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# Involuntary Migration and Resettlement

## The Problems and Responses of Dislocated People

edited by Art Hansen  
and Anthony Oliver-Smith

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## 11 A Reservation for the Nambiquara

David Price

It's true that we have to consider a piece of land as a tool to produce something useful with, but it's also true that we must recognize the love for a particular piece of land.

--Bertolt Brecht

As Western civilization in its various hybrid forms has spread throughout the world, numerous enclaves of residual ethnic minorities have come into conflict with the modern nation-states that lay claim to their lands. This is most obvious in the Americas and Australia, but it is no less true in Asia; even in the heartland of Western culture, minorities like the Basques or even the Scots and Welsh may be seen in these terms. The special sorts of political problems that concern relations between a national society and its enveloped residual minorities may be, at least among the world's larger countries, less the exception than the rule.

National governments that must deal with such minorities always maintain that these matters are purely internal and are not to be judged in the international political forum. However, localized ethnic minorities sometimes agitate for separate national status, and at times they succeed in achieving it. Such cases show that the distinction between internal and external affairs has little analytical value in the present context. On the contrary, this distinction is nothing but a posture adopted by national societies to mask their aggression. What makes the problems between a nation-state and an enclave "internal" is superior power, which enables the nation-state to draw its boundaries without consideration for the boundaries asserted by the enclave.

Thus, the situation of the enveloped minority represents one end of the continuum of power relations between societies: the case of the powerless at the mercy of the powerful. The other extreme would be a condition of approximately equal power that enables both societies to maintain autonomy. An intermediate position is reservation status. A cultural enclave with its own reservation cannot declare war, establish treaties, or benefit from the provisions of international law. It does, however, have official recognition from the national society; it has an economic base founded on the usufruct of guaranteed lands; and it has, at least in theory, the right to

regulate some of its own "internal affairs" in ways different from the national society. An enclave with its own reservation has what might be called a "paranational" status.

There is no doubt that having a reservation is advantageous for the residual ethnic minority. What is less apparent but equally true is that granting a reservation is advantageous for the national society. The matter tends to be treated as a moral question: Either the national society genuinely recognizes that the minority has rights over land through "immemorial possession" or it pretends to do so to preserve its international image. However, the hardheaded policymaker need not have recourse to moral considerations in order to adopt a proreservation stance.

Practical experience shows that residual ethnic minorities without reservations cost the national society money. The U.S. experiment with "termination" (a policy of phasing out reservations) reduced many of the Menominee from self-sufficient lumbermen to destitute welfare recipients (Shames 1972). In northeastern Brazil, acculturating tribes that have reservations are reasonably self-sufficient, while those with no guaranteed lands enter into competition with the already swollen ranks of unskilled laborers in the national society (Amorim 1975). The lesson in each case is that the more adequate the basis that a residual minority has for its own economy, the less it will be a drain on the national economy.

Thus, sound economic motives, as well as a sense of justice or a fear of international opinion, might lead a national society to establish reservations for its ethnic minorities. However, there are practical problems in deciding exactly how much land should be reserved, where it should be reserved, and for whom it should be reserved. Whether a given reservation is equitable depends on how these questions are answered. Unfortunately, there are generally people in both societies who are willing to influence policy decisions for personal gain rather than the common good, and even the best-intentioned people may fail to understand the variables in play.

In this chapter, I will discuss one particular instance of the struggle to define adequate reservations, with the Nambiquara Indians as the residual ethnic minority and Brazil as the national society. It is a case with which I have been personally involved and which has not yet received a satisfactory solution.

#### NAMBIQUARA SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO LAND

Traditionally, the Indians now called Nambiquara occupied more than 50,000 square kilometers in northwestern Mato Grosso and southern Rondonia.<sup>1</sup> Their homeland is characterized by a mixture of two radically different types of vegetation: forest and savannah. The typical village is built in a place that is reasonably level, sandy, and well drained. This is important because the Nambiquara sleep on the ground. Nearby there is a small stream, or at least a good spring. Gardens of corn, manioc, beans, yams, and other crops in the forest are within about an hour's walk. The village is typically built on the edge of the savannah. Among the benefits of this kind of site are greater freedom from insects, from ambush, and from



FIGURE 11.1 Nambiquara (Nagarottó) woman and children, 1979.

the threat of falling trees. Apart from these practical considerations, for the Nambiquara, the forest is simply oppressive. They exploit it very well, but they are never at ease unless they are "in the open" (haló:á),<sup>2</sup> where they can watch the heavens turn at night and see the sun come up in the morning.

The traditional village is small, consisting of two or three thatched houses. It is inhabited by some twenty-five people,<sup>3</sup> who are all close relatives. Within the houses, each nuclear family has its own hearth. Village social organization is built around a group of men who are "brothers" in the Dravidian-type kinship terminology. There may also be a consanguine of a different generation or an in-marriage male affine, and of course all these men have wives and children. One of the brothers—often the oldest—is called "the capable one" (hikant'isú) and serves as village leader. In most cases his authority seems to be of the type that Miller (1955) called "horizontal." He is primus inter pares, who leads by example rather than through a recognized right to command.

Village solidarity is demonstrated by the norms for food distribution. Whenever a hunter returns to the village with an animal of reasonable size, every hearth receives a piece of the meat. It is considered wrong to take corn or manioc from someone else's garden, as this is felt to belong to the persons who grew it. But once vegetables have arrived in the village, they will be given to anyone who asks. Refusing to share food is unpardonable.

