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MINERAL EXTRACTION BY AND FOR INDIGENOUS AMAZONIAN COMMUNITIES: GOLD MINING BY THE WAIÃPI AND KAYAPÓ

Paper Presented in the Session, *Mining, Oil, Environment, People and Rights in the Amazon*. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., November 19, 1997

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ABSTRACT

TURNER, Terence (University of Chicago) MINERAL EXTRACTION BY AND FOR INDIGENOUS AMAZONIAN COMMUNITIES: GOLD MINING BY THE WAIÃPI AND KAYAPÓ. Invasion of indigenous peoples' lands and casual environmental destruction by non-indigenous miners for gold and other minerals is not the only story on mining in the Amazon. Some indigenous peoples have succeeded in throwing invading miners off their lands and, with help from anthropologists and non-governmental organization activists, have begun to do their own placer gold mining, while working to restore the ecological damage done by their own and previous mining operations. Two such cases from the Brazilian Amazon, the Waiãpi of Amapa and the Gorotire Kayapó of Pará, are described. Both are in crisis because of opposition and obstruction by Brazilian governmental and private agencies. Support is urgently needed, especially for the Waiãpi project and the anthropologist-activist who has helped to get it going and is now under personal attack by political figures linked to local mining interests.

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The devastating effects of the current wave of mining, oil drilling and other forms of extractivism in the Amazon on the environment and on the rights and livelihood of the indigenous peoples of the area have been widely reported. Not every story about mining and Indians to come out of Amazonia in the last few years, however, features the Indians in the role of disempowered and exploited victims. In a few cases, indigenous communities have managed to expel miners from their territory and to take over mining operations (specifically, placer mining for gold) for themselves. These communities have shown the way by their example for other native groups faced with illegal invasion of their lands and exploitation of their resources by Brazilian extractivists. Perhaps more importantly, they have also demonstrated for the first time in the history of Amazonia that at least some indigenous groups are poised to take over the exploitation, within their own legally demarcated territories, of the most valuable mineral and forest resources the region affords, directly competing for control of resources like gold that are central to the regional economies of their areas. With minimal help from supportive anthropological activists and NGOs, a few such groups appeared to be on the way to rendering themselves economically independent of tutelage by the national state and establishing an autonomous capability for the reproduction of their distinct indigenous cultural identities and social communities. This possibility, in turn, has provoked intense resistance by a broad spectrum of state institutions (notably including the agency responsible for the guardianship of the Indians, FUNAI), and their allies in civil society, including private economic interests, evangelical missionaries, and media. The resulting struggle that is currently raging between these forces and the Indians and the few anthropologists and NGOs that are supporting them has momentous implications for the future of indigenous peoples and economic development in Amazonia. In this paper I deal with the two most important cases of this kind in Brazilian Amazonia: those of the WaiĀpi of Amapá and the eastern Kayapo community of Gorotire in southern Pará.

In both of these instances, the indigenous groups in question initially succeeded in expelling Brazilian miners from their territories and taking back control over their own gold resources. Both subsequently undertook to exploit these resources themselves, using environmentally non-destructive techniques. At the same time, they further committed themselves to attempts to repair the environmental damage inflicted by the Brazilian miners. The WaiĀpi have had six years to begin to put these projects into practice. The Gorotire Kayapo are still in the planning stage, awaiting the funding of an initial study by geological consultant and mining engineer. If these projects can continue and succeed, they will have far-reaching implications for the survival of the ecosystem and the political-economic viability of indigenous societies in Amazonia as a whole, not to mention the future of mining operations and technologies employed in the region. These implications have been clearly perceived by the non-indigenous mining interests of the areas concerned and their allies, which have mounted a full scale attack on these projects.

The Waiãpi and Kayapo cases thus are important not only as examples of the capacity and will of indigenous peoples to resist exploitation and take control of production for themselves, but also as indications of the emerging pattern of response to such indigenous initiatives by the non-indigenous forces and interests involved, particularly the administrative, legal and legislative organs of the state. As the Waiãpi experience most plainly shows, an ominous coalition of private mining interests, politicians aligned with those interests, evangelical missionaries, important sectors of the judiciary and the legal apparatus of the state, including Federal Prosecutors and functionaries of the Public Ministry (Ministerio Publico), and influential journalists and newspapers, has coalesced in opposition to the Indians and their supporters: an anthropologist, a geologist and the NGO that supports their work with the Waiãpi.

Over the past year and a half, this motley anti-indigenous alliance of state and Federal-level governmental agencies and functionaries, elected politicians, evangelical missionaries and private mining interests has been attempting to subvert the effort of the Waiãpi people of Amapá to mine gold in their own reserve, using the Placer method but without its usual corollaries, the use of mercury and other environmentally destructive techniques. In this effort the Waiãpi have been supported by the Brazilian NGO, the Centro de Trabalho Indigenista (Center for Indigenous Work) of São Paulo. Over the same period, efforts by the eastern Kayapo community of Gorotire to put back into production a large gold mine they had captured from the Brazilian miners who had illegally opened it on their territory have been systematically obstructed by the Brazilian Bureau of Indian Affairs, FUNAI, and encountered a series of difficulties in arranging authorization and support from other government agencies. These difficulties of the Kayapo project have been, in part, the by-products of the campaign to suppress the Waiãpi project, and in part the direct results of the same entrenched institutional and political forces responsible for the attacks on the Waiãpi project. These attacks have included death threats and punitive, financially ruinous lawsuits brought against the anthropologist who has worked with the Waiãpi, Dr. Dominique Gallois; intimidation and defamation of technical consultants, above all the geologist and mining engineer, Luis Vessani; and a political and media campaign against the NGO that had become involved as consultant and sponsor, respectively, of both projects: the Centro de Trabalho Indigenista (Center for Indigenous Work, or CTI).

