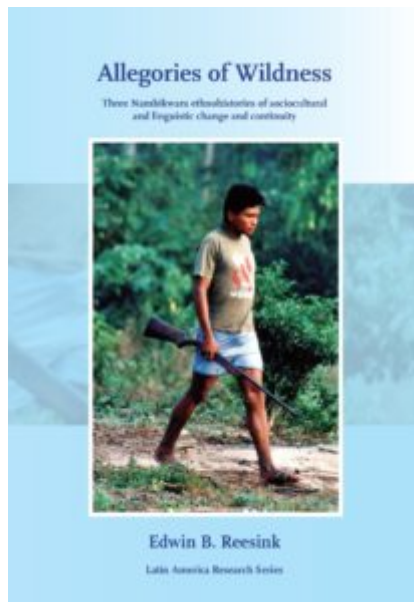


# Allegories Of Wildness ~ Refractions Of Wildness: The Choreography Of War



## *Peoples with histories[i]*

To best understand the situation with the Latundê, it is essential to have as much historical understanding as possible to comprehend the basis of the present and to more clearly see these people as but one thread in the myriad of local groups and peoples that comprise the *Nambikwara* fabric. The documentary history of the Latundê showed the contingencies that amounted to a tragic destiny. The field research discussed afterwards demonstrated that the destiny and viability of their social group, ethnic identity, and language is unclear. For the small group of people now called *Latundê*, we have can only get a fleeting glimpse of their history and only of a short amount of time. This is in part because of communication difficulties, but owes also to the Indians' reticence to discuss the past. It is quite obvious that they parted ways with the main body of the Northern Nambikwara not too long ago. Linguistically, the Lakondê dialect is very similar, aside from a number of syntactic and lexical differences. The major leader of the latter group, the one who was responsible for *contact*, and who is the brother of Dona Tereza, claimed that the two languages were the same. Therefore the small group of Latundê must have participated in the northern network described for the history of the Sabanê. As to the Sabanê, they were documented to be in the Roosevelt/Tenente Marques area at the time of Rondon's incursion and initial expropriation. Additionally, they have stories about prior migrations. Thus, the historical time depth has gradually been extended and now with the Sararé comes to include an even larger time frame. The Sararé, as the group is most commonly known currently, inhabit the southernmost part of all the region once pertaining to the Nambikwara ensemble. Similar to the Latundê they only made *contact* in the sixties and live in an area separate from the main Nambikwara Indigenous Territory occupied by the bulk of the surviving groups of the Guaporé Valley. Like

the Sabanê, the information about their history includes much more depth than that of the Latundê.

The Sararé form a sub-set of the sub-cluster of the branch of the Nambikwara linguistic family that is best known because of the linguistic missionary work among the Nambikwara do Campo. The Southern Nambikwara cluster includes the Campo and Valley sets within which one distinguishes the southernmost Sararé as a sub-set. The Nambikwara do Campo have a different historical record because of the Telegraph Line, the concomitant penetration by others this Line permitted, and the rubber expansion from lower rivers reaching out up to the high rivers of their heartland on the Parecis Plateau[ii]. The Guaporé valley was mostly spared from the expropriating effects the incursion of the Telegraph Line was to have, but by the time of the Second World War the renewed impulse of the regional encroaching society attained some peoples in the Valley too. The western border of the Valley Nambikwara was the Guaporé River, a river that had historical importance as early as the seventeenth century. By coincidence the river marks the expansion of the Portuguese beyond the original treaty of Tordesillas that pre-established the dividing line with the Spanish. At the time of the treaty no one actually knew the extension of the territories which each state was allowed to “legitimately” conquer in the so-called New World. The so-called *Paulistas* (from the state and capital of São Paulo that at one time formally comprised an enormous territory of various other contemporary states), also known as the *bandeirantes* (after the expeditions, *bandeira*, from São Paulo organized by the *Paulistas*, roamed ever further into the vast hinterland in search of Indians to be enslaved, gold, precious metals and diamonds. “Red gold” (Hemming 1995) constituted one of the mainstays of the labor force in São Paulo during a large part of the seventeenth century (see Monteiro 1994). Easy riches were supposed for the largely unknown interior and very much coveted as a fast way to wealth. In Brazilian historical mythology the *bandeirantes* figure prominently as those principally responsible for the territorial expansion of *Brazil*. In the process they depleted enormous areas of their inhabitants, also displacing and exterminating Indians. In the end, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Guaporé River became a major frontier with Spanish America, nowadays called Bolivia, consisting of the major part of the actual exterior border of Rondônia.

To secure their expansion, the Portuguese built a famous fortress on the Guaporé

meant to consolidate their new frontier in the whole of this large region (called *Príncipe da Beira*; middle course of the Guaporé, now Rondônia). They founded a new capital on the upper Guaporé, close to where the river bends to the north. This place was called *city of Mato Grosso*. The Guaporé River thus took on a strategic importance in the expansion and consolidation of Portuguese America. Coincidentally the same river serves as an approximate boundary for the Southern Nambikwara cluster on the part of its southern and eastern extension. The original division of “jurisdiction” of the Tordesillas treaty would have contained all of the Nambikwara well within the bounds of Spanish America. Now the frontier passes directly to the east of their territories and the colonial efforts to secure the frontier established in treaties from 1750 and 1777 brought military and colonist neighbors to the Southern Nambikwara. After the latest treaty, the Portuguese Crown established one of its demarcation commissions “*on Mato Grosso*” (Hemming 1995: 28). Therefore, the Nambikwara ensemble started to feel the infringement on their territories as early as the eighteenth century. By this time the frontier amounted to a very sparsely populated region of limited extension that left very large areas under the control of the Indian peoples. The colonists held a very low opinion of the Indians and considered their bodies, land, and resources to be used as they saw fit. The colonist conquered, subdued, or expelled the Indians and, without suffering any penalty, used to violate the official laws. To maintain the letter of the law and order in these remote backlands was almost impossible as there were few officials present, none of whom had much regard for Indian rights as many were recruited from the regional society.

The colonizing Portuguese felt completely secure about their *right* to the land, the subjugation of the *savages*, and felt entitled to all of the *riches* offered in this environment. In other words, *contact* with the Nambikwara must have taken place and resulted in a state of war. At the end of the eighteenth century the colonized territories in Mato Grosso amounted to areas around Cuiabá and Vila Bela, as the city of Mato Grosso became known, but did not extend “(...) *far to the north or north-west of them to the Parecis hills*” (Hemming 1995: 174). This implied a permanent battle for land and resources, ultimately leaving the Indian peoples with only two options: surrender to *de facto* subjugation and loss of autonomy, or war to expel the intruders and safeguard their independence. It seems as if the Nambikwara ensemble always chose to fight for freedom (unless they recognized no chance of winning). Such an observation does not preclude any peaceful contact, but any instances of such contact must have conformed to the

Nambikwara template of alliance relation, which, as discussed above, entails a conception of exchange and friendship between autonomous and equal parties. A clash of opposing views of self and other, and of autonomy and hierarchy, must have ensued after the establishment of any such peaceful relationship and this clash was inherent in any more profound development of concrete mutual dealings. For their part, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Portuguese government set up a Directorate system to provide a model for Indian incorporation into the colony. The model *granted* the Indians lands and some protection but under the *benign governance* of an appointed *village director*. A taste of the real impact of this proposal can be glimpsed from the words of a proponent of peaceful pacification at the behest of the provincial governor of Goiás when, at the end of this century, they convinced the Xavante of their good and diplomatic intentions, and persuaded them to settle in reserved lands: ““Our great captain [Queen Maria]”, he declared, “pitied your miseries and sent us to your lands to invite you to leave the nomadic life in which you lived untamed, and come among us to enjoy the comforts of civilized society”” (Hemming 1995: 72). The very *primitive* Nambikwara would make an excellent subject for a similar speech. Such a superior attitude in actual practice can only result in domination, Indian revolt, or escape. The model villages in Goiás turned into prisons or *concentration camps* with the harsh discipline backed by violence (ib.: 74). The overwhelming majority of the Xavante choose freedom and, after migrating to Mato Grosso, they felt so terrorized that this experience motivated them to wage a long war against the Whites.

No such attempts to apply this model are known for the Nambikwara. However, their lands were being penetrated in search of run-away slaves, new slaves, and gold. A large part of the reason for the settlement on the upper Guaporé stemmed from the discovery of gold, just like the later capital Cuiabá also was founded in the 1720s because of this coveted mineral (Hemming 1995: 192). In time Cuiabá became a larger and more active center than Mato Grosso. In fact, after the gold rush, Mato Grosso began to decline in importance, dwindling away because of the distance to other more dynamic places, whereas Cuiabá participated in the cattle frontier spreading out from Goiás and which gradually occupied the dryer and more savanna like plains (*cerrado*). This left the Nambikwara in a remote frontier region that did not attract the more slowly expanding albeit permanent frontier of the occupation by cattle ranches connected to the distant markets of coastal Brazil. A gold rush brings in the greed and the concomitant violence intrinsic in

the possibility of relatively fast and easy wealth. The search for gold localizes the actions at the place where the metal is to be found and in that sense involves less the rest of the region. In the past, for this particular area the distances to the *civilized* centers and the simple technology based on slave manpower of digging and sifting through the alluvial soils of small rivers limited the number of people involved and lessened the environmental impact. A cattle invasion continues to reflect a take-over of the total region. Then the conflict becomes a permanent competition for the same resource base and the outcome is always forced displacement of one of the contending populations. In this sort of conquest, if the conquerors apply sufficient energy and force, the Indians will be slayed or displaced. Some, usually a small minority, may be incorporated into the labor force employed by the conquerors occupying the very lands the Indians owned before.

This occurred in many places, including the plains and forested plateau near Cuiabá stretching out to the east where, for over a century, the eastern Bororo violently fought against the invasion of their territory, much to the frustration of the ranchers and the provincial government. For a long time the violent retaliation and repression of the so-called *Indian aggressions* using the *Bandeira* punitive expeditions failed[iii]. Some Bororo attached themselves to the bandeirante who *discovered* the gold fields of Cuiabá in the early eighteenth century and even went to live in Minas Gerais along the route to São Paulo (note that the exact ethnic relations between these different partialities called “Bororo” by outsiders are very difficult to reconstruct). Other Bororo stayed and for a long time resisted the advance of the cattle ranchers (who substituted gold prospectors), and in the years after 1839 they impeded easy access to the main road from Cuiabá to Goiás (the road passed straight through their homelands). These Indians attacked locations that were, at times, alarmingly close to the capital. A different approach finally convinced them to seek peace. One 1886 expedition included several Bororo women prisoners that had been educated in Cuiabá to be used by the Whites to communicate their peaceful intentions to the people of their origin. The women convinced the people, and the Bororo made peace with the expedition leader and visited Cuiabá. Here they were pompously received by the provincial President and other local *authorities*. An auspicious beginning for the Bororo of an alliance occurred when the president offered them presents, meals, and the freedom to wander through the city. However, the reality of the new alliance in their home territories turned out quite differently. The

situation rapidly deteriorated as many Indians became addicted to cachaça (a strong alcoholic drink made of sugar cane). One of the women who intermediated the new peaceful relationship later expressed her deep regrets and advised her son (chief in the Bakairi village she then lived in): “*Do not trust the whites. They are men who control the lightning, who live without a homeland, who wander to satisfy their thirst for gold. They are kind to us when they need us, for the land on which they tread and the plains and rivers which they assault are ours. Once they have achieved their goals they are false and treacherous*” (“*Rosa Bororo*” as cited in Hemming 1995: 393; he dedicates two chapters (11, 20) to the different trajectories of the branches of the Bororo, observing that the most belligerent and hostile people are the only survivors). In the aforementioned quote note the keen observation that the *Whites* are homeless wanderers, *they* are the *nomads* (see also Brody 2001). They, in effect, always seek new lands and resources (including people). The underlying factor that united European expansion was hegemony, Whites never sought a genuine alliance.