There is no special term for the village group, nor is it named. When necessary, however, it may be referred to by means of relational locutions that have reference to either descent or politics. For example, in a village where the nucleus of brothers is descended from memorable "Mr. Foot" a couple of generations back and where the leader is one "Mr. Strong," the group of villagers may be referred to as either "the grandchildren of Mr. Foot" (yútyahíásawihalisú) or "the people among whom Mr. Strong shares his things" (quntyahíáyen-kánu'tésú). These ways of speaking call attention to the two most important criteria for group membership: common descent and common adherence to a leader.

Characterization of the group as "the people among whom Mr. Strong shares his things" also points up a prime requisite of the leader: his generosity. All Nambiquara should be generous, but the leader should be the chief embodiment of this virtue. Similarly, characterization of the leader as "the owner of the land" (kíhnuáwak' qnyahíá) does not mean that the leader, personally, has rights of disposal over it, but rather that he holds it on behalf of his followers. The identity of different individuals as members of the same group is largely derived from their common association with a particular piece of land. By placing this land in the name of the leader, the group appropriately utilizes metonymy to symbolize its unity with respect to territory.

The villagers use the surrounding land in different ways to produce the two kinds of food that they consider as complementary and equally necessary parts of their diet. Fertile places within a fairly short distance of the village are used to make gardens to produce vegetable foods. A much larger area, extending far beyond the radius within which gardens are likely to be found, is used for

hunting to produce meat. Only forest soils are rich enough for gardens, but both forest and savannah may be used for hunting.

Bread and meat, seen as complementary necessities, are each associated with the sex that is most visibly involved with its production. Vegetable foods, most of which come from the gardens, are primarily the responsibility of the women; game from the hunt is the responsibility of men. The women's sphere of activity is delimited by the gardens, where they go to harvest plant food, and the village, where they prepare it. The men range farther afield, pursuing game where they can find it. This association between kind of food, sex, economic activity, and the places where it is customarily performed<sup>4</sup> is given symbolic recognition in important ceremonial contexts. Both bread and meat are necessary to sustain life; both women and men are necessary to supply them; and both the gardens and the hunting grounds are necessary to furnish them.

Each year, in the latter part of the rainy season, the villagers choose where they are going to make their new gardens. This is discussed while the people are sitting around their family hearths just after dark, with the husbands acting as spokesmen (cf. Aspelin 1975: 81-84). The leader may mediate only in the unlikely event of a dispute. He has no right to apportion the land.

Hunting is done at frequent intervals, whenever people begin to feel "hungry for meat." A man may go off alone for the day, or two men may go off together. If fresh tracks are seen near the village, all of the men grab their weapons and rush off. A party of men may hunt together in quest of a gregarious animal like peccary, and before a puberty festival a large party usually goes off to the best hunting grounds and spends several days killing game and smoking it.

It takes more space to hunt than to make gardens because animals are not rooted in one place. As animals are uncontrollable, the hunter must range over enough land to assure a reasonable probability of finding them. Extending out from the village in all directions is a vast network of trails—some major thoroughfares worn deep into the ground by generations of bare feet, others barely discernible passages through the brush, where the hunter can stalk soundlessly (cf. Aspelin 1975:82).

The area in which hunting is done has no explicit boundaries; no one claims exclusive rights over it; and there is no evidence that it is defended. Gardens, on the other hand, have specific owners, who complain loudly and publicly if they suspect that someone has been stealing their produce. Since the term "territory" has come to imply an area that is defended (e.g., Wilson 1975:256), it might be used for the gardens but not for the hunting grounds, which would more properly be termed a "home range." The resources of the home range are necessary to the survival of the village, but because of their sparse and unpredictable distribution, the assertion and defense of strict exclusivity would not be efficient (cf. Dyson-Hudson and Smith 1978).

The extent of the area utilized by a given village may be determined from its members' knowledge of local geography. People know their way around the home range as well as we know our way around our hometowns. Every stream and meadow and copse has a name. Thus, to discover the extent of a village's home range, it is necessary only



Fighting is not unknown, but the weapon of choice is usually a big wooden pestle rather than the bow and arrow. There is probably considerable overlapping of the individual villages' hunting grounds.<sup>7</sup>

Owing to the frequency of interaction within them, village clusters tend toward linguistic and cultural homogeneity. It would be misleading, however, to see them as "tribes" or "bands." Fredrik Barth (1969) defined an "ethnic group" as an aggregation of people who categorize themselves, for purposes of social interaction, as similar to each other—and different from the members of other such groups—at the level of their most basic identity. Members of the traditional village cluster undoubtedly felt that other people were different: each cluster was highly ethnocentric about its own way of speaking, cutting hair, fletching arrows, and so on. But people refused to admit that their own cluster constituted a group that could be compared with other such groups. They had names for other village clusters, but not for their own. From the point of view of the individual, an inner circle of named people was surrounded by an outer circle of named groups.

In one sense the village cluster satisfies Barth's definition of an ethnic group, and in another sense it does not. Its members recognize that other groups are different, but they do not really accept that they are similar among themselves and comparable to other such groups. Moreover, membership in a village cluster has no necessary implications for social interaction. There is no rule, for example, that one must marry within the cluster; it is just expedient to marry someone nearby. The boundaries that separate village clusters (and permit them to be ethnocentric) are more ecological than ethnic. Thus, the largest unit that indisputably conforms to Barth's definition of an ethnic group is the individual village.

This portrait of Nambiquara social organization and land use refers, primarily, to a time when the Indians were still relatively isolated from Brazilian society. In the seventy years since they began to come into contact, severe depopulation has confused the distinction between village and village cluster. Many Indians now see themselves as belonging to named groups consisting of the (often dispersed) remnants of the clusters in which they were born, labeled with the names that other clusters used to give them (cf. Rosaldo 1975).