The expulsion of Brazilian miners from indigenous territory, and the inception of competitive mining activities by the indigenous groups concerned, of course accounts for much of the opposition to the Waiãpi and Kayapo projects by regional mining interests and the politicians and state officials who represent their interests. Something more is involved, however, in the hostile reaction to the Waiãpi and Kayapo projects by national politicians, jurists, administrators, and above all FUNAI. The possibility, represented by these two cases, that at least some indigenous groups might become economically independent of the State and able to sustain themselves as autonomously self-reproducing indigenous communities, maintaining their own social and cultural identities within their own territories, threatens the ideological and political foundations of Brazilian indigenous policy and even, in a larger sense, Brazilian nationalism as a project of social assimilation and integration directed toward the construction of a single, homogeneous national identity.

Confronted with instances of indigenous communities effectively asserting their constitutional rights to control their own territories, and organizing themselves to exploit their own resources on a scale that would make them independent of the tutelage of the state, the Federal Indian Agency, FUNAI, has reacted by giving a new meaning to its tutelary role: that of actively obstructing and undermining the development of effective political-economic autonomy by an indigenous community, thus forcibly guaranteeing its continued dependence and subordination to FUNAI. That this new interpretation of its constitutionally mandated tutelary role by FUNAI is not merely an isolated reaction to the single case of

the Waiãpi, but a more general policy orientation evoked by other analogous cases, is demonstrated by FUNAI's handling of the Gorotire Kayapo attempt to implement a similar project, and the unwillingness of key functionaries in other government ministries to support it out of fear of incurring the political enmity of the coalition that is attempting to destroy the Waiãpi project. In both cases, FUNAI has consistently pursued courses of action and inaction calculated to prevent the indigenous groups in question from attaining effective autonomy, in patent violation of its ostensible role as protector of indigenous peoples and their interests.

Much more than the success of a couple of community development projects is thus at stake in the current onslaught on the Waiãpi and Kayapo projects. The whole ideological basis and future of Brazilian indigenous policy, and certainly the indigenous policy of the current Neo-Liberal regime, is involved. Currently, both projects hang in the balance. If they are successfully blocked and suppressed by the political and private forces arrayed against them, the implications for indigenous control and development of mineral resources in the Brazilian Amazon as a whole will be grave in the extreme. Anthropologists should also take note that the attacks on the two projects have been directed not only against the indigenous communities and NGO activists involved in the projects, but also explicitly against anthropologists, in so far as they attempt to act as supporters and facilitators of these projects (the Federal Congressman who has led the attack on the Waiãpi project, for instance, has proclaimed that the involvement of the anthropologist who has worked with the Waiãpi project constitutes "manipulation" of the Indians for her own interests, and that only missionaries truly have the real interests of the Indians at heart). The integrity, and potentially the very possibility of anthropological work with and on behalf of indigenous communities and their projects is therefore also at stake in the attacks on the Waiãpi and Kayapo projects.

In the remainder of this paper, I report the histories and current crises of these two unique and promising projects.

THE WAIÃPI EXPERIMENT AND THE ROLE OF THE CENTRO DE TRABALHO INDIGENISTA

The Waiãpi are a Tupi-speaking group located in the northern Amazonian state of Amapá; their current population is about 520. In the late 1960's, their territory began to be invaded by gold-hunting placer miners (*garimpeiros*). Relations between the Waiãpi and the invading miners quickly deteriorated, to the point where a whole local group of Waiãpi was massacred by miners in the eastern part of Waiãpi country. The Waiãpi community of Aroá, where the Waiãpi attempted to live in peaceful coexistence with the miners, was decimated by diseases brought in by the latter. The influx of miners and other outsiders was aggravated by the construction of the Northern Perimeter Highway, which passed close to Waiãpi villages. FUNAI established a presence in the area but did nothing to protect the Indians from the effects of these incursions (Gallois 1997a and 1997b gives a summary of the events of this period).

This situation--a repetition, in its main outlines, of that of many other Amazonian indigenous groups--continued through the 1970s and 1980s. In the early 1990s, however, the Waiãpi organized themselves to expel the miners, police the boundaries of their territory, and appropriate the gold-extracting technology of the invaders, though in less ecologically destructive forms, to provide an income for their own medical and industrial commodity needs. In 1991, some mining camps were attacked and burnt down, and the invading miners were obliged to leave. The process was led by communities from the northern and central areas of the Waiãpi territory that had not been so heavily penetrated by Brazilian miners. People from these communities took up placer mining on their own, at first imitating the methods of the Brazilian placer miners in areas that they had left. They rapidly adapted their methods, however, to a more low-intensity, seasonal pattern of work, organized on a

family basis, that dispenses with the use of mercury, and includes the recuperation of watercourses and banks that have been worked.

At the same time (1991), the Waiãpi organized themselves on an inter-communal basis to carry out the demarcation of their own territory. They insisted on doing this by themselves, refusing to allow a non-indigenous company contracted by FUNAI to do the job. The demarcation was carried out between 1994 and 1996, when it was completed and legally confirmed *homologado*, “homologized”) by the Brazilian government. By this time, the inter-communal organization had taken a more institutionalized form called the Conselho das Aldeias/APINA. APINA also organized projects in education, health care and training in the management of productive operations, such as the harvesting of forest products and gold extraction.