The story of the Bororo woman, Hemming noted, also was one of the favorites of Rondon who told it in his conferences in the country’s capital in 1915. Maybe he, just like Hemming, did not know that the children of the women were held as hostages in Cuiabá during the expedition. Apparently the Whites did not trust the women without means of coercion (Bordignon and Fernandes Silva 1987: 58). Moreover, Rosa Bororo was praised as a willing intermediary in a well known laudatory published account and is still known for this role (Bucker and Bucker 2005: 247). The leader of the expedition, on the contrary, in his unpublished manuscript actually observed she attempted to “*sow discord between the Indians*” (Almeida 2005: 6). Instead of a willing maker of the *peace*, she may have very well been highly distrustful of *civilization* from the beginning. Going to live in a distant Bakairi village may also indicate her resistance to domination. Maybe all partialities of the Bororo actually surrendered only when forced by the circumstances (cf. Langfur 1999). At this time other parts of her nation (or related nations) did not abide to *enter civilization* – as was the interpretation by the Whites of the day – and these, or at least some of these, are the Bororo villages Rondon encountered as a young officer in his first efforts to aid his country in constructing a telegraph line from Cuiabá to the border (still during the time of the Empire). According to one biographer, Rondon’s great-grandmother was a Bororo and he was raised by a grandfather with Indian blood. Rondon even learned to speak some Bororo (Bigio 2000). This is one much publicized aspect of

Rondon's family and is always stressed in hagiographies. This genealogy is exemplar in that the Indian ascendant in Brazil practically always concerns a woman and very rarely a man. This is in accordance with a series of associations related to gender construction and is part of the ideal type of the legitimate conquest of the land and people (see Reesink 2001). Although this kind of ascendancy might entail some sympathy for the Indians, it hardly ever develops into active protection and the elaboration of humanist positivist ideas. Hemming portrays Rondon's superior officer in this first venture as his source of inspiration towards Indians. His commander accepted being the intruder up to the point of not only prohibiting hostilities but categorically avoiding to shoot at the Bororo under any circumstance. Rondon greatly admired his superior officer and his confident notion that they were invading the land and it would be unjust to fight the inhabitants. The belief combined well with the idea that conflict was counterproductive to the aim of the expedition. Here, according to Rondon, he learned to "*love the Indians*" (Hemming 1995: 394-5). Apparently he did learn a more respectful approach to unknown Indians and accepted the legitimacy of their self-defense. In the end, the approach generated the collaboration of a large Bororo group in the construction of this line and he formed a lifelong bond with this people.

Still, legal *protection* goes back a long time in a series of affirmative and constructive Portuguese laws and Crown regulations of an incontrovertible protective nature which, naturally, as under the Directorate, always included the *guidance* of a civilizing agent. At the *independence* of Brazil – sometimes wrongly called a *decolonization* although the land was never given back to its original owners – several proposals for a more *humanitarian* integration into the nation were launched. The statesman José Bonifácio, often cited by Rondon, was among the authors of such proposals. The very example of the Bororo attracted before by *peaceful intentions* and non-violence demonstrates that the belief in *protective civilizing* prevailed in certain circles against the image of the violent, uncorrectable, and intractable savage held by the vast majority of the frontier population. Rondon, in this sense, stood at the apex of the thread of thought of a more humane treatment of the Indian peoples. This explains the naming of the telegraph station after José Bonifácio and Rondon thus acknowledged the intellectual debts to his own culture heroes. In light of these observations, we can see Rondon as more than a fortuity, but as the result of a progression of ideas and concepts linked to the social climate of the time. Two humanitarian European

philosophies influenced Rondon's life, Christianity and the positivist evolutionary dogma of humanity. In some ways these beliefs also founded European imperialism. Yet, the sociopolitical climate seems to have been ripe for the advent of his brand of *benign fraternal protection*[iv]. The major outlines of this model thus predated Rondon but his great merit lies in applying these ideas in a consistent and permanent manner to all Indian peoples in Brazil.

Simultaneously, usually unmentioned, his predilection for the search of the mines of Urucumacuan appears to be another intrinsic dimension of his upbringing in a State always preoccupied with gold. In this respect, Rondon followed in the footsteps of his *bandeirante* ancestor because, as discussed above, he did not relent in his search for almost forty years. When the Rondon Commission traversed the region of Vilhena, Rondon sent out people to investigate the area near the upper Apiadá River (now Pimenta Bueno). In the forties, as seen, he secured funds for the expedition in which Dequech participated. One widely unknown fact is that in 1934 Rondon claimed the right to these mines as he believed he had found them in 1909 (this document is reproduced in Pinto 1993: annex 2). Rondon claims to have found the mine with guidance from the 1771 *bandeirante* narrative[v]. Rondon affirms in his claim that he sent the engineer Moritz, from the Roosevelt-Rondon expedition in 1912, to verify the extent of the gold fields (report published in 1916). Later, in 1930, he explored the area even further. Two things stand out. First, the area described includes the Latundê territory, their small rivers running to the Pimenta Bueno River are explicitly mentioned (the document even mentions discovering the upper Pimenta Bueno, known in 1912 and another river with doubts about its course, later the *Apiadá River of the Massacá*). Secondly, Rondon stated the intention to register the same claim in Mato Grosso to safeguard *his right*. Furthermore, he already had participated as a technical director in firms that had claimed land rights to public lands in the same region but whose claims had already expired. Claims to a gold mine and participating in firms positing large land claims reveals a very little known facet of Rondon's life, the possibility he envisaged to put his expeditions and efforts into what can only be presumed to be personal gain (rumors I have not been able to confirm accuse his son of having done this; the Corumbiara Project may also have its precedents). Rondon's stated aim concerned prospecting and rational exploration. In fact, the expedition in the forties, with government funds, seems to have been just that and the result did not confirm expectations. In spite of the doubtful nature of their reality, the appeal of the mysterious mines

continued up till the days Price traveled and worked in the region. Many Brazilians continue to take stock in this belief. Numerous people in Vilhena crisscrossed the whole region and its rivers in their search for gold.

The mines in question give us another perspective of the history of the region and the relation to the Indian peoples. Not only Vila Bela (as Mato Grosso) arose in response to gold and even acceded to being the capital but its fortunes declined when the gold ran out. Cuiabá took over after it experienced its own gold rush and was far better placed geographically with respect to national contacts. Almost a century ago Roquette-Pinto attempted to get a clearer picture of the early history of the Nambikwara region. He searched for documents about the incursions of the initial search for Indian slaves and gold and the subsequent founding of Mato Grosso. He found that around 1723 a *bandeira* from São Paulo wrote an account of an expedition that journeyed through the Parecis Plateau, met with the Paresi, and possibly even a Nambikwara group. This Roquette-Pinto surmised from the description of the houses, which to him resembled those of the *Parecís* but actually is similar to a type of Nambikwara house. Additionally, he supposed that the *Cavihis* of the account are the contemporary *Uáintaçu* who descended from the Guaporé Valley to attack Vila Bela (Roquette-Pinto 1919: 16-8). All these observations are open for discussion. Primarily, it is possible that the *Cavihi* are *Kabixí*. This would mean that some names are given to the same people at different historical moments. This, however, is a matter of uncertainty and is taken up by Price. Secondly, it is unclear what kind of houses was seen. Fuerst (1971), after visiting the Sararé, suggested that perhaps the houses of the Nambikwara had been copied from the Paresi style. When Roquette-Pinto made this observation, he had not seen any such authentic indigenous houses[vi]. In other words, historical records of this time almost always allow for multiple interpretations and it remains difficult to decide between them. Take, as a parallel example, the circulation of the news of the mines of Urucumacuan. Their discovery is almost as old as the first registered passage (or near passage) through Nambikwara territory. In 1757, the news of its discovery situated the *abundant mines* between the Juruena and Jamarí Rivers (in effect, in all likelihood, a large region more or less around Vilhena; cf. Price 1972: 3). But the route to the mines was never clearly given. In this way the inherent uncertainty created a legend of gold mines always to be rediscovered by later generations. The certainty of its riches fueled the desire to find them, a task that seems simple at face value. The vastness of the predicted region gave much hope to explorers,

even after various expeditions proved fruitless. Roquette-Pinto also suggested that the time may have come to initiate the exploration of gold. After all, the *legendary ferocity of the savages* had abated and the region was accessible to gold prospectors. Old gold fantasies die hard. History not only fosters multiple views but here also the continual return of certain sociocultural desiderata (analogous to certain religions, it seems to be an 'eternal return' in Brazilian cosmology).

The reputation of the savages in this case refers to Nambikwara belligerence, a quality that assisted them in being saved from conquest in the preceding centuries. The presupposition of Roquette-Pinto is that the change to peace, which enabled him to proceed with his research around 1910, would last and permit the search for and exploration of the fabled mines. The notion of savagery reveals a clear continuity with the past even with the more optimistic view of Rondon's epoch. In the latter view, the recognition of humanity to the *savages* conveys that these people are worthy of compassionate treatment. Yet, the bandeirantes and the people at Rondon's time share the long-term constant that peace opens up the resources of the vanquished, or to-be-civilized, to the exploitation and total benefit of the conquerors, or civilizing agents. Late in the eighteenth century the call of gold stimulated the captain general of the province of Mato Grosso to send two expeditions (1776, 1779) to explore the lands where the mines were supposed to be. In 1795 he wrote from Vila Bela to the royal government about the attempt to repress the communities of runaway slaves (*quilombos*). His first sentence leaves little doubt about the motives for the prior searches for the mines: "*the current decline of the mines of Mato Grosso*" (transcription in Roquette-Pinto 1919: 19-36). In the same sentence he stresses the aggravating loss of many slaves that tranquilly go to live in the quilombos of the escarpments of the Parecis Plateau in the area of the sources of the Pindatuba, Sararé, Galera and Piolho rivers (locations given from south to north, eventually approximately the current location of the main road through the Guaporé Valley). These communities were flourishing from the southern tip of the Parecis Plateau a long way up the Guaporé Valley towards Vilhena, as these rivers all spring from the southwestern ridge of the highland. If this is correct, and not somewhat exaggerated to justify both the military expedition and diminishing returns of gold (supposedly taxed by his government but preferably smuggled), then this occupation would be more or less in the middle of several peoples, at the borders of the Guaporé Valley Nambikwara, the Paresi (the segment later called

Kabixí) and the Nambikwara do Campo. Again, this hypothesis relies on available knowledge of the distribution of Indian peoples at later times, not all of which is easily verifiable for the more distant past[vii].

Wedged in between some of the major Nambikwara ensemble divisions, the string of quilombos would be strategically positioned at the border line of the basin of the watershed that separates the northern bound major rivers like the Juruena on the Parecis Plateau and the smaller southern bound rivers tributaries of the Guaporé. The rivers were the axes of the Nambikwara do Campo regional sets of related groups, in principle along one river one used to find one regional set. For the other Nambikwara clusters, we lack information but the same organization along rivers and river basins probably stands. Such a position in-between major river basins might have been advantageous to such maroon communities. On the other hand, the presence of a significant number of communities in the middle of Nambikwara territory sounds somewhat unexpected amongst Indians who were known for their forceful reaction to invasions. Although this remains mysterious, the description of the route pursued by the *bandeira* shows some interesting features that are worth observing. Firstly, the accompanying map portrays the routes of 1794 and 1795 and clearly manifests the crossing of the Sararé River near the onset of the Serra da Borda and the circumventing of the mountainous range that runs more or less from the south to the north. This region is the heartland of the current Sararé and one route clearly traverses the modern-day *Indigenous Territory*. Moreover, the map displays the location of a village, the Arraial de São Vicente, either slightly to the north of the very same range or next to the northern tip. The route right through the current Indigenous Territory shows a well-trodden trail because several place names are marked along the way. In other words, as far as can be deduced from this map, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Sararé lands had been penetrated, invaded and even settled with small villages. If previously present in this region before the invasion, the Southern Nambikwara groups must have withdrawn from these positions and either tolerated the foreign presence or did not gather sufficient forces to expel the intruders. It must be remembered that the colonial population attained only small numbers and did not pose a threat in the wider sense of claiming the occupancy of all of the lands northeast of Vila Bela.

The impulse for this White occupation derived from the presence of gold. One can trace the archaeological remains in the present Indigenous Territory. Within easy

walking distance of the modern Indian village in the Sararé Indigenous Territory called *Serra da Borda* (located at the edge of the mountain range of the same name) a number of ruins can be found near the side of a small stream. Several areas have been excavated; creating man sized holes and amassed heaps of stones and small boulders extracted from the earth that has been removed. It is fairly certain, deducible from the way that these piles of rocks are overgrown with plants, that these activities occurred a long time ago and are the remains of mining. Given the fact that mining is not mentioned after its abandonment in the nineteenth century, it seems likely that these material evidences date back at least 150 or 200 years. In sum, part of the southern part of the Guaporé Valley nearest to the capital Mato Grosso was penetrated, gold was found and some permanent settlement took place. Explorations that led to cartography of the region depicted it on the map in a way that confers fairly well with a modern map. This indicates a reasonable knowledge of the region. In that sense certain information from the old reports appears and other questions arise. One of the expeditions cited above went along a route that supposedly would bring them close to the aforementioned quilombo communities. They found only one of them, however, near the river Piolho, the northernmost affluent before the Cabixi River that springs from the Parecis Plateau where Vilhena is now[viii]. The expedition encountered the settlement comprising for the most part of Indians and persons of mixed Indian-black descent. The majority of these people were born and raised at this location and they wanted to stay in their birthplace and village. The commander granted the inhabitants permission to return to the village after most of them were baptized in Vila Bela. The ex-maroons also promised to assist in establishing relations with *some non-hostile Indian villages* and to *reduce them to our society* (*reduction* suggests a sense of 'bringing them down to', reducing their territory and autonomy). The same official surmised that this peaceful reduction could be easily achieved by means of the gifts given to the inhabitants for this purpose. At the same time, he argued to the royal government that his permission to resettle the community under the aegis of the colony and with a new name served the strategic aim of relating Vila Bela by a land route to the fort Principe da Beira on the middle Guaporé River. The new route was also said to permit that *new mineral lands* [gold deposits] *will be discovered*. The prisoners were released for a variety of reasons, but most prominently seem to feature the search for gold and the strategic occupation of the land. The search for escaped slaves had ulterior motives.