The traditional village has not changed very much. There are fewer villages; they are farther apart; and some "missionary" villages are disproportionately large. But the pattern of ethnocentrism and potential hostility offset by necessarily exogamous marriages, visiting, and trading still continues. The Nambiquara area contains, now as before contact, a large number of very small, separate ethnic groups that must intermarry in order to perpetuate themselves. Each of these groups is dependent, for both subsistence and its identity, on the land it occupies.

#### INDIAN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND LAND RIGHTS UNDER BRAZILIAN LAW

The official position of the national society with respect to

the definition of ethnic groups and the lands to which they are entitled is to be found in the Estatuto do Indio (Indian Statute) signed into law by President Medici on December 19, 1973.<sup>8</sup> Tailored by Congress to suit all tastes, the Estatuto do Indio is a synthesis of vagueness and contradiction. Its problems quickly become apparent when it is confronted with the two essential questions: Who has a right to land and to what land does this right pertain?

Article 3, paragraph I, defines an Indian as "any individual of pre-Columbian origin and descent who identifies himself and is identified as belonging to an ethnic group whose cultural characteristics distinguish it from the national society."<sup>9</sup> The major focus of the definition is on identity. The individual must identify himself, and others must also identify him, as belonging to a particular ethnic group. But one wonders about the wisdom of the individual having to be identified by others, as well as himself. Could two prejudiced witnesses remove a person's Indian status by refusing to identify him as such? And the ethnic group to which the individual must belong—who is to decide whether its "cultural characteristics distinguish it from the national society"?

Assuming that we can decide whether a person is an Indian, the special rights to which he is entitled may still depend on whether or not he belongs to an "indigenous Community" or "Tribal Group," apparently synonymous terms that are defined in Article 3, paragraph II: "An Indigenous Community or Tribal Group is a set of Indian families or communities, either living in a state of complete isolation or in intermittent or permanent contact with other sectors of the national community, but not integrated into it." One would like to know by virtue of which shared quality the families or communities in consideration form a set. It is clear that a Tribal Group is not the same as an ethnic group, for otherwise the definition of Indian as member of an ethnic group and of Tribal Group as composed of Indians would be circular. But would it be possible for a number of families or communities to constitute a Tribal Group if they formed a set merely through geographical proximity? Is it important whether they all speak the same language? Or whether they participate in the same social organization? Without the specification of defining criteria, the national society has retained for itself the right to call just about any set of families or communities a Tribal Group.

The lands of these Indians and Tribal Groups are guaranteed under Article 198 of the Brazilian Constitution. The question of exactly which lands is best divided into three parts. First, must the lands be those that the Indians have traditionally inhabited? Second, how shall the extent of Indian lands be determined? And third, how will the national society recognize the Indians' continuing right to the lands?

The Estatuto do Indio states in Article 22 that "lands occupied by the Indians are inalienable Federal property," and that the Indians have permanent possession and "the right to exclusive usufruct of the natural resources and all of the utilities that may exist on such lands." But on the other hand, Article 20 permits the "removal of tribal groups from one area to another" ecologically similar area for a number of reasons that concern, basically, the national interest. In conjunction, Articles 20 and 22 respect the

Indians' right to remain on their own lands only so long as their presence does not threaten national "security" or impede national "development." Since almost any investment of capital may be seen as an instance of national development, this principle might be restated as "Indians are entitled to their own lands as long as no one else wants them."

The amount of land to which they are entitled seems to depend on their degree of acculturation. That is, at least, the most plausible resolution of the apparent contradiction between Articles 23 and 33. Although both articles treat "the Indian" in the singular, Article 23 seems to refer to those who live as members of Tribal Groups. It states, "The Indian will be considered as in possession of those lands which he effectively occupies and holds in accordance with tribal uses, customs and traditions, and where he lives or exercises activities that are indispensable to his subsistence or economically useful." This suggests that all lands to which a residual minority lays claim according to its own system of land tenure, whatever that may be, will be recognized by the national society, so long as the minority really occupies them and puts them to some sort of use. However, Article 33 states, "The Indian, whether integrated or not, who occupies as his own, during ten consecutive years, a stretch of land of less than fifty hectares, will acquire full ownership of it." This guarantees that the Indian shall have the same rights as squatters (*posseiros*) belonging to the national society. But the stipulation of a 50-hectare ceiling is so manifestly inconsistent with the intent of Article 23 that the framers of the law found it necessary to append a disclaimer: "This article [33] does not apply to Federal lands occupied by tribal groups, the reserved lands treated in this law, nor to lands held as the collective property of a tribal group." This paragraph restricts the 50-hectare ceiling to those Indians who are not members of tribal groups. As tribal groups are by definition not integrated, Articles 23 and 33, taken together, imply that unintegrated Indians have a right to as much land as they have traditionally laid claim to, but integrated Indians have a right to no more than 50 hectares apiece.

The guarantees that the national society offers of the minorities' continuing rights to their lands fall under two different headings: "Occupied Lands" and "Reserved Lands," treated in Chapters I, II, and III, Title III, of the Estatuto do Indio. This distinction shows a clear conflict between constitutional and statutory guarantees.

Under the Constitution, lands occupied by the Indians are federal lands. Article 19 of the Estatuto do Indio asserts that these lands will be demarcated by the federal agency responsible for the Indians, although Article 25 makes it clear that the Indians' right to these lands is in no way contingent on prior demarcation. Unfortunately, there are two grave defects in this constitutional picture. First, the definition of exactly which lands belong to the Indians is so diffuse that the guarantee of rights over them irrespective of prior demarcation is meaningless. In an undemarcated context, we do not know how to determine the lands to which the Indians' rights pertain. And second, whatever the law may guarantee, the only concrete recognition of the Indians' constitutional rights

is demarcation, and this costs money. Unless the necessary funds are forthcoming, the obligation of the agency responsible for the Indians to promote and oversee the demarcation of their lands comes to nothing. The agency can demarcate only to the extent that it has money to pay surveyors.