Gold production was important to the Waiãpi for two main reasons. Firstly, by taking on the role of producers themselves, they could retain the whole value of the gold, rather than the diminutive percentage they might otherwise expect to receive as a rent from concessions to Brazilian miners. Secondly, taking control over the mining operations themselves was important as a symbolic affirmation of their capacity to develop their own resources without depending on exploitative Brazilians--in this case, gold miners, in Waiãpi experience the most exploitative and environmentally destructive of all. The miners, for their part, bitterly resented their expulsion by the Waiãpi. Through their association, USAGAL, they brought continuous pressure on politicians and local government representatives, such as FUNAI agents, to support their return to Waiãpi territory.

The CTI (*Centro de Trabalho Indigenista*, “Center for Indigenous Work”), a Brazilian NGO, began to work with the Waiãpi in 1991, supporting their efforts to demarcate and defend their boundaries and other projects in the areas of health, education and acquiring skills for the management and organization of productive activities. Dr. Dominique Gallois, a professor of anthropology from the University of São Paulo who had conducted anthropological research among the Waiãpi since 1978, directed the CTI's Waiãpi projects. As Gallois explains,

...the work of the CTI with the Waiãpi basically consists in subsidizing their attempts to implement a communal plan for the protection of the land and the provision of economic alternatives to the destructive model that had been imposed on them in the 1970s and 1980s, together with virtually all the indigenous areas of Amazonia. In the lands of the Yanomami, Kayapó, Munduruku, Parakanã, Sararé, etc., [Intrusive extractive activities] continued to cause grave ecological damage and social disruption that threatened the future of native communities. Losses of territory and the impoverishment of natural resources indispensable to survival are only the most obvious aspects of the crisis. To these must be added the extortionate exchanges, the cooptation of leaders, and the [forced] adoption of economic practices typical of dependency, which in indigenous areas are never compensated for by compassionate aid for immediate needs nor by any systematic assistance. The crisis cannot be resolved by the authoritarian prohibition of the alternative measures taken by the Indians. We must not forget that they were brutally inserted into the model of destructive development that predominates in Amazonia, that has induced many communities to sell their timber, to give concessions to miners, and to commercialize their natural products indiscriminately without any selectivity or control for sustainability. In the total absence of orientation, many groups were induced to open their lands to indiscriminate exploitation, in exchange for immediate benefits that would enable them to supply needs acquired through coexistence with the invaders and the system of government assistance operative in all these areas. (Gallois 1997b:3)

In the spirit of this statement, the CTI, together with the Waiãpi, formulated a project for the “de-pollution” and ecological recuperation of areas of their territory degraded by mining operations (*Despoluição de áreas da Terra Indígena Waiãpi degradadas por garimpo*), with the CTI in the role of technical advisor and consultant. The principal goals were to remove as much of the mercury left in the land and river system by the Brazilian miners as possible, and to convert land that had been stripped and eroded into plantations of fruit trees. The CTI brought in a geologist and mining engineer, Luis Vessani, to advise the Waiãpi on ecologically non-destructive methods of placer mining. Vessani showed them how mining operations could be combined with the recuperation and conservation of areas that had been worked over and abandoned by Brazilian miners. Any gold recovered in the process was to be used to help defray collective expenses approved by the Waiãpi governing body of the project. This project was submitted to the Federal Ministry of the Environment, and approved by it in November 1996, as the procedural prerequisite to obtaining funding from the PD/A (*Projeto pelo Desenvolvimento e Proteção Ambiental das Florestas Tropicais*), a fund established by the G-7 countries to support projects mounted by NGOs and indigenous associations for ecological conservation and the demarcation and support of indigenous lands and peoples, as part of the Pilot Project set up by the G-7 (*Projeto Piloto* or PP-G7) following the 1992 UNCED (United Nations Commission on Environment and Development) Conference in Rio de Janeiro.

This moment of success, however, was immediately followed by vehement attacks on the project launched by the Federal Prosecutor for the state of Amapa, João Bosco Araujo Fontes Junior. This powerful political figure made a series of wild and baseless accusations against the project, the role of the CTI and its relation to the Indians, such as that the project was only a cover for a commercial gold mining operation run by the CTI for its own profit, that the CTI had used Indian labor for illegal forest clearance to build a clandestine airstrip, and that CTI anthropologist Dominique Gallois had manipulated Waiãpi leaders and communities for her own political and economic ends, rather than acting as an adviser and consultant as she in fact did. Araujo brought a civil suit against the CTI and the Waiãpi Project in August 1997, calling for the suspension of all contacts (such as permissions to carry out projects or the implementation of any joint projects) between the CTI, FUNAI and the Ministry of the Environment, banning all CTI personnel from entering the Waiãpi area, ordering FUNAI to take over all medical work among the Waiãpi (thus replacing the Waiãpi health project initiated by the CTI but carried on by Waiãpi paramedics trained through the project), and ordering the Waiãpi themselves to cease all gold mining. A Federal judge granted an injunction implementing all these provisions on August 28, 1997 (this same judge has found no reason to suspend mining permits for indigenous areas issued to two Amapa mining companies linked to an ex-governor of the state).

Prosecutor Araujo has also set in motion three separate police investigations against Dr. Gallois, leading to lawsuits against her for defamation of character against himself, illegal gold mining activities (supposedly for her own profit) on indigenous land, unlawful use of the image of the Indians (i.e., making anthropological videos about the Project and other aspects of Waiãpi life), and the “manipulation of indigenous leaders”. The details of two of these investigations have been kept secret from Dr. Gallois, pending the bringing of formal charges by the Prosecutor. The aim of this massive campaign of legal harassment seems clearly to be to drive Gallois and the CTI into bankruptcy should they attempt to contest the suits, thus forcing them to accept the termination of their Project and severing all connections with the Waiãpi. At the very least, Araujo’s conduct towards Gallois and the CTI, and the compliance of the Federal police and judiciary of Amapa with his punitive suits and investigations, have established beyond any doubt that Dr. Gallois and the CTI have no chance of obtaining justice in the courts of Amapa.