The commander released the blacks and other prisoners because he believed that they had families with the Indians and that the former slaves could teach the Indians how to cultivate the land. Curiously, the commander considered the ex-slaves better qualified to till the earth than the Indians. Probably this was an additional reason to justify his apparently irrational behaviour of releasing the maroons or, perhaps simultaneously, expressing the preconception of the *nomadic Indian*. No word is written about which nation the Indians of the mixed community actually belong to. In the eighteenth century bandeirantes wandered in the larger region of the Parecis Plateau and generally it is thought that the Paresi suffered greatly from their slave-raids. Thus these Indians could have been Paresi and slaves themselves, but the law officially prohibited Indian slavery and so no mention could be made of it in this kind of correspondence. Furthermore, no other reference is made to the *tame Indians* with whom the population allegedly had succeeded in maintaining some favorable alliance. It is possible that the *gifts* included metal instruments and that for some time the surrounding Indians gained access to these coveted goods. Maybe even the alleged reason for the quilombo's original success had something to do with kind of exchange relation and the ensuing good neighborly relations. At least, this would be the conclusion if such alliances really occurred and did not serve merely to embellish the real kind of relations with the neighbors. In other words, they may have been presented to validate the inhabitants' justifications to claim the value of their return or the official's reasons given to convince the Crown of the propriety of his decision.

Speculations aside, the presence of the quilombo confirms the entry of intruding outsiders and some forms of relationships built up within the Nambikwara territories. Today the region around the middle and upper Piolho River is occupied by the Negarotê, the southernmost branch of the Northern Nambikwara. They, however, claim that they used to inhabit more a northern region closer to the heartland of the Northern Nambikwara language cluster (Figueroa 1987). Therefore, it remains to be seen which Indian peoples or local groups actually maintained the occupancy of this particular region, the middle and lower Guaporé Valley, then. In the end, perhaps, we can not even be absolutely certain about their being Nambikwara in the most general sense, although it is extremely likely, at least for those in the middle Guaporé Valley. This is corroborated by the Wasusu stories about these mixed communities, whose Indian inhabitants they held in contempt as being no longer real Indians

and with whom a certain category of warriors and enterprising wanderers actively fought to expel (Fiorini 2000). The Wasusu occupied the higher courses of the adjacent rivers in the Guaporé Valley (south of the Piolho River) and their current position places them in the strip along the Parecis Plateau that was supposed to be occupied by the *quilombos*. Again, this raises doubts about the accuracy of this affirmation. Regardless, the oral tradition of the Wasusu confirms the presence of the *quilombos* but denies the establishment of any kind of alliance between them and the strangers and people *no longer Indians*. The picture painted by these historical memories stress conflict and incompatibility, although Fiorini hypothesizes that some of these enterprising individuals may have been incorporated into the enemy. As a people, on the other hand, and with respect to the majority of this special category of wandering and warring men, the relation with the intruding maroon communities remained inimical and very unlike any kind of alliance as was asserted by the maroons, according to the report in the official document.

The commander's missive transmits an imagery that emphasizes the conquest of the quilombo at Piolho, while his consent to its resettlement was more controversial. The report mentions the limited number of slaves recaptured, mentioning the number as if only relevant with respect to the size of the former quilombo (and hardly to their *owners*). The mention of *Indians* only refers to them in the generalized sense and does not specify any origin. The diary of the *bandeira* in an attachment to the documents allows for an interesting interpretation somewhat different from what the official report put in the foreground (lamentably reports by any other expeditions were not recovered by Roquette-Pinto). The diary suggests that the true motive for this expedition was not recovery of runaway slaves, but rather the search for gold. The military official in charge remarks that the captured population from the Piolho quilombo also promised to come to trade in the town of Vila Bela and to report any gold findings that could attract some Portuguese colonists to this *important place* (their village)[ix]. His account of the Indians and the quilombo alters the strategic arrangement of the facts of the document discussed. First, he mentions that another military official who apprehended many slaves but also left many others hidden in the forest had destroyed the same quilombo 25 years before. These slaves later re-established the community. The manuscript establishes that afterwards: "*Of these slaves newly established in the quilombo many died, some of old age, and others at the hands of the pagan Cabixês with whom they were*

*permanently at war with the objective to steal their women and with whom they had children of mixed blood[x] that the list shows*" (the list of captured people followed; in Roquette-Pinto 1919: 28). The annex thus admits to a state of war in flagrant contradiction to the main document but in agreement with the Wasusu stories. Therefore, here the Cabixês are very likely the Nambikwara and the village is not allied with the surrounding peoples.

Some additional information about the people and location of the maroon community may be useful here. From the older generation only six people were alive but they formed the leaders, spiritual and medical experts and the fathers and grandfathers of the small settlement. The expeditionary head appreciated both the very beautiful high ground of good soil and the abundant high forest, both superior at this river in comparison to other lands: *"(...) at the excellent and currently cultivated margins of the Galera, Sararé and Guaporé Rivers: abundant in game and a river of much fish, a river of the same size as the Rio Branco"* (ib.: id.). This was an old settlement with its own large and diversified horticulture at the point of producing their cotton for the confection of strong clothing. By this report the community in question appears to date back from before the year 1770 and the occupation of the land seems to be the oldest permanent village fully documented definitively within the Nambikwara territories. From the description its organized character as a holistic lived microcosm with a firm subsistence base and its own modalities of spiritual and material sociocultural practices is evident. Interestingly the black people spoke Portuguese as did the Indians, whom they taught. It is reported that even the adults spoke the language with ability equal to their teachers. Furthermore, even the Indians acquired some knowledge of the *Christian doctrine* which they perfected before they all received their baptism in town. In other words, a reconstructed lived micro-world with a strong cultural influence from the dominant colonial society and not solely an African-Indian recreation. Clearly though, such idyllic descriptions must not be accepted easily. One need only think of the motivations of the inhabitants to present the dominant society with a positive image to gain the relative latitude the contemporary constraining sociopolitical structures allowed them. Yet, both religion and language are significant indices of *civilization*, and are an ideal face to present to the outside, but some practices cannot be invented at the spur of the moment[xi]. A certain latitude of the own inventiveness of culture (Sahlins 1999), on the other hand, is naturally possible and even very probable when the presence of their own *priests* and *medics* are noted. No such data are given for the other ex-slaves

encountered. In effect, the expedition did find some tracks and houses of runaway slaves between the Galera River and São Vicente village but they had fled before their arrival. The abandoned houses were burnt. During the passage through São Vicente they sent the 54 captured people to Vila Bela by the *road called Guilherme*. The expedition itself went on along *the road of the Arraial da Chapada* (on the western side of the mountain range) until crossing *the bridge over the Sararé River* and awaited instructions. All of these observations confirm the regularity of the occupancy of these lands. The other more dense occupation by run-away slaves, however, occurred on the Pindaituba River, an eastern affluent of the upper Sararé[xii]. They even constituted two small villages located near each other. Here the party captured a number of *slaves* and *blacks* that were returned to their *masters*. Other run-away slaves are said to have returned on their own initiative, a fact depicted as the consequence of the destruction of their houses and fields.

The more striking and credible observation concerns the relation with the surrounding Indians. The nature of this relationship differs considerably from the one in the previous document, of which one might have supposed to have served as its source. Now the Indians are named Cabixê, evidently prefiguring the later denomination of Cabixi and the relationship was classified as one of a continuous war concerning the shortage of women. The shortage of women makes sense in a mining district where the main labor force is male. The subsequent need to assure the reproduction of the escaped slaves in the forests then would impose this theft, and thereby structurally configure the relation with the surrounding Indian villages as necessarily and durably hostile. Stealing local women also excludes the Paresi as participants[xiii]. Here then we are back to the warlike and belligerent image of the Nambikwara. This rings more true than the suggestion of allied tamable Indian villages. The expedition did come across the marks and traces of what they judged to be pagan communities not thought to be quilombos. At the organization of the bandeira by the captain general, the argument for the deployment of a large force to secure a safe passage is justified appealing to the necessity of passage through backlands in which live many savages. The expedition registered Indian tracks at the Piolho River. A search-party found many signs of the pagans' many fires in the vicinity when scouting the upper Rio Branco, and so they withdraw after many days of activity. This river being given as the first river north of the Piolho, I assume that it is the current river Cabixi (as does Price (1972: 2) who reproduces these maps). In that case the numerous fires

should be the fires of the Cabixi river branch of the Mamaindê. No Indian presence is reported at the upper Sararé and the lower part of the river seems to be frequented by the Whites (as also seen on the map).

### *Names and places*

Based on this information and after comparing the historical account to the available Cabixi ethnographic material, it is understandable how Roquette-Pinto concluded that the Cabixi were actually Nambikwara. David Price, the most eminent of the students of the Nambikwara delved into these difficulties of identification and, in particular, into the locations of the various denominations used for the different peoples and segments of peoples in and around the northwest of Mato Grosso and adjacent areas of Rondônia. In his dissertation, true to his intellectual tradition to compile as many data as feasible, he expanded on the documentary material presented by the previous scholars. Even then he assembled a number of publications and older hard-to-find references and did a search in the FUNAI archives of Cuiabá[xiv]. Price notes that after the discovery of gold in Cuiabá in 1719 the new discovery of deposits in the Chapada de São Francisco precipitated a new rush in a region nicknamed Mato Grosso. Later the name of Mato Grosso came to designate the whole region and the captaincy. The Chapada today is known as the Serra da Borda (at least in the Indigenous Territory) but at earlier times was also known by other names like the Serra de São Vicente (the first name appears in Price's dissertation (1972: 2), the other on the map in his later book (Price 1989b: 73) on the World Bank). It is remarkable in itself that the Portuguese discovered the new gold deposits when one considers the distance to Cuiabá and the presence of the autonomous native peoples still presumably hardly affected by the foreign incursions and foreign diseases[xv]. The lure of gold prevailed over the tremendous difficulties and dangers and here, again, one discerns how such appeal is historically imbued in the inhabitants of Mato Grosso, characterizing Rondon as a *son of the earth* (a native son, literally translating the Brazilian expression).

The subsequent discovery of gold in the region of the Arinos River in 1746, further north/northwest of Vila Bela, almost dealt a deathblow to the only too recent Mato Grosso (Coelho 1850 apud Price 1972: 3). The itinerant cycle of gold discovery – rush, exhaustion, and new discovery – is quite old in Amazonia. Quite rightly, Price remarks that the entire region must have been sampled at every stream before 1750, although, as seen, the hopes and prospecting never ceased

until the expeditions of the end of the eighteenth century analyzed above. In fact, the bandeirante leading of the expedition of 1717 started his career in 1673, at the age of 14, participating in the bandeira of his father (Pinto 1993:13). In time, the rumor of the mines persisted, contrary to the lack of *luck* of finding them and so, "*There is no way of knowing how many adventurers in search of these mines have entered the Nambiquara region over the last two centuries*" (Price 1972: 3). He could well have said the last *three* centuries but may have discounted the twentieth century after the precarious conquest by Rondon's telegraph line or the forty years before 1770. Overall, this largely undocumented activity of slave raiding of Indians, gold rushes and slave mining activities expanded the colonial frontier of what has been called Portuguese America. As Hemming noted the Indians were considered *Red Gold*, it is coherent to extend this analogy to *Black Gold* as epitomized by the slavery and, of course, the Yellow Gold itself, the mineral responsible for the cruelty and domination systematically suffered by Indians and blacks. Red and black gold served as the means to find yellow gold to the benefit of their owners and the affluence of the Crown.