Special statutory guarantees are laid out in Chapter III, which concerns "Reserved Lands." This category has four subdivisions, all taken over from previous legislation: reservations, parks, agricultural colonies, and federal territories. All of these kinds of reserved lands imply stronger guarantees of Indian rights, as they are promulgated by special decree. Further, they tend to overcome the weaknesses of the constitutional precepts, as the Indian area can be given a clear definition prior to demarcation through specification of natural landmarks as boundaries. Unfortunately, the law does not say that the government must establish reserved lands for the Indians; it says only (Article 26) that it may do so. Even this possibility has been weakened by legal counsel to the Indian agency, whose interpretation is that constitutional guarantees are adequate for Indians living on their own lands, and a reserved-lands status should hereafter apply only to Indians obliged to live outside their traditional homelands.<sup>10</sup>

This rapid overview of pertinent aspects of the Estatuto do Indio shows it to be imprecise and contradictory, a situation that far from furnishing adequate legal protection for the indigenous minorities, is an open invitation to corruption among persons in responsible positions. A few general points emerge, however. The Indian is an individual of pre-Columbian descent who belongs to a group that is somehow recognizable as different from the national society. Indians who are "integrated" may be organized in social units known as Tribal Groups. These Tribal Groups have some rather attenuated corporate rights to their traditional lands. The national society may recognize these rights by decree, by demarcation, or both. not

These are the terms in which Brazilian society is prepared to understand the Nambiquara Indians. In the next section, I will discuss interpretations that have been made of Nambiquara social organization and their relation to attempts to give the Nambiquara reservation status.

#### UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO CONSOLIDATE THE NAMBIQUARA

Although the Nambiquara were well known in the eighteenth century, modern contact dates from 1907, when Col. Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon, who built a telegraph line through their region, rediscovered them. Early attempts to describe their ethnic divisions employed a series of supposed "band" names that were, in fact, entirely spurious (cf. Price 1978:14-15).

With no genuine understanding of Nambiquara social organization, Westerners reported many or few ethnic groups, depending on their own interests. Rondon (1941) felt that he had discovered at least eight Nambiquara groups. A missionary who was sent to work with the Nambiquara but was temporarily unable to do so informed his

supporters that the Iranxe, to whom he had access, were also properly classified as Nambiquara (Kinsman 1947). More recently, there has been a tendency for missionaries to promote the differentiated model, for if there are many ethnic groups, there is room for many missionaries (cf. Gregory 1964). In contrast, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), which is the federal agency responsible for Indians, prefers a consolidated model. Its duties are greatly simplified if there is one Nambiquara tribe rather than many disparate groups.

In 1968, I had begun to do fieldwork among Indians in the Guaporé Valley when the FUNAI decided to attend to the matter of land. I was asked which parts of that region ought to be reserved, and I suggested four areas. These suggestions were made part of an official report that was sent to Brasília (Peret 1968). However, the report was lost, and only one reservation was created in the Nambiquara region. It was in the Campo and contained less than a sixth of the current population. The decree that brought it into being, along with other reservations for the Beirão de Pau, Erigpaktásá, Apiacá, Cajabi, Iranxe, and Paraci, ordered the FUNAI to "take whatever steps may be necessary in order to create, in the reservations specified in Article 1., conditions such that indigenous groups belonging to the aforementioned tribes which are scattered outside of their limits may be localized within them (Decreto No. 63.368, de 08/X/68).<sup>11</sup>

Owners of property in the Brazilian interior who wanted to take advantage of fiscal incentives offered by the federal government in order to "develop" their lands needed certificates from the FUNAI guaranteeing that there were no Indians on them. Only nine days after the creation of the Nambiquara Reservation,<sup>12</sup> the FUNAI was already giving out certificates to owners of property in the Guaporé Valley on which it admitted the presence of Indians, but concluded: "However, no restrictions need be imposed on the utilization of the specified area by the interested party, since this Foundation will undertake the transference of the remnants of the aforementioned tribe to the area destined as its reservation" (FNI/BSB/1.127/69: p. 8).

The FUNAI decision to treat all of the Indians in the region as a single tribe, the Nambiquara, clearly served national interests. Or rather, it served the interests of those members of the national society who had bought lands in the Guaporé Valley. By defining the Nambiquara as one tribe, entitled to one reservation—and by creating that reservation in the most arid part of the region and undertaking to move all the Indians onto it—the FUNAI effectively opened up the rest of the area to national expansion.

In 1971, to fulfill its obligations to the landowners, the FUNAI mounted a program called the Nambiquara Attraction Front and placed at its head the sertanista Friedrich Paul ("Fritz") Tolksdorf (FUNAI/BSB/3092/71). In the ideology that supports Brazilian discrimination against residual minorities, Indians who are completely independent from the national society are said to be "wild" (bravo). It is considered necessary to "pacify" them in order to make them "tame" (manso).<sup>13</sup> The FUNAI employs several experts in "pacification," who are called sertanistas.<sup>14</sup> Tolksdorf was an old hand with Indians who had solved problems for a land development company on the Rio Arinos and "pacified" the Erigpaktásá Caneiros. In 1972, he enlisted the