These legal and judicial attacks have been from the beginning joined and amplified by a Federal Congressman, Antonio Feijão (PSDB-AP). Feijão is himself in the gold-mining business, and has represented the interests of the miners of Amapa and their association, USAGAL. Following the expulsion of the miners from Waiãpi territory in 1961, this same Congressman Feijão, in conjunction with USAGAL, falsely accused the CTI of exploiting the Indians as slave labor to mine gold for them. A scurrilous and sensationalistic media campaign, led by the newspaper *O Liberal* of Belem, the organ of the political and economic establishment of northern Amazonia, has uncritically repeated and amplified these outrageous charges. (Gallois 1997b:3 and 1997c: passim)

The prosecutor, Feijão and the journalists of *O Liberal* claim to be basing their attacks on reports by the local FUNAI agent and missionaries of the New Tribes Mission. Both had good reason to want to see the CTI ousted from the area. The FUNAI agent, against whom serious charges of corruption and embezzlement had been made and are still pending within FUNAI itself, had consistently opposed the presence of the CTI and the attempts of the Waiãpi to take control of their territory and resources and implement their own governing council and health care. Having done nothing to support or protect the Indians against the depredations of the miners during his tenure, he plainly felt threatened by the CTI's effective work in support of the Waiãpi, and even more by the Waiãpis' independent organization of health care, gold production and a political body to run them. The FUNAI office in Amapa employs 40 functionaries, whose jobs depend on the proposition that the Indians are incompetent dependents requiring the exercise of a "tutorial" function (the Portuguese term, *tutela*, combines the meanings of guardianship and tutelage in the English sense of teaching) by FUNAI. This paternalistic fiction is threatened by the successes of the Waiãpi, aided by the CTI, in taking control of their own lives. Not a single member of the regional staff of FUNAI (nor, indeed, the staff of the central office in the Federal Capital) has spoken up in support of the CTI against the trumped-up charges of the State Prosecutor and the Congressman. The newly appointed President of FUNAI has echoed the charges against the CTI and refused to review the Waiãpi case, even after being called upon to do so by Dra. Ruth Cardoso, the wife of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. (Gallois: personal communication)

The New Tribes Mission, who had earlier been excluded from the Waiãpi area by FUNAI, and whose hard-shelled attempts at evangelization had been criticized by the CTI, doubtless hopes that if the CTI were expelled it might have a chance to return, offering services in exchange for the opportunity to renew its efforts at conversion. Suspicions to this effect have been greatly strengthened by repeated assertions by Congressman Feijão, an evangelical convert close to the mission, that only missions, and not anthropologists or NGOs, have the real interests of the Indians at heart and are competent to assist them.

Even the regional office of the Federal agency in charge of defending the Amazonian environment, IBAMA, made an overflight of the area of the supposed clandestine airstrip to "investigate" the charge of FUNAI that the CTI had ordered the Indians to construct it. The IBAMA plane made no attempt to land, nor did any IBAMA official speak with any Waiãpi (nor take into account that the Waiãpi have a clear legal right to construct airstrips on their own land, had they in fact done so). Nevertheless, IBAMA proceeded to fine the CTI for "illegal deforestation". As the Social-Environmental Institute (*Instituto Socio-Ambiental* or ISA, an NGO with offices in Brasília and São Paulo) commented in the summary of the case it presented in its newsletter,

Curiously, this whole bureaucratic orchestra has never appeared to take action against the overtly illegal activities of gold miners in other areas of the state. It has nevertheless provoked an enormous inquisitorial confusion, as if the gold mining of the Waiãpi, legally permitted by the Indian Statute, were a mining operation of the CTI and as if the

recuperation of areas degraded by mining were mining, as if a farm plot were an airstrip for jets, as if the Indians were idiots. (ISA 1997:3)

Dr. Gallois's principled and well-documented responses to the various charges and her attempt to legally appeal them have thus far been ignored or rejected by Federal Courts. (Gallois/CTI 1997e:2-3) She has received death threats in case she tries to return to the Waiãpi, which she has reaffirmed her determination to do. Vessani, the mining engineer who had worked with her on the Waiãpi project has been threatened with other suits by the Prosecutor, falsely charged with illegally profiting by Waiãpi gold production, and obliged to close his business office in Goiania. He, Dr. Gallois and CTI, despite their lack of the financial resources necessary for litigation on this scale, are nonetheless determined to fight back. They have hired lawyers and have obtained pro bono assistance from a nationally known lawyer specialized in rights cases. (Gallois 1997c, 1997e:3-4; Gallois, personal communication) Meanwhile, the Waiãpi themselves, through spokesmen for their own organization, APINA, and a delegation they sent to Brasilia to protest to government leaders, have called for a cessation of attacks on their project with CTI, demanded the resignation of the regional administrator of FUNAI, and called upon the government to liberate the funds already allotted to the Project by the PD/A (currently being blocked by the Ministry of the Environment under pressure from Deputy Feijão and Prosecutor Araujo). As Gallois asks,

Who is responsible for [the restoration of] the environmental destruction and social disruption perpetrated by the [Brazilian] miners?...Congressman Feijão? The miners' association, USAGAL? The Federal Prosecutor of Amapa? The New Tribes Mission? The [local agent] of FUNAI? Not one of them has said anything about this responsibility, in all the texts and defamatory statements they have hurled against CTI and the Waiãpi themselves as represented by their communal organization, APINA. What is certain is that, for various reasons, the actors engaged in this campaign of calumny are all trying to prevent the Waiãpi from succeeding in their attempts to gain autonomy. (Gallois 1997b: 6)