As noted, some of the activity in the seventeenth and eighteenth century derived from the strategic needs of the consolidation of this golden frontier. Thus the third captain general (the military commander of the province) cited by Price as arriving in the region in 1769 and the first for whom he found reasonably adequate documentation, soon sent an expedition to travel overland to the fort on the Guaporé River. This occupation opposed the Spanish presence as materialized in the Jesuit missions in present-day Bolivia and prepared the establishment of a definite path. This party encountered several groups of Indians, many of these names given disappeared from the literature. Then the *Cabixis* lived between the upper Cabixi, the Iquê and lower Juína and the *Pareci* lived on the upper Juruena. Contrary to what might be expected as this geographic location concerns the southern rim of the heartland of the Northern Nambikwara (the Mamaindê) while also encompassing the northern part of the current savanna area of Southern Nambikwara (including the Manduka of the Aroeira area and further on in the direction of the Juína river), Price proposes that this group probably was Nambikwara but does not name any of these peoples. He suggests, very tentatively, that these people may be related to the Sabanê. The Cahivi of around 1723 mentioned above as a candidate for being Nambikwara are, as Price reports in a note (1972: 5-6), described as exhibiting customs quite unlike the present day Nambikwara and remind him of Tupian cultural practices. The name itself may be

derived from a Tupi word for people (Kaghahív; and the name turns up in other times in Rondônia). Therefore, he seems to conclude, the only Nambikwara eligible for this part of the region would be the socioculturally and linguistically most differentiated people of the Nambikwara ensemble. Hence his opinion about these early Kabixi differs from Roquette-Pinto. On the other hand, Price knew very little about the Sabanê and he prudently raised the possibility only as a very remote one. The same account reports two other groups, the *Tamarés* and *Guaritérés* of whom the former don't wear clothing and sleep on the bare ground. Such an epithet is characteristic of the Nambikwara and always refers to a unique distinctive feature. Therefore, these Tamaré seem to be the only people certain to be Nambikwara in this century. Price supposes the name of the other group to be similar to the northern designation of the Southern Nambikwara cluster (*wélêteré*) as this could be a transcription of this name by the Portuguese. This is considerably more speculative than the identification of the Tamaré.

From the discussion in Part II I feel confident in asserting that the Cabixi at this stage are unlikely Sabanê but still might be Nambikwara. As Price observes, the naming of two other groups of Nambikwara indexes an approximation to these peoples that, if truly Nambikwara, demonstrates a later lost ability to discriminate between populations of some cultural or ethnic differences. The party took prisoners among the populations met on the way to serve as guides and later released them. Slightly afterwards, the government established an Indian village in the valley of the Sararé River (1781). This village consisted of 56 Indians of the Pareci, Maimbaré (probably one of the three major branches of the Pareci) and Cabixi, only one of these names potentially referring to what became known as Nambikwara and then of an unknown number of people. In 1783, the village director Cardoso abused his position. He acted to separate a man from his new wife (his first wife's sister) whom the latter had just brought in from the interior. The arbitrariness of this act revolted the Indians. They killed the man, the other seven Whites and burned the village. Given the experiences of settling down mentioned above, such behavior is expected and the whole attempt lasted only two years. No other effort to *reduce* the Cabixi is known. If the Cabixi Indians in question really belonged to the Nambikwara ensemble, than this could have been the first time some Nambikwara entered into peaceful relations with the intruders. Even if this is not the case, the outcome must have spread and may have taught the Nambikwara a lesson with respect to the treatment to be expected from such an alliance. Taking prisoners along the way also does not

connote a very friendly attitude. The trail itself, as becomes clear from the necessity to repeat the journey at the end of the same century, was abandoned under allegations of the large distance involved and the *numerous pagans infesting* the countryside (apud Price 1972: 9). In other words, the conclusion is justified that the eighteenth century mostly generated hostility among a populous people later called Nambikwara, and that war rather than peace between them and the mining villages and gold discovery expeditions prevailed.

The importance of the black slaves in these enterprises comes to the fore in a letter to the king dated 1752. On the eastern side of the Serra da Borda – hence possibly either on the fringe or within the immemorial Nambikwara territories – two mining villages existed. Between the two of them fewer than seventy White men lived there, of whom just seven were married. The presence of these men denote the frontier situation and shapes the reason of discord with the director of the failed settlement due to the conduct of the director who insisted on trading his old wife for a newlywed woman who just arrived in the village. By implication, without explicitly saying so, the first woman certainly was Indian too[xvi]. The dispute of women caused the uprising and this shortage is shown by the disproportionate numbers of the White population, a proportion that increases much more when considering the 1170 slaves (and the presence of some free blacks and *mulatos*). The relative proportion of over 16 slaves per White man, considering they were all potential *owners*, expounds clearly the importance of this regimented labor-force and the permanent need to safeguard this *property*. The sheer numbers explain to some extent how the slaves could have decided to try their luck to found free quilombo communities. In contradiction with the discussed account written afterwards, quilombos almost sprung up simultaneously with the mines, the community repressed in 1770 is given as located on the Galera River. Interestingly, the social organization of the dismantled community possessed some distinct sociocultural form of governance. They had a widowed *queen* and a *parliament* presided by a *governor*. Seventy nine blacks and thirty Indians *of both sexes* inhabited the community. They grew food and cotton and even had two blacksmith shops (Coelho apud Price 1972:10-1). This suggests a self-sufficient and well-established autonomous village.

From this limited information it is practically impossible to deduce who were the Indians and what relations procured with the surrounding neighboring Indian

villages. On the other hand, the information about the blacksmith's competency and the ascribed practice of killing deserters point to a community with the means to hold its own in a potentially hostile environment. Also, the Indian point of view of the occupation of *quilombos* in the region can be further explored with fragments of the Sararé oral tradition. As already quoted above for the Wasusu, in contrast to the common belief, Indian peoples sometimes do have an astonishing historical memory. That is, not only the mythical memory, in the respectful technical anthropological sense not in the popular sense of whimsical untrue stories, but also partially in the sense of the history in the western tradition of selected, retained, and presumably factual knowledge about the past. Price reproduces a recorded interview with the leader of the Sararé that demonstrates both an unexpected time depth and confirms the idea that the Brazilian penetration of the Nambikwara homelands consisted of the very significant participation of black people. Although these events happened a considerable time ago the memory of some of them was told and passed to the next generation. The question that prompted this response concerned the finding of potsherds near a Nambikwara village on the Plateau by Price and a fellow anthropologist, Cook[xvii]. The Sararé leader Américo had this to say:

*"Now, if you look at the Brazilians, you will notice that some of them have pretty hair, like that of the Indians. This is because Brazilians killed some of the inhabitants of these sites and carried others away. The descendants of their offspring are the Brazilians with straight hair, who are still around. That's how it is.*

*I don't know much about it, but this is what my father told me, and I also, learned it. What he said was that the people of whom I have speaking lived in the places where you find the potsherds today; and moreover, that these other people, these Brazilians with heads like macucos [Monticula Boie, Saxatilis (lin)] - these black Brazilians - were very warlike. He said that first Brazilians were very warlike and that they carried off the inhabitants of these sites. He said that the Brazilians of today are good people however.*

*"Today," he said, "only the pots remain. However, formerly, people like that one - young men and young women, like that one - they killed all their old mothers, and killed all their old fathers, and they carried the children away with them. And when they were grown, they had children by them. Now these Brazilians, who are beautiful, and who have hair like Indians, are their descendants." " (Price 1972:*

16).

This oral tradition confirms the slave raiding genocidal practices and the competition for the bodies of the young Indians, both as a workforce and, for the women, as sexual objects too, with the concomitant assassination of the older, less useful and less pliable generation. Moreover, this places the forefathers of the Sararé squarely in the Guaporé Valley at the time of this particular form of Western predation. Noteworthy is the idea that the Indians of these places gave birth to a special kind of Brazilian, with Indian hair. The aesthetics of the Sararé do not diverge completely from the Brazilian ideal because the latter appreciate straight hair as *good hair*. However, this convergence is partial, as the Brazilian ideal for the vast majority still concerns being White and blond or *moreno*, despite relatively recent efforts to improve the appreciation of *black* characteristics, a difficult project in spite of Brazil's sizable *moreno* population (see Reesink 2001). The Brazilian descendants esteemed by Américo differ from Whites and he falls back on his own culture's judgements: the Brazilian ameliorated their racial stock by the forced infusion of captured Indian children and their pretty black straight hair (valued in *mixed blood mestiços*). It is not without irony that this notion concurs with the racial upgrading of the Brazilian people proposed for the Nambikwara by Rondon (with a certain appreciation of mixed ancestry). This is especially true because of the implication that this improvement depended upon the Indian influx and thus would result entirely from their involuntary contribution. A contribution, in this case, not necessarily by Nambikwara, as the identity of the potsherd makers remains unspecified. This story in addition to the Wasusu version of these events helped Fiorini (2002) conclude that the Indian producers of the ceramics must be Paresi.

Based on a few occasional remarks made to me, I believe that the present day Sararé take pride in their physical appearance and do not share the Brazilian predilection for whiteness, blondness, or even *moreno* mixed ancestry. It is quite certain they totally reject their own mixture with Brazilians, at least as far as their women are concerned. The admixture of their type, in this view, could only have occurred by raiders and not by alliance. Contrary to the Sabanê, the permanence of the strong in-group feeling and the fact of remaining together on a part of their homelands allow the Sararé to maintain a high level of autonomy. A young woman who delivered a child by a *civilized* man found herself in dire straits and only with great difficulty succeeded in raising him. Even today some of the old men have

not really accepted the presence of the child and it is commented that some still advocate the killing of the young boy. Depopulation may have contributed to this attitude but if this story is remotely similar to the historical Sararé peoples than they could hardly have allowed the assimilation of run away slaves or other strangers. Américo also recounted an unrecorded story about two bands waging a battle which initiates with the derogatory statement that the enemy living in the Guaporé Valley “*were raised among civilizados*” (Price 1972: 16). Thus his people, later fused with others into the Sararé, cherished its own culture and body. War definitely appears the major mode of relationship with the self-styled *civilized*. Among them neither blacks nor Whites are beautiful, only the Brazilians who are of Indian descent. And it is hardly astounding that the others are described as *Brazilians*, as profoundly other. Contrary to the common-sense notion about the *Earth people* as primitive, naked sleepers on the ground (Price 1981a), these indications demonstrate that the *Nambikwara* esteem their culture and aesthetics. As all peoples, unless thoroughly dominated and conditioned by symbolic violence, they consider themselves superior to the strangers (cf. Bourdieu 2000).

From these early times of contact the Nambikwara obtained a number of cultigens that they acquired in an unknown way but incorporated into their stock of edible plants. In the myth of origin a number of domesticated plants figure on the list of the transformation of the body parts of a boy into the edible plants and flutes, and the more recent plants are distinguished clearly from the mythical origins of the plants of the horticultural gardens (Price 1972: 16). In other words, both the idea of some type of change of one’s own society and of exchange with others leads to the adoption of new material items very likely occurred among the historical Sararé, even if war was the predominant mode of contact with the intruders. In this sense, as the other side of the coin of the feeling of superiority might imply the rejection of change or foreign objects, the peoples of the Nambikwara ensemble do not seem to have been adverse to useful innovations. The readiness to adopt such items as labor saving instruments or new crops denotes a practical attitude. On their own terms these peoples are neither extremely supportive of nor particularly averse to assimilating the material culture or sociocultural practices of others. Even Rondon encountered on the Parecis Plateau in the region *never before treaded by white men* stumps of trees cut by steel axes[xviii]. The espousal of practical tools or plants also may be taken as a token of self-esteem if the people and the group itself decided and chose

what to accept and what to reject. Simultaneously, the firm belief in one's own worth and the value of personal autonomy are impediments to the idea of an easy acceptance of slavery.