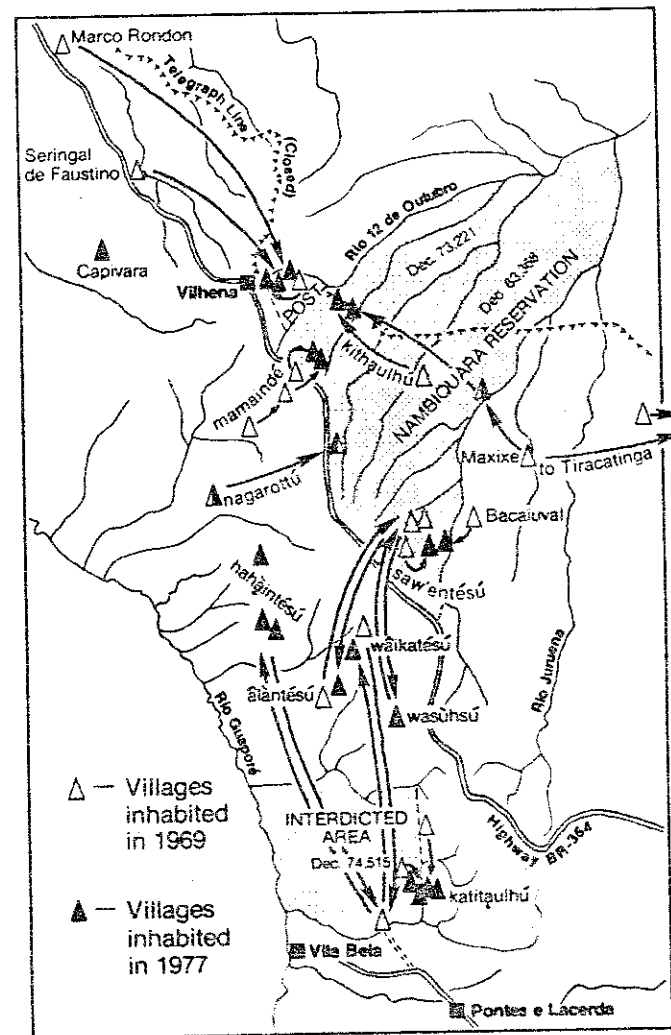


FIGURE 11.3 Village movements, 1969-1977.

aid of missionaries Edwin Pedersen of the South America Mission and Sung Joon Kim of the Missão Cristã Brasileira and began to move two villages from the Guaporé Valley to the reservation. The groups involved were the wasúhsú and the ãlantésú. They were moved to the southern part of the reservation and installed in territory that traditionally belonged to the saw'entésú (see Figure 11.3). A few of the wasúhsú simply refused to move. Within a year, all of their relatives, and all of the ãlantésú, had returned to their former



homes.

First reports had it that these Indians, who were used to living in heavily forested and very fertile lands, simply could not adapt to the semixerophytic savannah. Indeed, the best wood for bows and many of their medicinal herbs could not be found in the Campo. Nor was there as much game as they were used to. But, according to one of the missionaries, reports that their corn produced poorly were grossly exaggerated. He said the real reason that the wasũhsũ and ãlântésũ left the reservation was because of a conflict with the saw'entésũ. In fact, at one point a quarrel over the disposal of a deer that had been killed almost led to a serious fight between the groups.

By the time the last of the Indians had packed their baskets and walked back to the Guaporé Valley, I had returned to Brazil and was teaching at the University of Brasília. The unsuccessful move was a defeat for Tolksdorf, and it gave the FUNAI some very bad press (cf. Chimanovitch 1974). Gen. Ismarth de Araújo Oliveira had recently taken over the leadership of the organization, and he was anxious to clean up its image. In this atmosphere, I was contracted for two years to "prepare and execute" a "project of research in applied anthropology" among the Nambiquara. Special priority was given, in Clause 3 of my contract, to the "planning of boundary changes," and it was mutually understood that my chief responsibility would be to work out a viable reservation system and thereby defuse an explosive situation before it attracted international attention. By 1974, the Guaporé Valley had been invaded by thousands of Brazilians who were opening roads, chopping down the forest, selling timber, planting grass, and moving in cattle at anything but a tropical pace. The Indians were not accustomed to defending their hunting territories, and they put up little resistance.<sup>15</sup> Over a ten-year period, two-thirds of their population had died of imported diseases,<sup>16</sup> and the small and scattered communities of survivors found themselves treated as a minor nuisance by multimillion-dollar corporations racing for a piece of the pie.

I felt that a pragmatic approach was necessary. It was unreasonable to expect the government to make a separate reserve for each little group of twenty to fifty Indians. Moreover, this "postage stamp" solution, as I came to think of it, seemed ultimately harmful to the Indians. How would these tiny groups make out ten years hence, in little patches of woods with no game, surrounded by cattle on all sides? Could the FUNAI be expected to supply an Indian agent for each of these little reservations? A much better solution seemed to be the establishment of an ecologically suitable reserve in the least developed part of the Guaporé Valley, destined to serve all of the Indians of the region.

While I was still gathering information on which part of the valley to choose, the matter was taken out of my hands. The area between the Galera and Sararé rivers was interdicted to permit the "attraction" of the Indians in the Guaporé Valley (Dec. No. 74.515, de 05/IX/74),<sup>17</sup> on the basis of information provided by Tolksdorf.<sup>18</sup> Although I had not been consulted or even informed that a decree to this effect was in the offing, I had no alternative but to accept the course that events had taken and do the best I could.

The interdicted area was malarial and had access problems. However, it was big; it contained all of the ecozones that the Guaporé Nambiquara are used to; it was almost untouched by developers; and as a resource for the future, it contained some of the best timber and richest soil in the region. I went to Cuiabá and began trying to discover who were the people who held title to property in the interdicted area,<sup>19</sup> so that they could be legally informed of the prohibition on further development and I could get on with the job of "attracting" Indians. However, I was obliged to advance my schedule once again when Tolksdorf arrived with the news that the hahãintésũ, a group in the central valley, would have to be moved without delay. The largest ranch in the region had built its headquarters right on top of the village. The Indians refused to go away and continued to live in miserable hovels beside the landing field. For two years they had not made gardens; they lived by begging, stealing, and killing cattle. The director of the ranch was out of patience, and the situation could blow up at any minute.