THE KAYAPO EXPERIENCE OF GOLD MINING: FROM ARMED STRUGGLE TO SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND FROM *RENTIERS* TO PRODUCERS

Beginning in 1983, the territory of the eastern Kayapo communities of Gorotire, Kikretum, Kubenkranken and Kokraymoro began to be invaded by masses of gold prospectors. (Cleary 1990; Fisher 1994; Schminck and Wood 1992; Turner 1993) A few large mines and many small operations were opened, all using placer methods that employ mercury, a serious pollutant. The placer method employs high-pressure hoses to wash gold-bearing clay over sluices; the muddy tailings, along with much of the mercury used to precipitate the gold particles, is washed into the rivers. The largest mines were opened close to the village of Gorotire, which also happens to be the largest Kayapo community; it now has a population of over 1,000. In 1985 the Gorotire Kayapo assaulted the two large mines that were then in operation and held the 3,500 miners who had been working there hostage at gun point until the Brazilian government conceded their ownership of the mines and their right to close them down. The government, however, demanded in return that the Gorotire allow the mines to remain in operation for two more years, with the understanding that the Kayapo would be entitled to a percentage of the take. (Turner 1993, 1995c, n.d.1)

The Kayapo accepted this bargain, fully intending to shut down the mines after the two-year grace period. By the time the two years were up, however, they, or rather the handful of leaders who actually banked and managed the income from the mines on behalf of the community, were hooked. The

leaders in question, the sons or nephews of the older chiefs, had been sent out for schooling and familiarization with Brazilian ways. At the time they were the only Kayapo with the necessary linguistic and cultural skills to negotiate contracts and manage bank accounts. The same skills both made them capable of maintaining households in Brazilian towns and appreciative of the pleasures and advantages that would accrue to them and their families from doing so. As they pointed out, it was necessary for persons in their position as community representatives to maintain residences near the banks and offices they needed to frequent in their capacity as royalty collectors, contract negotiators, and purchasing agents for their communities. As they further insisted, it was necessary for the proper discharge of such functions, in the context of provincial Brazilian society, for them to maintain a style of life consistent with their importance as custodians of such substantial responsibilities and sums of money...

Thus was the slippery slope greased. Soon the lion's share of the income from the mines was going to pay the costs of keeping the new young leaders in the style to which they rapidly became accustomed. This style was impressive even by the standards of the wealthiest local gentry, including large houses, staffs of Brazilian servants, fleets of cars, what became in effect private airplanes, and accounts with local merchants running, in the aggregate, into the hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. Thus a new Kayapo class (strictly speaking, the first Kayapo class) was born. There was, to be sure, a certain amount of redistribution of goods and other benefits to the older chiefs and ordinary people who remained behind in the village. The income from the mines that went to sustain this lifestyle was roughly doubled by lucrative mahogany logging contracts that began to be arranged by the same young leaders with local Brazilian logging firms beginning in the mid-1980s (about the same time as the mining deals). The main political-economic result of the mining and logging contracts, however, was the rise of the new *rentier* elite of young leaders, with their monopoly on intercultural skills and their new, and for the Kayapo unprecedented, Brazilian wealth, to levels of prestige and influence that seemed to surpass those of the senior ritual chiefs of the community. (Turner 1992; 1995a; 1995b; n.d.1)

By the early 1990s, however, many older boys and young men in their twenties from Gorotire and a few other villages had acquired some schooling and familiarity with Brazilian ways, in part as a result of visits to towns facilitated by the young leaders and in part of intermittent classes in literacy and arithmetic provided by teachers from the government Indian Bureau (FUNAI), and evangelical missionaries. The young leaders in their town houses no longer held a monopoly of intercultural skills, but increasingly confronted an informed and critical public of younger men who were becoming concerned over the failure of the mining and logging contracts to bring greater benefits to the community, the cumulative environmental damage they were causing, and the ever more serious consequences of this for the health of the community. The mining and logging operations were progressively eroding the ecological values of the forest and rivers, while malaria increased as placer mining created large shallow swamps that made ideal incubators for mosquitoes. (On mercury pollution in rivers in Kayapo areas see Ferrari et al. 1993A, 1993b; Gonçalves 1994; Gonçalves et al. 1992, 1993)

In this volatile situation, a crisis was abruptly precipitated by the collective action of the younger men's age group. The context was a communal ceremonial hunt, which the two men's groups undertook in the customary way as collective units, acting separately but in concert with each other. They camped together in the forest, away from the village and their families, occupying separate areas of the common clearing. The circumstances thus reinforced the tendency of the younger men's group to act as a "collective subject", sharing collective emotions. One morning, as the older men left for the hunt, the younger men remained behind in the camp. A few of them, who had emerged as informal leaders,

had taken the initiative to call for a general discussion of the logging and mining contracts. In a long and intense discussion, these leaders brought the group to a unanimous decision to demand the immediate cancellation of all extractive contracts, and to implement this decision by proceeding directly to assault the massive gold mine at Santidó, a short distance away, and drive away the 3,000--odd Brazilian miners then working there. The success of the plan as a communal move, however, depended on the support and collaboration of the senior men, which was by no means assured.

When the seniors returned from hunting to the camp, the younger men collectively confronted them and called upon them to join them in the attack on Santidó. The younger men made it clear that they had already made their own decision to assault the mine: they were now calling upon the senior men to either join them or not. The confrontation immediately raised the specter of historic occasions on which the younger men had collectively broken out of the control of the senior men and precipitated open fighting between the age sets leading to outright communal schisms. This understandably aroused fear among the senior men that if they should try to restrain the younger men and fail, the younger men might turn against them, with unforeseeable results. They ended by deciding unanimously to join the junior men in the attack on the mine.