This returns us to the question of who were the *Cabixi* of the eighteenth century. As seen, the Cabixi participated in the constitution of the ill fated Indian village. Up to this moment I hypothesized that the Cabixi (especially the Cabixê) are part of the Nambikwara and Price admits the idea of the intruders distinguishing between three different local groups or peoples of the Nambikwara ensemble a few years before the village was founded. However, upon later reflection, he was not satisfied with this conclusion and ten years later returned to the subject. In a case study about *western classification* of indigenous peoples he addresses the intellectual puzzle of naming practices of the Portuguese colonial enterprise where successive waves of intruders not always built on the names left by previous raiders. The main question revolves around who, in over 250 years of interethnic relations, were the sequential groups referenced by the terms Cabixi and, and much later, Nambikwara. Price revises his opinion taking into consideration additional sources and reviewing the already cited excerpts [xix]. Citing the first bandeirante on the Paresi of the Parecis Plateau, Price quotes him on how the explorer noticed the region to be heavily populated and how the Indians dedicated themselves tirelessly to agriculture. Evidently, the Indians exhibited the further characteristics of egalitarianism and non-aggressiveness. They were, therefore, the perfect candidates for slaves and serfdom. No wonder that at the end of the eighteenth century Ricardo Franco writes of the Paresi as if they were a people of the past and suffering near extinction. Price also cites a new testimony of a royal official in Cuiabá, reporting to Portugal in 1738, who acknowledges the illegal practice of using Indian slaves for the laborious process of washing and panning the gold contained in the gravel of the new mines of Mato Grosso. Here the functionary discusses the enslavement of the *Paryci*, *Cabexy*, *Mambaré*, and *Waccayiri*. The Crown, according to this official, would lose income and could not support the cost of an expensive measure like releasing the Indian slaves and setting up the villages for these Indians if, in effect, it commanded compliance with the law. This is an obvious instance of justifying disobedience to an inapplicable law on the frontiers of the realm. In order not to promote a full frank contradiction of the law, he suggested that *disinfecting* the countryside of Indians should be a service to be rewarded with the disposing of the lifelong labor service of the Indians captured.

Colonial society and especially the interior always were in conflict with the written law. The almost completely unprotected Indian peoples became fair prey and thus the prior speculations about the presence of Indian slaves and run-aways in the region of Mato Grosso are quite legitimate. In that sense, the presence of the Cabixi in the one reported attempt to install a legal Indian settlement in the Sararé region somewhat contradicts the picture of the Cabixi at war at the end of the century: if as non-aggressive and subject to slavery as stated for the Paresi, then the Indians in the village should be a division of the Paresi. But then again, even these *peaceful* Indians rose against the tyranny of the director and that contradicts the image of peacefulness, reminding instead of Nambikwara propensities. Furthermore, a few of the Wasusu warrior adventurers mentioned by Fiorini might have participated in this venture, either as part of the Paresi contingent with which they probably maintained a special relationship (as warriors, hunters, even leaders), or else a small number of Nambikwara people settled there as captives issued from *civilized* forays. Some Nambikwara may have been in the Paresi villages as either prisoners or simply people attracted by the presence of steal tools. The presence of Cabixi in the village administrated by a civilized director does not necessarily exclude the identification of Cabixi as Southern Nambikwara: they could be Paresi, Paresi mixed with Wasusu warrior-hunters (or possibly other neighboring Valley Nambikwara) or even captured Nambikwara (as is possible in the quilombo).

Price concludes that Cabixí are Paresi - disregarding the state of war with the quilombo to countervail the notion of the peaceful disposition of all groups to which the name was attributed - with the idea that around the time of Rondon the two other major branches of the Paresi called the third branch Cabixi. These people thought the name Cabixi was pejorative. At that time the Nambikwara were the *wild Cabixi* and the Paresi branch the *tame Cabixi*. I would add the placement of the Paresi on the upper Juruena and the extension of Cabixi territory until the lower Juína (far beyond the Northern Nambikwara homelands) strengthens the argument that the Cabixi mentioned first are Paresi. These indications reveal the occupancy of the Parecis Plateau by the people whose name it bears, very likely predecessors to the presence on the larger part of the highlands by the Nambikwara do Campo. Price finishes this part of his review with a citation from the end of eighteenth century by Ricardo Franco, a part he did not cite before and now quoted in favor of the proposed new identification (the almost extinguished Paresi mixing with the Mambare and Cabixi) and most of

all delineating the contours of the territory: “*a nation that wanders in the savannas of the Pareci; they live at the sources and in the forests of the Rivers Guaporé, Sararé, Piolho and Branco* [that is, the Cabixi]” (apud Price 1983b: 133). This latter affirmation defines a territory that extends from the high Plateau but spills over into the adjacent (and more forested) part of the Guaporé valley. Today the Nambikwara do not occupy the higher grounds of the southern tip of the Plateau and towards a northerly direction until the Wasusu (that is, the high lands opposite the current Sararé territory). But the Sararé did point out to me a village site well within the foothills leading up to the Plateau, located, presently, outside of their Indigenous Territory and on the other side of the highway. The question is if the Cabixi of the eighteenth century occupied the headwaters of these rivers – from the Sararé up till the Cabixi River – and how far their dominion reached the lands downstream. Price’s map shows that the main part of the Guaporé Valley belonged to the Nambikwara while later Nambikwara occupancy extended to include the entire Guaporé Valley. Franco claimed that the people of the Valley were Cabixi[xx]. If the Nambikwara occupied the escarpments and the map is valid, then a part of the former Cabixi territory overlaps with Nambikwara lands and they still could have been Nambikwara.

In review, the data thus far seem to indicate that the older Cabixi were a branch of the Paresi – but note that there is some counterevidence. One contradiction still raised by Price is the placement of the Tamaré, a label that likely refers to a Nambikwara people. At the end of the eighteenth century they lived almost exactly on the spot of the 1769 territory of the Cabixi. Franco, somewhere between 1799 and 1804, attributed the lands from the upper Galera and on the Juína to the Tamaré. Price does not discuss the case further than observing that this contradicts the previous location of the Cabixi. Either in twenty five years the Nambikwara already expanded into lands of the Cabixi affected by slave raiding, or they were there the whole time and the Cabixi always occupied more southern areas on the Parecis Plateau and possibly on its more immediate flanks. Alternatively, the discriminative ability that Price discerned in 1972 did not really operate that well in this region – the Portuguese were more interested in the gold than the people – and did not bother to clearly separate the Cabixi from the Tamaré at this time. Given the paucity of firm evidence, it seems to me that this debate is rather speculative and, barring the unlikely introduction of new information, can at best only result in more unverifiable conjectures. At this point in his article however, Price proposes an ingenious third possible solution. This

hypothesis is based on the oral tradition from the Sararé region. He cites another part of Américo's narrative quoted first above:

*"A long time ago there were people, I've been told, who were just like the people of today. They were called neyalhósú [the owners of the land[xxi]]. Long ago they lived in the place where you now see the potsherds. ... Once some people went to a neyalhósú [sic] village and asked for food. The neyalhósú said, "Listen. If you kill a paca or an armadillo, I will give you produce in payment for this meat, and we will eat each other's food."*

*The men did not understand. ... One said, "I think he wants some pitumbas [a fruit]." But another man, who understood the language, disagreed. "That's not what he wants at all. He didn't ask for pitumbas; he asked for meat - either armadillo or paca."*

*But after he had left, the other man rejected this. "What he wants," he said, "is pitumbas." Nobody else wanted to make an issue out of the matter. "That's right," they said, "He asked for pitumbas. Pick some and give them to him."*

*So the man went and took some pitumbas and took them to trade. But the neyalhósú refused to accept them. He turned his back and put his produce away. "I asked you for meat," he said, "Paca or armadillo. So why have you brought me fruit?" Then the man who understood the language said, "That's just what I told you. He didn't ask you for fruit. I told you what he wanted; now you must take the blame."*

*That's how they spoke to each other. That's how it was a long time ago" (Price 1983b: 139).*

This complement of the first fragment of the historical narrative describes the people in question as speaking a different language, living on the Parecis Plateau near then current village site of the Nambikwara do Campo and within their contemporary territory. These unknown people preceded the Nambikwara who named them as *the owners of the land*. When Price lived among the Nambikwara of the Plateau they called the Paresi *savanna dwellers*. The Nambikwara naming of another people, according to Price, appeals to a characteristic trait, usually a reference to what calls special attention to the observer. In other words, they view and refer to others in terms of what they themselves are and do not and of that what in other people's practices calls their attention. This justifies the

conclusion that in these times the Parecis Plateau was occupied by the Paresi and the savanna, or at least most of it, the southern part, only became the territory of Nambikwara after the enormous population losses sustained by the Paresi as the preferential target of the slave raiding. The Nambikwara probably escaped the raider's attention because they did not live in the high open savanna that favors pillaging but in the forest bordering the Plateau, "*perhaps in the Guaporé Valley*" (ib: 139)[xxii]. Although caution is justified, Price seems to be somewhat excessively cautious here. Living in the Guaporé Valley is supported by the oral tradition and the summarized indications. The whole problem has been to establish how far this occupancy extended towards the highlands and towards the south. It is clear from the story that the two peoples knew of each other, as one of the men even speaks the language and a visit to the village can only occur if there were some friendly relations prior to the event. It is, by the way, characteristic of the Nambikwara notion of the autonomy of the person that the error is not corrected and the stubborn man is left alone to find out for himself. No fruit but meat is desired, and then the foods can be exchanged. In effect, the suggestion hinted here concerns a complementarity of grown vegetable food and wild meat to create a proper meal. Moreover, the statement clarifies that each food identifies with the giver. As a metonymic gift relation prevails between producer and food, the hunter supplements his meat and the horticulturist his manioc.

Price did not analyze the transaction in these terms but emphasized the symbiotic relation. This exchange should be thought of as the exchange of socially esteemed foods. In fact, if the testimony of the first extraneous account by the bandeirante of the stress of the Paresi on their horticultural toils was correct, then the role of sedentary food producer is part of these peoples' social values. Despite Rondon's passing remark, Price probably was unaware that the Paresi village allocates the role of hunter to one or two men who hunt for all of them. The Nambikwara appreciate the hunter and value the meat he brings in. Therefore, the notion of a complementary division of activities and cooperation in the exploitation of the environment as the mode of coexistence between, for example, the Cabixi (as Paresi) and the Tamaré (as Nambikwara) makes sense. The Southern Nambikwara, for most or all the Northern brethren lived too distant, or the part of them inhabiting a parallel line with the fringe of the Parecis Plateau might have entertained this exchange of sociocultural preferences and specific competences for many years (even though the quoted bandeirante complimented the Paresi as being experts in a special collective hunt). Price notes the existence in other

ethnographic regions of similar arrangements in Amazonia (for instance the Maku and the Tukanoans), but he does not expand upon the proposition. This may be because owing to Rondon's publicity of the Nambikwara do Campo, this group is often taken to be representative of all *Nambikwara*. Price also spent much of his fieldwork time in the savanna. Without further discussion he amplifies his hypothesis to encompass all of the *Tamaré* as involved in this kind of system. Pending further research it would have been more prudent to confine the alternative to the southern set of peoples and villages pertaining to the Southern Nambikwara language cluster[xxiii]. In this sense, the category of wandering Wasusu men, as explained by Fiorini (2000), leads this anthropologist to postulate that these men not only fought against invaders but gained positions of hunter-warrior and even leadership roles among the Paresi. Hence the notion that these men and other Nambikwara attracted by them could live among the Paresi, or even that these peoples might have had partially overlapping territories.

Price, unaware of the Wasusu wanderers, also goes on to propose some kind of co-existence. The conclusion drawn also pertains to the nature of the relation that food production has to the land and what, exactly, occupancy of a land entails. Price does not elaborate the point but remarks that an early observer considered the two peoples to *intermingle*. From this narrative he judges that the peoples "*may have lived in the same region*" (Price 1983b: 139). He does not explicitly clarify this by suggesting, for example, that the peoples partially overlapped in village locations but by implication, this appears to be his conclusion. Implicit too remains the suggestion that the partial overlapping of territory partly explains the confusions in the oldest literature about the exact locations and the group label: Cabixi may have been an ambiguous label since the beginning. Alternatively, the current Nambikwara do Campo spend half of their yearly time in the village and the other half traveling on a network of *strong clean trails worn deep in the ground* radiating from the permanent village in all directions and consisting of "*long, steady paths that wind through the savanna; and barely discernible passages through the forest where the hunter soundlessly stalks his quarry*" (Price 1981a: 17). Journeying for days and weeks means a normal mobility for these people, although one not to be confused with aimless wandering. At least, the Wasusu do not like to roam without purpose and normally set out to travel with a clear objective in mind (Fiorini 2000). Thus a temporary residence of a hunter alone or, more likely, with his family in or near a Paresi Cabixi village falls perfectly well within the pattern of normal itinerancy. Through their vast fund of

knowledge the Nambikwara do Campo hunter overcomes “*the disadvantage of dependency on a dispersed resource*” (Price 1981a: 17). The desire for meat even gains a specific expression in the Southern Nambikwara language of the Sararé: *hesanawa* denotes a general hunger that can be satisfied with all sorts of foods but *hesanawa kaiuha inyainatuwa* signifies *hunger to eat meat* (Santos 2000: 32). The division of labor of hunting and gardening could even be supplemented with the usual female activity of gathering in the same countryside: the wife of the hunter could gather other unusual food either for her own family or the Paresi. As to the customary corresponding female practice of gathering, it is important to clarify again the common conception that these peoples are only hunters and gatherers. The Nambikwara have been for countless years horticultural peoples, a fact validated by history and myth[xxiv].