Ernst de Booy, of the Missão Cristã Brasileira, informed me that the hahãintésũ, with whom he had begun to work a few months earlier, understood their situation and would probably be willing to move. I talked to one of their leaders, who agreed that their present circumstances were difficult and that it would be worth trying something else. The FUNAI advanced money to pay the expenses, even though accounts had been closed for end-of-the-year auditing.<sup>20</sup> Gustav Bringsken, pilot of the Missão Cristã Brasileira, flew Indians to the town of Vila Bela, family by family, and I took them by pickup truck to the interdicted area.

At the same time, I moved the wãikatésũ, a small group that lived on the main access road to the central valley and had provided entertainment for passing truck drivers for ten years. I first knew the wãikatésũ in 1967, when they were being stared at like animals in a zoo. Now the truck drivers were visiting the women and staying longer. When one of the men objected, he was shot. I thought it would be a good idea for these Indians to move a little farther away from the cutting edge of national expansion. Heinrich Berg of the Missão Cristã Brasileira discussed the matter with them, and they agreed.

The two groups were moved to a large garden of corn and rice that had been planted in the southern part of the interdicted area by a rural Brazilian, who was handsomely compensated for his labor. The Indians set about eating the new corn and were pleased by the abundant game in the area. Their only initial complaint was that the ground was rocky and unpleasant to lie on.

Two missionaries stayed constantly with the Indians to give them medical aid and encourage them to harvest the rice, so that they would have something to eat during the rest of the year. It is not possible, however, for two missionaries to hold back fifty-seven Indians if they decide to get up and walk off, which the hahãintésũ did three months later. Twenty kilometers north, they stopped for a time in a recently abandoned village belonging to the katitãulhũ, where two women and a newborn baby died, apparently of malaria. They then followed a trail to the katitãulhũ villages, and there was a skirmish. The hahãintésũ, although numerically superior, were

defeated and disarmed by the katitqulhú, whose territory they had violated. To prevent any further clashes, personnel from a nearby ranch loaded the hahaintésú aboard a truck and dumped them on the federal highway, fifty kilometers away. They started walking and, in a few days, were back where they had begun.

Shortly after the hahaintésú left, the wáikatésú were attacked by a particularly virulent strain of malaria while they were off hunting in the forest, and four of them died. The rest of the group, now reduced to seventeen, were taken to Vila Bela by the missionaries for more adequate medical care. They spent a year there, living in Gustav Bringsken's front yard, staring back at the children of the town. During this time they got to know the katitqulhú, who had been visiting Vila Bela peacefully since 1953. At first relations were tense, but the katitqulhú were short of women and the wáikatésú had a surplus, and soon two marriages were contracted. In early 1976, the wáikatésú finally left Vila Bela and established themselves near the katitqulhú. A year later, all of them except those who were bound to the katitqulhú by now-fruitful marriages went back to their traditional region.

In the case of the two villages that Tolksdorf moved, it is possible to maintain that the reasons for failure are ecological. In the case of the groups that I moved, however, the reasons cannot be ecological, unless stony ground at the point of entry into the interdicted area was sufficient reason for the Indians to return home. In all other respects, the Indians had at their disposal the same kinds of resources that they had in their traditional homelands. What stands out is that, in both Tolksdorf's moves and in mine, the transferred groups came into conflicts with other groups who were proprietors of the areas to which they were moved. Among the Nambiquara, a group's relation to a particular region seems to be more important than the availability of particular resources as a factor limiting where it can be expected to move. This hypothesis is strengthened by an examination of those cases in which, without any particular fanfare, other groups successfully established themselves on the reservation.

#### DISCUSSION

Between the time that I left the field in mid-1970 and my return in late 1973, four villages had made apparently successful moves to the reservation. Two of these were resettled at Tolksdorf's instigation, and two moved of their own volition. The former were the last two villages of the mamaindé cluster. In making the move, they had the encouragement and support of Peter Kingston of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. When he went with them to examine places to which they might move, they chose locations that had rather indifferent soil. Kingston would have preferred an area with more bountiful resources, but the Indians chose a place that might be considered as still within their traditional region (Kingston letter of 25 May 1977).

The village of Bacaiuval was the last holdout of the upstream haló:tésú. When ranchers began to appear in the area, the villagers

moved a few kilometers and reestablished themselves on the west bank of the Juina, on the edge of the reservation. In so doing, they had to leave their traditional homeland. But they remained as close to it as possible, and they still hunt and make some of their gardens there.

Maxixe's village was the last autonomous settlement of the downstream haló:tésú. When I visited it in 1969, it had a total population of fifteen. After the death of its leader, the village split up. Some of the inhabitants joined relatives in Tircatinga, where the Missão Anchieta led the Indians to believe that they would have guaranteed lands. Others moved to the reservation, where Maxixe's son, João, at first tried to found a village on the extreme western boundary, as close as possible to his traditional region. The attempt failed, but Canguru, another former member of Maxixe's village, still customarily plants a garden and spends a good deal of time on this spot. João himself now lives near Campos Novos, but separately from the other Indians there and in the direction of his old home.

Since 1974 three more groups have moved to the reservation with help from the Nambiquara Project, with which I replaced Tolksdorf's Attraction Front. Two of these groups, established at Marco Rondon and the Seringal de Faustino, consisted of a mixture of the last remnants of various northern clusters. Both groups were living outside the Nambiquara region, in intimate contact with the invading Brazilian population. One did manual labor on a free-lance basis and provided entertainment for passing truck drivers. The other was the personal property of a small-time rubber baron; both sexes were made to work, without pay, seven days a week. Neither group could go home again, as their lands had been conquered some thirty years ago by a hostile neighboring tribe, the Cinta Larga (cf. França 1946). When we offered them transportation and a bit of help in getting reestablished, both of these groups moved onto reserved lands. It was not a return to ancestral homelands, but few people could even remember them.