The attack was carried out, with complete success. The Brazilian miners, surprised, offered no resistance as the Kayapo herded them off into the forest for an 80 km. walk to the nearest roadhead, burned their bunkhouses and toppled their machines and hoses into the deep water-filled pits they had been used to create. The alarmed young leaders in their town houses in the city of Redenção hurried to try to arrange a compromise that would allow the mining (and their kickbacks) to continue, but to no avail. The attack had been, among other things, a repudiation of their leadership. (For detailed accounts of this episode see Turner 1995c; n.d.1)

The sentiment of the community remained overwhelmingly opposed to a renewal of the mining concessions, and new leadership, not compromised through identification with the extractive contracts, was clearly needed to replace the discredited leaders and create a new structure of authority at the community level. The elder chiefs recognized this and appointed two young men (each the son of one of them) as the leaders of two newly formed groupings of the men of the community, supplanting the two groupings that had been associated with the leaders involved with the mining and logging contracts. (Turner 1995a, 1995b)

This Gorotire revolt against the gold mining concessions attracted attention in the Brazilian indigenist activist community. A Brazilian NGO, the Socio-Environmental Institute (ISA), decided to try to interest the Kayapo community of Gorotire in taking over the working and management of the captured gold mine, along lines inspired by the CTI's Waiãpi Project. ISA asked Luis Vessani, the mining engineer and geologist who had served so successfully as the technical consultant on the Waiãpi project, and myself, as an anthropologist who has long worked at Gorotire, to go to Gorotire and talk to the community to see if there were interest in launching such a project. Vessani and I agreed, and went to Gorotire in August 1996.

We were received grudgingly and with suspicion by the Kayapo leaders and the local FUNAI personnel who, we found, were involved in negotiations with Brazilian miners to allow the latter to resume their operations at the Gorotire mine. The local FUNAI director had of course been advised of our mission but attempted to persuade us to "suspend" it to allow their negotiations with the miners to proceed undisturbed (not to our surprise, we found that they had not notified the head office of FUNAI in Brasilia of these negotiations). In contrast, we were welcomed enthusiastically in the village by the senior Gorotire chiefs and a group of young Kayapo who had already attempted to begin work on their

own at the mine. Many of the other villagers were receptive toward our project, provided the recuperation side of it could be effectively carried out in the context of the mining-ravaged landscape left by the expelled miners. A substantial number, mostly young men who had taken part in the movement to terminate the mining contracts the previous September, held strong doubts about this and opposed a resumption of mining in any form. After I explained at length the nature of the operation we were proposing (a completely Kayapo-operated and managed process that would restore the land as it progressed and avoid releasing mercury into the environment, as in the CTI--Waiãpi project) most of the dissidents gave their qualified assent.

On the basis of this consensus at Gorotire in support of the new do-it-yourself mining project, and Vessani's confirmation, after a geological investigation of the Santidio mine, that it still contained a vast amount of gold, we prepared a formal proposal for support for the community project, consisting of funds for training of indigenous workers and managers, mechanical equipment, and consultant salaries. Marcio Santilli, who had been the director of ISA who had initiated ISA's interest in setting up the project and had asked Vessani and I to go to Gorotire to sound out the community, had meanwhile been appointed President of FUNAI, and had made approval and implementation of the Gorotire project a top priority for FUNAI. By agreement with ISA and at Santilli's request, we submitted the proposal to FUNAI. After only six months in office, however, Santilli, frustrated by opposition by entrenched FUNAI bureaucrats, abruptly resigned.

Santilli had found that the bureaucratic chiefs of the corrupt and paralytic FUNAI apparatus were intransigently opposed to schemes such as the Gorotire mining project that would give indigenous people direct control over such a large budget and potential income, making them potentially independent of FUNAI. The support Santilli had been promised by President Cardoso and the Minister of Justice, Nelson Jobim, for his efforts to reform FUNAI and end the strangle hold of the entrenched bureaucratic power brokers was never delivered, and he came to realize that he was essentially being used as window dressing for the government's real, deeply anti-indigenous policy. Santilli's resignation, however understandable on these general political grounds, left the Gorotire mining project to the mercies of the feudal lords of the FUNAI bureaucracy. The predictable result was that it sank inexorably into the FUNAI morass, never to emerge. This despite the intervention of the Ministry of the Environment, which appropriated \$280,000 for the project, leaving FUNAI responsible only for giving its approval and preparing the proper bureaucratic forms. The new President of FUNAI, Julio Gaiger, gave continual assurances that the project proposal was receiving due consideration by FUNAI's internal departments and experts, and was about to be approved, but it remained blocked by endless bureaucratic obstructions until the expiration of the fiscal year, forcing the government to withdraw the appropriation unspent. This debacle made it clear that FUNAI would block any attempt to implement the project that relied on its approval.

Under Brazilian law, however, other government departments, and even legally established private NGOs, can receive and administer governmental appropriations for projects such as the proposed Gorotire gold scheme. With the support of the CTI, which offered itself for this role, I approached the Ministry of the Environment about the possibility of renewing their appropriation for the project, with the CTI rather than FUNAI as sponsoring organization. Officials at the Ministry were receptive, provided three conditions could be met: the first and most important was that the community of Gorotire would again have to guarantee its full support for the project; the second was that Luis Vessani, the geologist and mining engineer who had worked with the CTI on the Waiãpi project, or some other expert with the same qualifications, would agree to perform the analogous role on the Kayapo project; and the third was that the CTI itself or some comparable NGO would agree to serve as sponsor.