A mode of exchange and co-existence makes practical and symbolic sense. Notwithstanding close contact, this mode of relation does not exclude a reciprocal ethnocentric attitude between the partners involved in the exchange. The hunter qualities of the Nambikwara and their mobility may be a source of pride not shared with a people that went to so much trouble to till the land and to weave hammocks. The Paresi looked down on a people who preferred sleeping on fine white sand to sleeping in hammocks. This dislike is palpable in Price’s translation of the Paresi name for the Nambikwara, *Earth People*, those sleeping on the ground. It was not for lack of knowledge or ability that the Nambikwara did not make hammocks and remained in a kind of very ‘primitive poverty’, rather it was a question of preference and custom. Centuries after part of the Nambikwara ended their partnership with the Cabixi and Paresi, with the tremendous decline of this ensemble, a missionary resolved to fetch a Paresi hammock and challenged the people to replicate it. “*They examined it with interest and began twining palm fibers, but when they discovered how much work was involved, they quit. They would rather spend their nights snuggled up to the warm ashes of a dying fire than spend their days making hammocks*” (Price 1981a: 16). From this context it is not so much any imputed *laziness* but a question of measuring the costs of the investment in energy compared to any gains in comfort. Apparently, they believed that weaving a hammock is not worth the effort when the sand and the ashes offer a comfortable alternative. Moreover, Price suggests a Tupi influence on the Northern Nambikwara culture, particularly for those in Rondônia. He concludes that despite the inevitable knowledge of the hammock they still preferred to sleep on the white sand (Price’s observations are available in an undated FUNAI memo

titled “O Projeto Nambiquara” available in the Instituto Socioambiental archives, São Paulo). Clearly the apparently patent superiority of the hammock is due to a particular presumption and the projection of a value not inherent in the object itself.

Thus *Earth People* is the title of the article Price wrote for the lay public. He might well have used Ash People, as illustrated in the authors’ own poetic description, as they slept close to the ashes of the dying fire and liked to paint themselves with ash residue. Sometimes as evinced by Cinzeiro’s name, they laid too close to the fire and got burnt. The Sararé, as was to be expected from the oral tradition quoted, not only prefer to sleep on the ground near a fire, but also know how to weave and have access to the necessary primary material for the fiber. Thus they could produce hammocks and mats: *“They acquire the fiber for the bowstring and for the weaving of the strips sa’hlu to carry children from the savanna tucum [a palm tree] or else to fabricate woven arm ornaments (...) If they wanted to produce mats and hammocks the Katitauhlu would know how to do so, however, they don’t and say that it is the Paresi who have the custom to make them”* (Santos 2000: 29). As such, the Katitauhlu, as Santos prefers to call the Sararé, not only are aware of the object and the technique but attribute its customary usage to their Paresi neighbors. The Paresi pride themselves with the intricate fabricated cloth of their hammocks and they consider this one of the artifacts that distinguishes them from other groups. Perhaps they could be called the Hammock People, in perfect opposition to their neighbors. On the savanna the Nambikwara prefer fine white sand on which to found their villages. They distinguish between *red-sand savanna*, *white-sand savanna* (with a somewhat higher vegetation than the previous), *red-sand forest* (small trees) and gallery forest with richer black soils (for horticultural gardens). Observers of the earth, a second sense of being Earth People, the Nambikwara do Campo recognize a specific strip of vegetation protecting the forest from encroachment[xxv]. On the edge of the savanna and the forest the village consists of *“(...) two or three hatched huts on a little patch of sand that is kept clear of weeds. Children play in the sand; manioc bread is baked in the sand; and when people die, they are buried in the sand. A place is considered a village only if someone is buried there, and when people die far from an existing village, they are carried to a spot where the presence of nearby gardening lands means that a village can someday be founded. As a seed buried in the earth gives rise to a plant, the dead beneath the ground give rise to a community of the living”* (Price 1981a: 17-8). Earth, Ash, or

Sand People indeed.

*The Empire's unwilling retreat*

The Guaporé River was officially discovered in 1737, at the time of the Mato Grosso gold rush and later constituted an important avenue of commerce with its connection to the Madeira River and subsequent route to Pará. By 1750 the Indians furnished at least some of the workforce for the mining activities, and one observer asserted that they also provided the mainstay of the labor at the plantations of the Guaporé. A friar's testimony and outrage confirms the exact terms of Américo's oral tradition: "*They kill the old and bring the young in chains to be sold*" (apud Price: 1983b: 132). A gradual decadence of the mines and an almost desperate search for new sources of gold ensued. After the repression of the quilombo and the thorough prospecting of the expedition of 1795, a number of prominent miners of Mato Grosso pursued the lead of gold deposits near the new village Carlota, the former quilombo. They spent their resources and took many slaves with them but were completely deceived in their expectations. Ricardo Franco, whose comments are quoted here (Price 1972: 15), affirms their reduction to penury and being isolated from normal communications. The decline set in could not be reversed. After 1800 the whole region of Vila Bela gradually became progressively less significant. The miners exhausted the main sources or these fell to modest levels, the attraction of the entire region faded. After 1805 the town of Diamantino was founded near the Arinos River. This river turned into the main artery for the commerce with Pará and an overland route to Rio de Janeiro also existed. This explains how the Guaporé River lost its main function and how Vila Bela became a largely superfluous town (its strategic frontier position aside). The Whites gradually abandoned the town leaving behind a black population to fend for itself. Economically, the town and surroundings did not lose all means of exchange after 1830, there was some commerce related to the gathering expeditions of the medicinal plant ipecac (Price 1972: 17-8).

The nineteenth century thus saw the retraction of the frontier and its pressure on the Nambikwara. Perhaps more accurately, the absence of immediate and attractive riches elevated the cost of maintaining an occupation of a territory disputed arduously by the Indians called *Cabixi*. The latter waged a war that eventually led to the abandonment of the villages in the interior and almost caused the withdrawal from the ex-capital itself. The interior colonialist expansion in itself did not halt, notwithstanding the dearth of major economic growth or new

boom activities. Slowly, in some regions, the frontier moved on and some peoples had to surrender. Traces of these events can be followed in the official reports or speeches to open the yearly provincial parliamentary cycle made by the Presidents of the Province of Mato Grosso. After the central government's neglected or circumvented laws, these statements are interesting because local governments gained in legal authority and, especially after 1834, interfered more directly in the fate of Indian peoples (Carneiro da Cunha 1992: 138; this article discusses the very similar situation for the entire country in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). In Mato Grosso the Indian question is always addressed, if only with a few obligatory remarks. The *problem* is too large to pass over but the consensus too great and the *difficulties* eternal[xxvi]: the lack of means and men to bring the Indians to conversion and civilization “(...) *for the interesting labor to recollect this numerous fraction of our countrymen to the Society and Religion, for which nothing is permitted to oppose itself, and that will continue their hostilities*” (the President Pimenta Boeno in 1836; Boeno 1845: 10)[xxvii]. The shared common premises shape the unquestionable superiority of the Society and Religion opposed by the absence of the same principles among the inferior peoples, *our Indians*, who do not understand the immense and obvious advantages to integrate themselves and thus may insist in their hostilities. The possessive principle of being of the *same country* and being *ours* justifies the public policy to *civilize* the uncivilized. The efforts to settle the *hostile* Indians and to establish a peace never parted from any other assumption and, therefore, never responded to the Indian presuppositions of a veritable alliance between equals. The complaint of Rosa Bororo is the experience, irrespective of all their different perspectives, of all Indian peoples or villages accepting peace. The Whites never fail to attempt making peace via surrender, domination and serfdom. A remarkable constant already remarked on but which challenges the current Western self-image as a *civilization* produced by permanent historical change and *progress* (for the larger Western context of the impressive constancy of a variety of preconceptions about the so-called *West* and hunters-gatherers, see Brody 2001).

The addresses to the Assembly or the reports presented to it thus regularly inform about the *hostilities* and *barbarous acts* of the several Indian peoples and the actions taken. In this initial period one major worry concerned the Cabeçais Bororo who occupied the land on the upper Paraguay and the Jauru River until the upper Guaporé (see the map by Price (1983b: 140) named as Western Bororo). Southern neighbours to the northern *Cabixi*, they formed a buffer zone

that, being closer to the capital and more populated, worried the government much more than the farther and apparently less economically important eastern bank of the Guaporé. *Agriculturalists* (Brazilian settlers) now inhabited the region between the capital and the village currently the town of Cáceres (on the Paraguay River), and beyond this place towards Vila Bela (observed by Castelnau during his trip in 1845, he commented on the impressive quantity of cattle; Hemming 1995: 200). The simple occupancy of Indian lands and the ecological and economic competition ensuing normally is never admitted in print to be a motivation for the Indians' defense. Hence the conclusion: "*The Cabeças Indians had not been provoked; no other measure was left but to beat them and inspire fear: all else would be illusionary, would attain the means of correspondence with Matto grosso [the town], or would sacrifice the lives of travelers and cultivators*" (Bueno 1845: 11). A *sad but necessary expediency* followed, a bandeira from Cáceres, with instructions that attend to the *duties to humanity*. Humanitarian measures, a recurrent kind of phrase to appeal to the presumed superiority of civilization, still allowed for between 40 to 50 Indian casualties and the imprisonment of 28 others. The prisoners were later distributed among *honorable people* in the capital for *education*. In other words, people of sufficient social standing to exchange very cheap labor for room and board.

The hostilities ceased for the time being – a kind of war season was determined by the climate – as the Indian population was significantly reduced. Their war force was now estimated at only some *200 bows*, inadequate for effective attacks and to express their "*avenging nature*" (ibid: 11). The colonizing society never retaliates, it usually only reacts to extraneous aggression and very rarely if ever presumes itself to act as the aggressor. The military expedition only returned because of the climatic conditions and stopped pursuing the Indians further. In the end, however, the war effort apparently exhausted the means of the Indians who were recurrently subjected to this kind of assaults. Consequently, these are the Bororo who accepted *peace*, who were settled by the Whites and then by 1863 became extinct (Hemming 1995: 201). An extinction contrasting with the persistence of the Eastern Bororo whose resistance, as mentioned above, was praised by Hemming when noting their survival until today. Ironically, according to the same writer, Rondon descended from the third branch, the Plains Bororo, whose territory extended to the west of Cuiabá and was situated to the south of the Cabeçal and also became extinct. The Cabeçal branch served for a long time as a buffer to the Nambikwara region. They fought, but unfortunately for them, their

plains were ideal for cattle (Hemming 1995: ch.20). It is unclear if Rondon really identified in some manner with the somewhat remote ascendancy (a great-grandmother, according to Hemming 1995: 394; a great-grandmother (MFM) of mixed Cabaçal origin, according to Rondon's biographer, Lima 1990: 59), but he went to pacify the neighbors of his distant extinct relatives[xxviii]. Near simultaneously to the expedition against the Bororo, the government planned to mount a similar effort against the *Parecis*, who were *perpetuating insults and thefts* in Lavrinhas but here there were no murders. The bandeira went forth from *Matto-grosso* and the Indians retreated. There was no violence.

The Paresi being named as aggressors conflicts with their previous peaceful, tame, image. Then again, no known Indian people is completely peaceful and they may have appealed to violence to take vengeance for humiliations. Perhaps they tried to conceal their activities hiding behind the notion of being peaceful while the Cabixi were gradually being marked as the major disrupters of the peace in the region. Price hypothesized the possible intermingling of the Cabixi-Paresi with Nambikwara groups and then proposed that the Nambikwara expanded from their possible homeland in the Guaporé Valley to occupy lands abandoned by the Cabixi-Paresi. From the evidence he concludes that the eighteenth century Cabixi composed a part of the Paresi and that the near extinction of other parts of the more comprehensive ensemble opened up the space for the Nambikwara to expand east to the Parecis Plateau and south to the upper Guaporé. He founded the latter conviction on linguistic grounds. As this does not concern his major interest in this article, he does not elaborate or clearly says so, but this explanation does entail that the Sararé area should have been this region of later southern expansion. Thus, if correct, the Kitauhlu and other peoples occupied their contemporary territories on the Parecis Plateau after the Cabixi retreated and all references to the Cabixi of the seventeenth century discussed before would not apply to them. On the other hand, the references in the nineteenth century to the latter ethnonym denote the Sararé Nambikwara. He believed that his suggestion of the mixing of the two peoples defends his idea of the later passing on of the name from a segment of the Paresi to a component of the Nambikwara. Still, there are a few unresolved issues. The sketch of the division of territories as rendered by Ricardo Franco, for instance, might be thought to be already a result of the void created by the depopulation of the Paresi. The net result is not entirely convincing that the *Cabixi* cannot have simply been a confusing term even at the beginning of its application (this too might be a result

of intermingling). If the frontier was already very much in upheaval after 1720 and particularly after the gold rush, then the term may have been unstable in denotation from the mid-century onwards. I tend to believe that the situation is more complex than Price suggests[xxix].