The most recent group to move was the nagarottú. These people had been living for some time on a ranch where a relatively benevolent overseer treated them well in return for their occasional labor. However, the owners of the ranch are aware that in the long run the presence of Indians might create legal problems, and the Indians were aware that the climate of toleration would not last indefinitely. With a bit of help and encouragement from the Nambiquara Project, they made a slow move to the reservation, having initially planted gardens in both the old and new locations as security against whatever might happen. Like the mamaindé, they chose a spot on the reservation that could be considered as still within their traditional region.<sup>21</sup>

In our attempts to guide the Nambiquara transition to reservation status, Tolksdorf and I unwittingly performed a social experiment. Each of us was responsible for about the same number of attempts to move villages to interdicted or reserved lands. Although the philosophies that guided our efforts were radically different, neither of us was more successful than the other. The success of some moves and the failure of others cannot be attributed to either

policy or personality. What does account for this difference is territoriality. Moves from one point to another within a group's home range were successful. Moves of one group into another group's home range were unsuccessful.

The evidence shows clearly that the crucial variable is not simply economic. The hahãintésú moved to a place that had the same sort of ecology as their homeland and was as rich, if not richer, but they did not stay. They later admitted that they just went along "for the ride" and never intended to move permanently. Despite the new corn and an abundance of game, they were already headed toward home when they were speeded on their way by the katitquihú. The mamaindé and the nagarottú, on the other hand, moved to places of inferior productive capacity that were, arguably, within their own traditional regions.

In undervaluing territoriality as distinct from economics, we have been guilty of gross ethnocentrism. Western culture traditionally considers "man" to be separate from "nature" and to have dominion over it, so that from "man's" point of view, the same kind of "natural" resources have the same value. One hectare of level, sandy loam with a balanced pH and good drainage is supposed to be as good as another hectare with these same characteristics, because each will produce the same crop. We forget that the land on which people live may define who they are, as well as furnish them with something to eat. When a group of people cooperate in order to wrest their living from a given area, this area defines the group as clearly as the area is defined by the group's activities. Neither group nor area has meaning by itself.

What are the concrete implications of these conclusions? If the Indian Statute is deficient, what would a better law be like? What could be done for the Nambiquara?

If legislation is to be adequate for the defense of Indian lands, it must be explicit in defining the kind of group for which land is to be reserved. It is clear that land should be reserved for groups rather than individuals, as the enforcement of individual tenure would infringe the right of the residual minority to practice its own kind of economics within the reservation. Thus, it seems well to begin with a definition of the kind of social entity that merits land. This entity, which might as well be called a Tribal Group, could be defined as a community or network of communities linked together by traditional patterns of social and economic interaction, the majority of whose members are descended from peoples who lived in the national territory before Western colonization. An Indian, for legal purposes, would simply be a member of a tribal group.

The lands to be reserved for a tribal group should be defined, in consultation with its members, in such a way as to permit them to continue to extract their livelihood from the environment in the manner to which they are accustomed. Rights to land based on antiquity of residence are hard to validate: Documentary and archival sources are imprecise, and the presence of old graveyards may depend on the group's mortuary practices. These problems could be avoided if the law guaranteed to the tribal group the lands that it now inhabits, unless it could be shown to have moved onto them in recent

times with fraudulent intent. The extent of the lands inhabited can be only determined by consulting members of the group in question.

Seen in these terms, the Nambiquara would have traditionally constituted at least four tribal groups, corresponding to the Guaporé Valley, the Campo, the Northern Nambiquara, and the Sabanê. Today the Northern Nambiquara and the Sabanê have drawn together and maintain ties, through the Manduca and kithquihú, with the rest of the Campo Nambiquara. Thus, all of these people are coming to participate in a single social and economic network, which is served by the present Nambiquara Reservation. In the Guaporé Valley, however, there is no longer any possibility of creating a single continuous reservation. At least three areas will now have to be set aside: one for the people of the Upper Sararé, and one for the hahãintésú, and one for the wãikatésú, ãlântésú, and wasúhsú.

Whatever plan is adopted, it must be put into effect as soon as possible, before the entire Guaporé Valley falls before the chainsaw. During the administration of President Ismarth de Araújo Oliveira (1974-1979), at least six different FUNAI-sponsored commissions made recommendations for the demarcation of land, but attempts to designate areas to be demarcated died in the Ministry of the Interior. It remains to be seen whether the new president of the FUNAI, Adhemar Ribeiro da Silva, and the new minister of the interior, Mario Andreazza, can resist the pressure of wealthy ranchers and implement a solution to the land problem that will be equitable and just for both the Nambiquara and Brazil.<sup>22</sup>

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#### NOTES

1. The best way to describe relevant aspects of Nambiquara social organization is to first present regularities that can be recounted synchronically in a somewhat hypothetical ethnographic present and then discuss the changes that contact with Western society is bringing about. The beginning of permanent contact varies from village to village and spans seventy years, so it is not possible to correlate the ethnographic present with a calendar date. As

most of what I have to say here is still true in most of the Nambiquara region, I use the present tense. Exceptions should be clear in context.

2. Native terms are cited in the Southern Nambiquara language, kithauihú dialect. Vowels have their cardinal values. /l/ is (r) after front vowels; /n/ is (dn) after oral vowels and before consonants; /h/ after consonants indicates aspiration; /' / is a glottal stop; and other consonants are more or less as in English. Accents indicate tones: /' / = rising; /~ / = falling; /^ / = laryngealized (creaky voice); unmarked = low level. The cedilla /, / indicates nasalization; the colon /:/, length. For greater detail, see Price 1976.