With this assurance I returned to Gorotire, and after two lengthy meetings in the communal men's house, during which many of the younger men voiced their suspicions and reservations about permitting any renewal of mining in any form, as well as their bitter experience of the untrustworthiness of the Brazilian government in general and FUNAI in particular, as exemplified once again by the obfuscation of the gold project we had agreed upon the previous year, the assembled men gave their approval. What carried the day was the coupling of environmental recuperation with the promise of training in management and total Kayapo control over production, along lines similar to the Waiãpi project.

With this community endorsement I returned to Brasilia and the Ministry of the Environment, only to be told by the same officials that there was no money after all; the President had just decreed a hold on all spending by Ministries for the rest of the fiscal year. A hurried meeting with high officials of the Ministry produced warm assurances of support in principle and their promise to try to insert our project in the list of worthy proposals for funding by the PD/A, for which the Ministry serves as the filter of proposals and conduit of granted funds, at a meeting scheduled for October. At this point, however, CTI discovered that it would be unable to sponsor the Gorotire project because it was already sponsoring another proposal for funding by the PD/A. A frantic scramble to find another institutional patron ensued. It was eventually resolved by CTI colleagues who located another government department, CETEM (*Centro de Tecnologia Mineral*, in the Ministry of Science and Technology), which has been much concerned with mercury pollution resulting from placer mining operations in Amazonia), that was willing to act as sponsor.

At this point, however, the official of the Ministry of the Environment responsible for overseeing financial outlays for all programs in Amazonia announced that in the light of the charges being brought against the CTI's Waiãpi project, he felt reluctant to recommend our project to the PD/A. Other, higher Ministry officials attempted to overrule the functionary in question and induce him to forward our proposal to the PD/A with their recommendation. They made clear that they felt that the Kayapo gold mining project was the kind of project that was needed to surmount the otherwise hopeless conflict between extractive interests and indigenous rights in Amazonia. All our ducks once again seemed securely lined up, but then on the eve of the October meeting, the G-7 office in Brussels responsible for dispersing funds for PD/A projects announced that they had no more money to distribute and adjourned the PD/A meeting indefinitely. A meeting of officials of the Ministry of the Environment and the PD/A to consider the funding of new projects was finally rescheduled, over a year after the initial discussions of the project at the Ministry, to be held on Nov. 12 (1997). At the last minute, however, some Ministry of the Environment officials proved to be too intimidated by the campaign against the CTI and the Waiãpi project to be willing to risk similar political attacks and media defamation. In vain, the CTI co-director who had done so much to support the earlier phases of the Gorotire project argued that the charges against the Waiãpi project were obviously political and unsupported by evidence, and that CTI would now in any case not be formally associated with the Kayapo project. The officials, however, obviously concerned about the possibility of political attacks from the same sources, maintained their refusal to recommend the project to the PD/A "at this time". Thus has the chilling effect of the "inquisitorial" campaign against the CTI and the Waiãpi spread beyond the borders of Amapá to paralyze the prospects for the Kayapo, and presumably any other indigenous project attempting to take control of mining operations in its own territory.

Another factor weighing against the willingness of key administrators in the Ministry of the Environment to back the Kayapo mining project at this time was the new bill allowing mining in indigenous areas now being rushed through the Brazilian congress. Authored by Senator (and by a telling irony, ex-President of FUNAI) Romero Juca, the bill would allow mining on indigenous lands by non-indigenous parties, in

apparent violation of the provisions of section 231 of the Brazilian Constitution. This would be an exact reversal of the legal situation prevailing up to now, and to all appearances also of the Brazilian Constitution. (Albuquerque Rocha 1997; Gallois 1997d; Franco 1997; Paul 1997; Senado Federal 1995) The expectation that this bill will be passed by Congress and signed into law by President Cardoso, according to sources currently on the scene, has created an atmosphere of preemptive reluctance to take any positive steps towards facilitating indigenous peoples' mining projects on the part of functionaries in Ministries otherwise favorably disposed towards them. (Luis Vessani, personal communication) Passage of the bill will have a powerful impact on the whole situation of mining on indigenous lands in Amazonia, but it is difficult to predict the nature and extent of this impact, other than that it is certain to unleash an avalanche of litigation in the courts. It is bound to be challenged on grounds of unconstitutionality by advocates of indigenous rights. Meanwhile, it will doubtless contribute to the climate of illegality in which invasions of indigenous territories by miners, loggers and others are becoming ever more common.

This political/bureaucratic saga, in which the Federal and State governments regularly line up with the private interests most intent on exploiting indigenous lands and resources and most opposed to indigenous empowerment, helps to explain why indigenous communities and leaders find it almost impossible to develop projects that require governmental approval, regulation and/or support, or to move them through the governmental system from initial proposals and promises to action. In such a system, the help of non-indigenous go-betweens capable of dealing with the intricacies of Brazilian bureaucracy and communicating with non-governmental sources of support, as well as providing technical expertise, and explaining all these things to the members of the indigenous communities who must ultimately make the decisions and provide the labor and political will to make the projects reality, is obviously crucial.