The speeches of the highest official of the province when set within their ideological parameters offer some information about the Cabixi and the situation of the Sararé region. Even early in the nineteenth century the Cabixi appear alongside the Paresi, as if a different people. In 1839 the speech of the provincial president raises "*a not very pleasing subject*". He claimed that "[t]he *Cabixís Indians and Parecís*, who inhabit almost the whole eastern margin of the Galera River, one of the tributaries of the Guaporé somewhat downwards from the city of Matto-Grosso, continue to be inimical in a cruel way to the village of São Vicente as well as the one of Pilar. These two nations have caused havoc there, murdering, stealing, and causing the abandonment of [some] Establishments, burning Sugar mills [...] [S]ince 1819, new incursions are growing, new sparse hostilities that are of their customary doing have laid everything to waste, bringing the dispirited people to flee to these villages"[xxx]. The report then describes government efforts to assert its innocence with this state of affairs even when in 1836 and 1837 they assaulted the installations of a Dona Antonia Torres and obliged her to forsake her property. The orders to retaliate had been too slow to be implemented in time. And, not *being beaten and persecuted*, next the Indians *invaded Ouro Fino* and behind the chapel, *inhumanely* attacked two people, killing one and mortally wounding the other. The years around 1819 were a time of turmoil. It was not long before Vila Bela became definitely decadent when the capital shifted to Cuiabá. Doubtlessly, this decline and the progressive weakening of the population and its defenses were noted by the Indians. If the *eastern bank* of the Galera means the northern margin of the river then the most likely candidate for the Cabixi in question are the Nambikwara of the Guaporé Valley either pressing to recuperate lost territory, or else to gain new lands or access to material goods. They are distinguished from the Paresi but mentioned as if co-authors of the events. This description confirms the relatively dense occupancy and the presence of larger *properties* that followed the mining concessions and industries. A map of the Mines of Mato Grosso shows these villages and mining camps all over the mountainous area and the upper courses of the streams springing from it. It leaves the upper Sararé unmarked and indicates the western region in the direction of the Guaporé as *uninhabited*. As such, these

areas might have been refuge areas for the previous inhabitants and bases from which the attacks may have been launched[xxx].

In 1845, Castelnau reported the same combination of groups as menacing and frightening the regional population, in particular the mining villages São Vicente and Pilar in the interior, in the Serra area (Price 1972: 18). In 1840 the president of the province described the *Bororo do Cabaçal* as aggressive, and capable of murder and depredations. He added that the *Cabixiz* who occupy almost the entire eastern margin of the Galera River pose the same threat (Rezende 1840: 16). This remark strengthens Price's claim that the Nambikwara moved south. However, the other possibility that the region had been strategically abandoned in order to recoup and proceed to a kind of guerilla warfare to regain the lands cannot be ruled out. Indeed, the firm attachment the Nambikwara have to their territory makes this a possible scenario. If, as Price notes, buried Indians lend a village its authenticity, the inhabitants have a special attachment to certain locations via the burial grounds of their ancestors. Residents of Vila Bela believed too that the Southern Nambikwara were a nomadic people in spite of evidence to the contrary apparent in destroyed indigenous communities (Santos 2000: 56). Just as the presidential reports cited above, Santos accepts the validity of this statement. However, the Indians' assiduous presence all over the region speaks otherwise and, even if at the height of mining the Indians might have retreated from the core mining area, in this century they eventually reoccupied the land and resettled the villages. If the map depicts the situation in the Sararé region at the apex of invasion, then the possibility of withdrawal to the more distant recesses of the same region, under protection of the dense forests, was an available option to the original inhabitants.

Price's remark on the Nambikwara practice of burying the dead near a promising village site was noted earlier. This can be thought of as yet another sociocultural way in which the Nambikwara relate to the earth, not only in an attachment to immediate village territory, but to potential land as well. Bearing this in mind, it is interesting that the oldest living Sararé recalled how the Indians often relocated their villages and gardens to more remote areas when threatened by White expansion (paths for mules, for example) so as to live in relative peace on their own land. Again, being *nomadic* is an external image but one that may have its source in the movements of peoples during times of strife. A strategy of refuge areas was necessary to disappear from the eyes of intruders, given the impression

of not inhabiting the land while still occupying their own territory (Santos 2000: 56)[xxxii]. As this happened in the twentieth century, there is no reason to believe that this did not begin in the eighteenth century. Invisibility and supposed nomadism proved useful defense mechanisms. Unlike the Paresi, who were a sedentary people, the Nambikwara would be thought of as not easily confined in a definite space and firmly localized in villages. Surely, the tendency of the Nambikwara to go on *treks* may have also contributed to outsiders' credence that they were nomads. Yet, after suffering from the prolonged war in the 1950s and 1960s and only recently *contacted*, the Sararé were no nomads when visited by an anthropologist named Fuerst. In contrast to the accepted beliefs, he labelled these people as sedentary horticulturalists (Fuerst 1971)[xxxiii]. Price, as seen, was more interested in the central Nambikwara, the savanna people (Nambikwara do Campo) on the high Parecis Plateau. He claimed that he was unable to see evidence of these local groups' occupation of the Chapada in the wake of the receding Cabixi and Paresi. In fact, the current Cabixi-Paresi narrate a retreat to the south, from the middle Juína downwards[xxxiv]. From this observation arose his suggestion that the Nambikwara took over the empty space unnoticed by the Brazilian outsiders, after the latter effectively decimated the Cabixi and Paresi. Furthermore, as if the substitution of one people for another also caused the passing on of the name of the people associated with the place, the Tamaré also took over the name of the people they usurped because it was a *catch-all* term for *wild Indians* (Price 1983b: 140). Even if this hypothesis proves correct, the emphasis still falls on the savanna and begs the question of how the southern groups also gained this name. If the category Cabixi is primarily associated with wildness, then, of course, the other Southern Nambikwara cluster could be included.

Price notes that the dichotomy of *wildness* and *tameness* were the key descriptive elements used in classifying any indigenous people (ib.: 143). This classification continues today, only under the more politically correct division between the *arredio* (withdrawn, unapproachable) and the *contacted*. Such a split still suggests that rejection of outsiders is something done wholly by the Indians to the Whites, and never vice-versa. Such categorization predominated in the official speeches in the nineteenth century which allude to the *Cabixi* and the *problems* they cause. An 1837 address suggested that civilization must continue to grow and expand, and while the wild adults may never completely lose their *barbarian customs* if they remain together, the impressionable children may easily

assimilate *our customs* (Boeno 1845: 20-1). The oration continues and touches on the topic of foreign immigration in terms of the government's plans to stimulate *foreign colonization*. This entailed the notion of importing *civilized people* to populate the vastness of the interior, totaling *65 thousand square leagues* (conservatively taking a league to be 6 km, this is close to 2,340,000 km<sup>2</sup>). The notion of a void, of enormous empty topological spaces to be settled, is not a new one. Such a view does little to strengthen the Indians' status as *fellow countrymen*, actually they were not considered to be settlers or even Brazilians. The speech also mentions that the decline of mining, especially evident in the São Vicente settlement, is not because of lack of manpower (as originally suggested). Rather, it has to do with the deficiency of proper machinery. Put differently, although people were interested in gold deposits that could be panned easily by slaves, they were not interested in investing in deposits to be harvested mechanically. If true, this explains the decline of importance of the Sararé region and suggests that the region's history would be radically different if there had been more economic interest in these operations. It also confirms that other economic interests could have made a notable difference. Note in comparison the dismal fate of the bordering Bororo territory that was comprised of plains ideal for cattle.

It was true that the province officially contained a very low number of inhabitants and this fact diminished the pressure for the internal expansion of the empire. In 1845 the President affirmed that no census was taken but the parochial figures furnished by the priests the year before (who tallied populations) added up to 37,826 people, of which 8,868 were baptized Indians (although two other places did not include such data). This implies that the Indian population was near a quarter of the population size. The *savage* Indians, however, remained uncounted. While not exhaustive, these data draw attention to some interesting issues. First, there is the large number of evangelized Indians compared to Brazilians. Also noteworthy is the very low density, even taking into consideration the influx of migrants from Minas Gerais. On average, there were 0.012 inhabitant/km. Considering the fact that large regions of the provinces remained unpopulated because of free Indians peoples, and assuming conservatively that only a quarter of the province had 0.2 Indian inhabitants/km, one could estimate the presence of 117,000 Indian people[xxxv]. Thus, the attention given to the *Indian* population is no surprise. This also explains why the President of the Province advocates more than the usual *domestication of the Indians*, but proposes that it is one of the most

important obligations of government at all levels. He adds that they should not be *abandoned* at the stage of *imperfect Christians* but that “(...) *it is necessary to fixate them further in civil life, and make them contract the habit of work, to which they are averse, proportioning them the means to be regularly and profitably employed*” (Jardim 1845: 28). A year later, the same politician observed that mining started to suffer from the lack of “*African labor*”, a euphemism for slavery (Jardim 1846: 25). In light of the meager population, the Indian (and slave) labor would be beneficial to *civilization*. The president then observed that the Cabeçal Bororo are now *settled and domesticated* and the road to Mato Grosso is safely defended. The entry to *civilization* as a landless or near-landless laborer to be *useful* to the *civilized* also had a respectable history before Rondon appealed to practically the same pragmatic arguments.

In 1846 the same president reported on the various official Indian villages. Among his proposals he argued the usefulness of the union in one village near the Jauru River of all of the Cabaças Bororo. The idea demonstrates both the perceived likelihood of population decline after settlement and the further restriction of their land resource. He also proposed the creation of three new villages, including one at the village of São Vicente Ferreira “*for the Cabixis and Ajururis*” (Jardim 1846: 33; the Ajururis are unknown and do not appear on the general overview of Indian *nations* and *tribes* of 1849 although he does repeat the same *Uajururi* in his proposal to create the Directory of Indians; apud Price 1983b: 135). By this time the emperor, in his *paternal* and most serious consideration on *the fate of the Indians* warned several times that their *simplicity must not be abused*, and the year before issued a decree to regulate the settlements in the *regime of aldeias*. No mention is made of the proposal by the next president, but, on the contrary, it is evident that he did not have many qualms about forcibly countering the frequent Cabixi attacks on the villages of São Vicente and Pilar. He ordered the chief of police to organize a *bandeira* with the necessary force to defeat the Indians (Oliveira: 1848: 4). The speech given the following year makes two main observations. The first concerns the necessity of more effective official support for missionaries operating within the region and the second observes the low level of food production in what should be an agricultural province. As another president complained, Mato Grosso was far from the dominating political and economic regions of the empire. Indeed, such distance to commerce and financial centers is part of the reason that the growth of the frontier lost a lot of momentum and the highly thought of project of conversion and settlement of Indians decelerated.

By this time the Cabixi had regained their strength and continued *harassing* the intruders' villages. "*It is not without hurt feelings, gentlemen, that I communicate the aggressions that the inhabitants of the places of the town of Mato grosso [sic] have suffered by the Indians. The Cabixi wandering at the headwaters and margins of the Galera attacked the Cubatão sugar mill on the general road to Fort Principe to rob it; and the Pareciz did the same to the villages of S. Vicente and Pilar and both caused some damages; and if at the first two points no one perished, it is certain that at the last, one man and one woman were murdered, as the police official of this city communicated to the presidency in a communiqué dated last December 22. The Nambiquaras, [as is also stated] on the official record, attacked the commercial boats of the traders from Diamantino José Alves Ribeiro and Gabriel José das Neves at the mouth of the Tapanhunas River and these attacks resulted in some deaths among them and one gravely injured person*" (Ribeiro 1848). In one paragraph the Cabixi are accused of the assaults in the interior, near the Galera River, the *Pareciz* of the onslaught in the Sararé region and the death of two people, and finally the *Nambiquara* of operating a raid on passing commercial boats. Note that this document attests that the Paresi are to blame for the Sararé deaths. The Cabixi were located further northwest, in the Guaporé Valley, and the *Nambiquara* on the eastern bank of the Arinos River (the largest river after the Juruena), far to the northeast of the current Nambikwara. To complicate further the possible inconsistency of names, places, and groups, Tapanhuna not only indicates a river but also a people that Price located at the northern margin of this tributary of the Arinos (Price 1983b: 134). The Cabixi here most likely are Nambikwara of the Valley but the Paresi are accused of the crimes in the Sararé. The *Nambiquara* (as noted, a Tupi compound of the words ear and hole, probably referring the earplugs characteristically worn in their ears), definitely were not yet the same people known as Nambikwara today. Price suggested that they moved southward, and became known as the Iranxe[xxxvi]. The Paresi associated the Nambikwara and Iranxe because neither sleeps in hammocks. Accordingly, the Paresi assigned them the same name[xxxvii]. Following the tenuous Paresi's link, towards the end of the century the local Brazilians also began to call both groups with the same name. Whatever the connection, it is a fact that by the beginning of the twentieth century within this region, local people called the "Earth People" *Nambikwara* (Price 1983b: 142).

