomblé*<sup>31</sup> and the famous *Carnaval*, as long as the indigenous groups would be in accord, which the majority is not. In the possibility of the Kayapó and Xavánte integrating, for example, their ascension into a better social or economic state is not guaranteed. As it was previously stated, indigenous peoples are not generally viewed positively by the public. Their integration into society is mostly seen as a joke instead of a hope. Therefore, if they do incorporate into Brazilian society, they might face the same racial discrimination as the majority of the black population. More than likely they will join the poor in the *favelas*,<sup>32</sup> and in their quest for better paying jobs, they might be discriminated even if they are capacitated to perform them. So far, the

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<sup>30</sup> A philosophy that recognizes ethnic diversity, and contributions to society by people of diverse backgrounds.

<sup>31</sup> The prominent orixá-based religion in Brazil brought over by the African slaves.

<sup>32</sup> Shanty towns, or as I like to say, Brazil’s slums.

few that have tried to integrate have ended up dead, incarcerated, ridiculed, or completely rejecting their indigenous heritage (Galeano, 50).

*The good in the middle of all the bad*

Throughout the years, there have been a couple of persons and organizations that have helped the indigenous cause and serve as examples that can benefit the Kayapó, Xavánte, and other groups. The first to deserve mention is Cândido Rondon, the person to which the state of Rondônia is named after. Rondon worked arduously throughout his life and used a lot of peaceful tactics in order to get the indigenous group's trust. He did this by leaving them presents in the woods and ensuring them that they would never be harmed. Interestingly, his personal motto was "Die but never kill." Furthermore, Rondon's ultimate goal was to establish indigenous national parks across the Amazon where they could be protected and receive health services. In 1961, his efforts were rewarded and the first park was established in Xingu territory three years after his death. Rondon also was the founder of the *Serviço de Proteção ao Índio* (SPI) or the Indian Protection Service. It was later replaced by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI).

The brothers Villas Boas- Orlando, Claudio, and Leonardo- also dedicated their lives to help out the indigenous community. They did this by following Rondon's model. In a government expedition of the Mato Grosso area, they were able to encounter some unrecognized indigenous groups, such as the Txucarramãe Indians, and also offered them presents. Soon after, they were able to meet with them and spend a few days in their village and began to help gradually. But the Villas Boas brothers are mostly known for the work they did in the Xingu National Park. As directors, they were able to establish a model that ensured the Xingu's

protection and slow adaptation into Brazilian society, an example of integration. Of course, many other groups and leaders disagreed with this model. To them, the faster adaptation into society meant a fast involvement in the economy (Davis, 48). Technically, there are two alternatives to this. The first is to adapt gradually, even if it means that the indigenous groups need to exploit their own lands, since it is the only source of money that they have. The second is to only adapt into the social customs, but refrain from joining the economy.

A more recent figure to step up to the plate in defense of the indigenous groups is Davi Kopenawa, leader of the Yanomami. Davi's passion to defend his land and people began during a shamanic trance where he saw all of the forests being destroyed by the whites (Rabben, 128). This induced him to begin speaking at conferences and attend government-sponsored conventions to have his voice heard. The services he was asking from the government were very simple, provision of health care and bilingual education for all the children in the reserves, something that the Kayapó, for example, are taking advantage of. Unfortunately, help has not arrived in the fashion that Davi wanted. He has only begun to think that "whites are deaf and blind to the spiritual meaning of his words" (Rabben, 129). Even after addressing the United Nations in the 1992 International Year of Indigenous Peoples Conference, the Yanomami are dying of contagious diseases and violent confrontations with invaders.<sup>33</sup> This is true for the Xavánte as well, and thus the reason they are resisting integration.

Fortunately, support of the indigenous groups arose at an international level because many of them, like the Kayapó, searched for help outside of Brazil. At the time of the military regime, for example, the Inter-American Development Bank removed their financial support for the Amazon road-building project simply because the government failed to protect the indigenous people's rights. Also, different human rights organizations at various countries kept

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<sup>33</sup> Rabben 2004

denouncing military repression that included torture, arbitrary imprisonment, extrajudicial executions, and disappearances in the cities and in the countryside (Rabben, 19). Luckily, it is because of this type of interventions that institutions such as the World Bank refused to lend Brazil any more money for the military's urbanization and industrialization agenda. A boost in the economy should not be the priority if in return hundreds of people are affected, like the Xavánte. In present years, many of these same organizations have provided support directly to Brazil's indigenous organizations that just want betterment for their people. Some of these Brazilian organizations include the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), Union of Indigenous Nations (UNI), Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Brazilian Amazon (COIAB), Indian Law Resource Center (ILRC), and the Indigenous Rights Unit (NDI) (Rabben, 153).