The importance of the issues at stake in the fate of these projects has begun to be grasped by international organizations. As this is written, the Commission for Human Rights of the Organization of American States has taken up the case of the Waiãpi project, specifically including the attacks on Dr. Gallois. In the likely case that the Commission finds that the rights of Dr. Gallois and the Waiãpi have been abused, and that they are unable to obtain justice in the Federal Courts of Amapá, it will probably send the case for hearing before the InterAmerican Court--an eventuality that would cause considerable international embarrassment to Brazil. The Committee for Human Rights of the American Anthropological Association has similarly drafted a statement of support for the rights of the Waiãpi and Dr. Gallois, that is currently under consideration by the Executive Board and President of the Association for release as an official document of the Association to appropriate figures in the Brazilian and U.S. governments, and to media and scientific societies of both countries. The Brazilian Anthropological Association has declared its support for Dr. Gallois and the CTI project, and called upon FUNAI to give Dr. Gallois a hearing. NGOs such as Survival International (London), the Coalition for Amazonian Peoples and their Environment (Washington), and Amanaka'a Amazon Network (New York) have taken up the case. Brazilian and international agencies and organizations concerned with universal human rights and indigenous rights are thus becoming increasingly involved in the struggle to defend the Waiãpi project and the non-indigenous activists and organization involved with it. This mounting domestic and international pressure, if successful, may also help to bring favorable action on the Kayapo project.

CONCLUSIONS

The Waiãpi and Kayapo cases have become pretexts for the forging of a more aggressively anti-indigenous policy by the Neo-Liberal Brazilian state and its allies in regional and national civil society.

This policy constitutes a response to an emergent phenomenon with which the Brazilian state and its indigenist ideology have not yet been able to come to terms: indigenous groups that are demographically on the increase, have become conscious of the value of their own culture and have no desire to become assimilated into Brazilian national culture and society, and now possess, within their own demarcated territories, the economic resources to enable them to reproduce their own societies independently of state assistance. This possibility stands in obvious contradiction to the assimilationist and evolutionist ideology that constitutes the ideological basis of the relationship of the Brazilian state to the indigenous groups within its borders, and which is embodied by FUNAI and its ostensibly tutelary role. The Waiãpi and Kayapo cases exemplify this tendency more fully than any others in Brazilian Amazonia, which is why they have become the objects of such determined obstruction and defamation by the state and its allies. The response of the latter, and above all of FUNAI, to the threat posed by the Waiãpi and Kayapo projects to their respective economic interests, ideological legitimacy, and institutional *raison d'être*, has been simple, direct, and massive: obstruct, subvert, and prevent the realization of such a possibility by any means available. It is in this context that Gallois' comment must be understood:

It is...of great concern that FUNAI has been trying to crush partnerships between NGOs and indigenous communities. The Waiãpi case has served to fuel anti-indigenous politicians across the Amazon in a general attempt to destroy the alternatives that have been carefully built over the years by indigenous communities and their allies. (Gallois/CTI 1997e:1)

In addition to exemplifying this general scenario, the struggles over the Waiãpi and Kayapo-Gorotire communal gold-extraction and environmental recuperation projects carry several further implications of general relevance for the contemporary situation of indigenous peoples and ecological values in Amazonia, as they relate specifically to mining by indigenous communities, and potentially other attempts by them to make themselves economically and politically free from dependence on the state by organizing for the production of marketable commodities. The first of these is that indigenous peoples are less than ever merely passive victims of economic "development" in the forms it has typically taken in the Amazon: invasion and exploitation by national extractive enterprises like mining and logging. In cases like those of the Waiãpi and Kayapo, they have shown that they have the will and the capacity to resist, by force where necessary, and also to make the social adjustments and informed political decisions required to reorganize their communities for relatively sustainable and ecologically non-damaging forms of production for the national and international market. In sum, the native peoples of Amazonia, more than ever in the present conjuncture, have the capacity to become the subjects of their own history. For this reason they are currently facing intense opposition from many institutions of the state and civil society. They, and their allies, need all the help they can get.

Secondly, it is clear that in this struggle, the principal organs of the State, from the President's Office and the Federal Indian Agency (FUNAI) to Congressional and legal officials at the Federal, State and local levels, are now more than ever generally on the side of the private economic interests ranged against the Indians. In this respect, the case studies presented here are in full accord with the conclusion of G. Brunelli in his analysis of the conflicts between indigenous peoples, private and state development interests in the Western Amazon in the 1960's AND 1970's. Brunelli writes,

The social dynamics [of the relations between indigenous Amazonian peoples and the forces of "development"] reveal that the autochthonous groups must fight above all against the agencies of the state and the private sector, and that FUNAI is not the ally of the Indians in their negotiations with the latter... Surprising as it may appear, this conclusion confirms once again that, despite the letter of the law, the role of FUNAI in Amazonia is not at all that of a "tutor" of the Indians. (Brunelli 1997:646)

At the same time, the case histories have indicated the existence of forces within the Brazilian state willing and able to support indigenous struggles for autonomous production. The support of these forces will be essential if indigenous communities and their allies are to prevail against the anti-indigenous policies being pursued by the majority of the state apparatus and private economic interests.

Thirdly and finally, the complexity of the conflicts and alliances, potential as well as real, among the indigenous communities, governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private extractive interests involved in these cases places a premium on the role of anthropological and other non-indigenous activists able to mediate between indigenous communities and the non-indigenous agencies involved. In the two cases discussed, anthropologists and activists of the Centro de Trabalho Indigenista have played an essential part in assisting the indigenous communities concerned to formulate their projects and maintain the necessary contacts with external sources of support, protection and technical expertise. As the example of Dominique Gallois of the CTI's Waiãpi project shows, this role may come to demand not only extraordinary skills, unwavering patience and dedication, willingness to risk personal attacks and harassment, but also physical courage in the face of threats to life and limb. Our professional colleague, Dr. Gallois, and her project are struggling under a political and legal assault they lack the financial resources to cope with, and the outcome, which will have profound implications for the future of indigenous peoples and mining throughout Amazonia, will depend in large part on the support of fellow anthropologists and activists like those in this room.

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