3. Average village size is obviously very important to the logistics of social organization. As it may easily be affected by the upheaval consequent to contact with Western society, I have tried to determine precontact village size (Price 1972:150-156). My result is halfway between the average size of the traditional Sanumá villages studied by Ramos (1972:42) and the local groups of the virtually uncontacted Colombian Maku listed by Silverwood-Cope (1972:123)--37.4 and 12.3 people respectively.

4. This analysis in terms of associations between pairs of opposites obviously suggests the structuralist method of Levi-Strauss (e.g., 1967). For some limitations on the application of this method to Nambiquara ethnography, see Aspelin 1976.

5. The traditional Nambiquara are not familiar with the concept of maps, however. Consequently, informants must be trained. I generally began by drawing with a stick in the dirt. Several informants are now at ease with a paper map.

6. This is the term that the Nambiquara use for members of Western society when they speak Portuguese. They do not intend any favorable connotation; it is simply a convenient cover term for the intrusive population, which includes foreign missionaries and anthropologists as well as Brazilians and which cannot be easily characterized by reference to its color.

7. By a rough calculation, six clusters in the Guaporé Valley have an average area of 700 sq km, and seven clusters in the Campo average 1400 sq km. Thirty or forty years ago, clusters in the Campo seem to have contained four or five villages. Rondon showed a Northern cluster which, in 1911, had fifteen villages (1915: foldout on endpaper). As he was impressed by its size (1911:230-231), it must have been unusually large. In any case, where the type of land varies so much, the absolute size of an area is probably less important than the kind of resources it contains.

8. Lei No. 6.001, published in the Diário Oficial 21/XII/73.

9. All translations from Portuguese sources are my own.

10. This interpretation was voiced by Getúlio Barros Barreto, head of the National Indian Foundation's (FUNAI) legal department, at a special session of the National Indigenist Council that met together with some of Brazil's leading anthropologists and indigenists to discuss the situation of the Nambiquara (Bristol Palace Hotel, Brasília, October 27 and 28, 1975).

11. Note that the Nambiquara Reservation was created before the Estatuto do Índio became law. It was subsequently modified by Dec.

No. 73.221, of 28/XI/73, which added on a strip between the Rio Camararé and the Rio 12 de Outubro, thus making it contiguous with the 25,780-hectare Posto Indígena Nambiquara (formerly Pyreneus de Souza), which was registered in the Comarca de Cáceres in 1961. The reservation has never been demarcated.

12. A certificate issued to the Colonizadora Guaporé, Ltda., dated 17 October 1968, was shown to me by Vicente Villa Neto, in Cuiabá, on 28 November 1974.

13. See Price 1975 for a history of these ideas.

14. Sertanista comes from sertão, which is (1) the dry scrub country in the interior of northeastern Brazil; (2) a name for the region that has this kind of vegetation; and by extension (3) the "interior" or "outback" in other parts of Brazil. By derivation, a sertanista is a person who knows the sertão. Today it is a job title in the FUNAI.

15. It should be noted, however, that when ranchers attempted to build a cattle-loading ramp within the garden perimeter, the wasúhsú disarmed them and drove them off.

16. This estimate is made on the basis of work done in 1976 on genealogies and former villages. One of my informants became ill from remembering so many dead people. Independent estimates made by other persons who know the Guaporé well concur with mine.

17. Without any other provisions having been made for the Guaporé Valley Nambiquara, the interdiction was removed from most of this area by Dec. No. 79.095 of 05/I/77.

18. Sources who saw Toksdorf's report defending the need to interdict this particular region told me that it was amply documented and included maps of the Guaporé Valley drawn by Gustav Bringsken, pilot of the Missão Cristã Brasileira, and aerial photographs taken by W. Jesco von Puttkamer. Concerted attempts to locate this material led to case FUNAI/BSB/2823/74, which contains the text of the communications sent by the president of the FUNAI to the minister of the interior and by the latter to the president of the republic. But the supporting material has apparently disappeared.

19. This was not easy, as the land office had been closed for several years, since the discovery that in many instances it had furnished two or even three titles to the same property. Moreover, although all of the Guaporé Valley is in the município of Mato Grosso, properties have been registered (and taxes paid) in various other municípios, some of which are even in other states.

20. Funds were advanced when other accounts had been closed "because of the emergency nature" of the situation (Radiogram 418/DGPC, de 10/XII/74). Several months later, when one of the landowners who thought himself prejudiced by the movement of the Indians into the interdicted area threatened to sue, the FUNAI adopted the position that I had moved the Indians without formal authorization. A friend suggested that I could protect myself by showing that the FUNAI had accepted my accounting for the money spent in moving the Indians. However, I discovered that because of a coincidental foul-up, I did not even have a document to that effect. I spoke with the treasurer of the FUNAI office in Cuiabá, who remembered the matter and gave me a statement that I had, in fact, made the accounting, which had been entered as Prestação de Conta No. 139/74. The next

time I was in Brasília, I tried to locate these papers on the pretext that I needed a photocopy of one of the receipts in order to settle a squabble with a merchant, but Prestação de Conta No. 139/74 simply could not be found.

21. Since this chapter was written (1977), both the manainde and the nagarottó have moved back to the heartland of their traditional regions. On 2 October 1980 I had a brief opportunity to talk with them about the extent of the lands they formerly used. Neither group claimed as part of its range the area on the edge of the Nambiquara Reservation to which it had moved. Earlier claims that these areas were part of their traditional regions apparently represented attempts to legitimize the moves.

22. Adhemar Ribeiro da Silva was forced to resign on 1 November 1979. He was replaced by Col. João Carlos Nobre da Veiga, who instituted the most repressive administration the FUNAI has yet known.