In addition, after the end of the military dictatorship in 1985, a lot of these indigenous groups, besides the Kayapó and Xavánte, became politically active. Linda Rabben states how "since the 1980s, they have intensified their efforts to reclaim their identity and their land, leading Brazil's indigenous groups into a new phase of mobilization" (13). In other words, the groups began to march down the streets of urbanized cities protesting for their rights of life, health, peace, and prosperity. What they didn't know is that they were going to meet police force during their demonstrations. Their peaceful marches became centers of police brutality towards them. Using water hoses, battle gear and guns, the police would hurt and mistreat the individuals. But these incidents were nothing compared to the assassinations of eighteen Pataxó leaders, for example (Rabben, 159). Presently, with the help of the internet, various indigenous groups are reaching to outside organizations for help and to defend their cultures, territories, rights, and interests (Rabben, 13). If the Kayapó and Xavánte do decide to integrate and help their fellow brothers, they will still face government interventions.



*Limits and future research*

The limits to this research were few, but very important. In the first place, I was not able to find a lot of research on Brazil's indigenous groups in a social context. Also, most of the scholarly works I encountered were in an anthropological context, which dealt more with subsistence patterns and health issues. Moreover, I did not have a lot of Kayapó and Xavánte examples of resistance as I pleased. Furthermore, I did not have any statistics to support my short-term and long-term arguments. This is something that can further be examined.

Further research could be focusing on the long term situation of the benefits of globalization by looking at other aspects of it (it is not entirely bad). Also, other research can concentrate on other indigenous groups, tribes or communities of Brazil besides the Kayapó and Xavánte. Furthermore, a study can be done looking into examples of integration, the benefits of it, and the response of the groups that have. If the same resistance concept is followed, groups that live outside of the reservations, such as groups living in the Amazon,<sup>34</sup> can be looked into. Ecologically, a good study can look at the ways that these indigenous groups and others help or destroy the ambiance of the forest or surrounding natural areas. For example, a comparison between the intruders that are damaging the forests because of development with chain saws and bulldozers, with the Indian societies who use subsistence strategies that combine agriculture, hunting, and gathering in order to live in harmony with the environment.

*Closing Remarks*

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<sup>34</sup> Interesting fact: In 2008, the National Geographic Magazine obtained pictures of one of the many tribes that live in the Amazon who have no contact with Brazilian society.

For me it is very difficult to disagree with resistance and agree with integration when it comes to the cultural identity of the indigenous groups in Brazil. I believe in keeping culture and traditions alive with little change. I know that change is convenient and it means progress, but there are certain aspects that should not have to undergo a modification just because a political government says they should; especially if the main purpose behind this is money. I see integration as a problem for the indigenous groups in Brazil for many reasons. The first is that their language will eventually fade out to leave room for the general language. To the linguist and anthropologist, for example, this causes a problem because the native languages that have survived throughout the years will disappear and there will be no record of them for future generations. So far, Brazil is the third country in the world that has the highest number of indigenous languages in jeopardy of extinction.<sup>35</sup> Another reason is the actual taking of their lands. Unsurprisingly, the Brazilian government favors farmers over the groups that have lived in the lands for decades. For example, in Roraima, the Federal Supreme Court is the one in charge of voting if the indigenous reserve Raposa Serra do Sol keeps their lands or if they are given to rice farmers.<sup>36</sup> The last reason why I see integration as a problem is that many of the indigenous groups like the Kayapó and Xavánte, simply want to continue their ways of life peacefully. The Kayapó do have some contact with Brazilian society, but they had no other choice. They learned to fight the way the general society does and that is through political battles. For this they need(ed) to learn Portuguese. With the Xavánte it is different. They rather resist and contact or integration with the society that has only affected their overall survival. Because of their example, I say that it is as if history is repeating itself. At the beginning of Brazil's colonial period, most of the natives had to flee because of the precarious conditions they were facing with

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<sup>35</sup> [www.bbcbrasil.com](http://www.bbcbrasil.com)- 02/19/2009

<sup>36</sup> [www.bbcbrasil.com](http://www.bbcbrasil.com)- 12/08/2008

the initial arrival of the Portuguese settlers, and enslavement. Now, more than five hundred years later, they rather run away than to fall victims of the globalization trap. At the present, it is the government and the owners of companies who have the majority of control over the poor and defenseless such as the indigenous groups, because these latter live within the land that is being exploited. Resistance, or gradual resistance, is necessary for these two groups and others to retain their culture and traditions. Another solution that exists besides resistance is for both parties to come together and cooperate with one another to find what is best for both: for the indigenous groups to retain their lands and their ways of living and for the government to find other means of increasing their economy through other sectors besides the exploitation of land.

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