### *The re-conquest*

Juggling the names attached to groups and peoples is customary in Brazilian practice and, following Price's argument (1983b: 143), may be dependent on the degree of interest in the categorizing by the characteristics or properties of the classified. Names can also be forgotten with the ebbs and flows of the frontier, as in the case in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Alternatively, the self-styled victims of the peoples that initiated the re-conquest of the occupancy of the Sararé region had their own political reasons for accusing at certain times the Paresi, and at other times to blame and stigmatize the Cabixi. Perhaps the president of the Province had his own reasons for not clarifying the confusions. The raid of 1848 provoked the local population of Vila Bela to get assistance to mount a retaliatory expedition. However, the town police chief contradicted the presidential address that supposedly was based on his correspondences when he wrote that the gathered force of 240 men searched for the Indians entering the Galera and going up the river, starting from its mouth. Up this river lived the Cabixi, the same group that in 1848 another writer condemned as making yearly raids on the mining camps while the Paresi are depicted as a shy, trading, and peaceful people (Ferreira apud Price 1983b: 135). Either out of habit mentioning Paresi and Cabixi jointly, or else due to the general idea of wildness associated with the latter, perhaps the local people usually did attribute their predicament to the Cabixi even when the provincial government or others might still implicate the Paresi (the 1847 president aside, who affirmed that the Paresi were a nonviolent people; Jardim apud Price 1983b: 135). Thus, at different times distinct social categories or people had reasons to classify Indian groups, for generally unknown reasons. This demonstrates that it is not fair to attach any blame to the Cabixi or Paresi before knowing the motivations and understandings of the source of the complaint.

To the chagrin of the police official the bandeira did not apprehend any rebellious Indians and his troops practically disbanded after a short while in the forest. After regrouping, they asked for supplies and the police chief decided to take charge of the operation. The troops did not cooperate when the expedition wandered in various directions near São Vicente. The police chief accused the participants of *malice* and *without the will to reach the dwelling place of the Indians*, and that the soldiers revolted by reporting to be ill (Montemór apud Price 1983b: 136). Such behavior probably was affected by the terrible reputation of the Indians and such image probably influenced the choreography of violence and terror. Fear and caution go hand-in-hand, and these Indians and the Whites eyed one another very suspiciously. Both sides in a conflict shape their own imagery. Images mostly

are more distant from the truth when only violence reigns relations. One French writer even imagined the Cabixi covered with tattoos and speaking Quechua (Moure cited in Price 1983b: 137). As seen in this example, their fierce reputation probably protected the Indians from more aggression, as the image of wildness sustained a fear that aided in the (re-)conquest of territory. In 1854, another man who had lived in Mato Grosso described the hatred and fear he harbored towards these Cabixi whom: “(...) *beaten by the first settlers of this wilderness, can cause very great harm to a population, which, the way things are going, will shortly lack the necessary force to defend itself against this immense and powerful horde*” (Moutinho 1869 apud Price 1983b: 136; note that this man familiar with the region equates the original inhabitants with the Cabixi and by extension to the Nambikwara). This probably underscores the prevalent ideology that settlers should deal with Indians as they do with other problems associated with the *wilderness*, that is, by vanquishing these obstacles. The man believed that it is unacceptable and unbearable to be beaten by *wild savages*. It seems he is not so concerned with various material losses, but more with the humiliation of losing to inferior *wild* men who should be incapable of such deeds. No doubt this explains why they must be an *immense and powerful horde*. The bitterness augments when the original dream of the foundation of Vila Bela was to create the town as *the true heart* of South America (Carelli and Severiano 1980: 7). The frustration involved with abandoning this plan and not actualizing the ingrained notion of superiority must have been most embarrassing and generated hatred and fear. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the Cabixi became an epitome of the *wild Indian* in the entire region of the Guaporé (as reported by travelers; Price 1983b: 136). Such a reputation does not call attention to the minutiae of their language and culture and encourages an umbrella category that encompasses many very different *wild Indians*.

In respect to the ambiguity and inconsistency of names and the movements of peoples, names crystallized at particular times and in specific sources. Hence, all historical description made prior a certain time is questionable. The province made a general overview of all the known *Nations* and *Tribes of the indigenous population of Mato-Grosso* in 1849. According to this source, there were only 100 *Bororo Cabações* and 250 *Parecys* remaining. As to the *Mambarés* (most likely a branch of the Paresi) there were 400. The *Cabixis* had an estimated population of 500 and purportedly lived in the same region as the *Mambarés* and Paresi. The *Nambiquáras* at the Arinos and Peixe Rivers are said to number 700. This brings

the total to 15,800 people, a very conservative estimate and most certainly grossly underestimating the population of those peoples unknown to the pollsters. A guess is ventured for the Indians uncounted, 5,025 people. This increases the total to 21,725 Indians. The gradient exposes a kind of utility appraisal and corresponds analogically to contemporary stages of *contact*. The Bororo were settled in a village close to *our villages* (permanent contact); Paresi, and Mambaré have *some relations with us* but are *in their primitive state of independence* (intermittent contact); the Cabixi are characterized as *hostile to us and not interested in our friendship* (violently rejecting contact, in comparison to the peaceful Paresi) (Oliveira 1849:32). This draws a relevant gradient correlation between independency, intermediate contact and partial independence, and total subordination. At these times the official authorities did not yet hide behind words to recognize Indian peoples as *nations* and to apprehend their previous autonomy as *independence*, even if they officially pertain to the *population of the province*. Thus, it seems a relatively honest assessment of the institutional goals, although the idea of *friendship* must be read within the hierarchical key of Brazilian society of the time and not in any egalitarian sense. Independence is closely associated with inferiority and *wildness*. The elite circles have historically rejected such independence as unacceptable. Such people believed strongly in the superiority of *higher* classes and their right and obligation to control and civilize, *educate*, the *lower* segments of their own society and the Indian peoples.

The aldeia system did not prosper in Mato Grosso. In 1850 the funds of the imperial government were spent on the Eastern Bororo, and no proposal for the demarcation of Indian lands issued in conformity to the regiment of 1845. Many directors lived far away from the village they *directed*, and some never even visited it. There was no properly organized aldeia (Pimentel 1850: 11-2). In a report the following year, the author observed the *insults committed by the Cabixis*, though he declined to furnish any further information. The author admitted absolute ignorance of the immense regions between the Xingu, Araguaia and Rio das Mortes Rivers. Additionally, as a result of settling in a village, the population of the Cabeças diminished from 177 to 67 people in less than ten years (Leverger 1852: 47-8). After accomplishing nothing with the previous military punishment that was aimed to produce vengeance and avoid further similar actions, the new president of 1851 suggested other means to repress the Indians. His solution concerned a more regular deployment of forces in the affected regions ready to intervene at any moment. By this time, he was aware of

the attack of the *Cabixís* living at the margins of the Galera River on a mill seven leagues away from the City of Mato Grosso. The Mato Grosso man's fear of an attack by an *immense and powerful horde* became more real as the Indians were close to the town. The only difference is that instead of mentioning the Cabixi and Paresi, this time there is worry about the Cabixi and Maimbaré (Leverger 1852: 6)[xxxviii]. A year later, in 1852, Leverger, a man who originally was a marine officer and at this time was the president of Mato Grosso, noted that the measles epidemics in Mato Grosso caused few casualties. Perhaps the thorough avoidance between the two opposing peoples spared the Indians a disastrous epidemic, if not the damages must have been tremendous but unnoticed. The government also supported a private initiative to organize a settlement of Guarayo on the Guaporé River, with an aim to calm the people on the boats in transit from the fear of the Cabixi (Leverger 1853a: 29, 32). The next year he authorized a *bandeira* against the Cabixi because they caused a lot of damage at a short distance of the town. However, for some reason this never materialized (Leverger 1853b: 5).

In 1854 Leverger again claimed only to take recourse to violence when absolutely necessary. He claimed *isolated facts* must not be *attributed to decidedly hostile intentions of the whole tribe* and do not impose the necessity of a military expedition. In this logic, he did not authorize punishing expeditions to the *Coroados* because he believed that the attacked inhabitant may have provoked the situation. Leverger treated the case of the *District of Mato-Grosso* differently, however, as one *urged by necessity*. For three years the inhabitants pleaded for military intervention "(...) *against the depredations perpetuated by the Cabixís (amongst whom they say are a number of Parecis) in the villages and establishments of that District. Yielding to the repeated clamors, I ordered the mounting of a bandeira that, conveniently armed and with ammunition and instruction for its commander to avoid whenever possible a massacre and to aim at the capture of adult Indians for whom I set a bounty, departed in September. After many days of pursuing the savages, whom according to some amounted to over a thousand - a number that seems exaggerated to me, the bandeira returned without catching them*" (Leverger 1854: 7-8). An unsuccessful attempt to deal with the situation violently tempered with the instructions to be more humane to the offenders. A constant relatively advanced position for those days but, in the last instance, resorting to violence always ends up underpinning the colonial order. The people perceived the Cabixí to be a totally *hostile tribe* and convinced the president, who by this time no longer took stock in the Paresi's participation.

Violence finally was justified, but the Indians, very likely well trained in a kind of guerrilla warfare, successfully evaded these forces. Thus, in 1856 he authorized another bandeira against the *killings, thefts and fires* committed close to the capital. Two other expeditions only wasted the *excessive* expenditure and did not succeed in averting the danger. He then suggested, not for the first time, to put into place a larger number of military garrisons sufficiently manned “*to oblige the Indians, sooner or later, to interact with us in a friendly and cooperative way (...)*” (Leverger 1856: 6). Force and military power founds the conquest of *friendship*. Friendship, as seen, means being assigned a specific locus in social space and acceptance of the normal pre-ordained subordinate niche in the structural hierarchy of *Society*.

In the following year, 1857, another president reported that a bandeira to another people also failed and only seemed to have *instigated the Indians to more cruelties* (judging from their location, they were likely Bororo). This president also did not grasp or admit the concept of the spiral of violence, and appeared to be only interested in the victimized ranchers, settlers, and travelers: “*(...) I don't see any other means to halt the killings, fires and thefts performed (...) by the Indians than an appeal to force to repel their aggressions*” (Osório 1857: 9). The formula for the damages now seems to have become a ritualistic litany. The reason for these organized assaults on the Indians is simple, these *barbarians have been hostile to us for over a hundred years* and do not permit the tilling of *extraordinarily fertile land* close to the city. *Hostility and aggression* by any Indian people plainly justifies violence when they hinder access to such valuable economic resources. In this year, as in the previous one, the official policy of creating Indian settlements and of stimulating missionaries to direct missions with the support of the province continued to be contemplated. *We don't have missionaries and only very little money*. The lack of money to sponsor the missionaries and finance their work contributed to ineffectual policy. The central government had dictated several rules regarding missions and official Indian villages since the beginnings of the conquest. In that sense there were very few real *aldeias*. The explicit or implicit complaint that the aldeia system did not work or could not work out in accordance to the applicable rules was repeated until the end of the period of the *Empire*. One of the few efforts to apply the system was made with the Guarayo, also esteemed to serve as an example for the wild Indians. However, the director who initiated the village departed at the end of 1854 and the Indians were left on their own. The effort really consisted in

securing the traffic on the river and the communication between Mato Grosso and Fort Principe against the *barbarian Cabixi*[xxxix]. The only way to accept that such a village might encourage the Nambikwara to seek the same shelter and advantages is if one is already profoundly convinced of the attractions of civilization (see citation in Santos 2000: 43).

A civilization that, apart from an almost ritual appeal to the perpetual *lack of funds* that hinders the range of governmental action, sometimes transpired to be not as perfect as one would like. Of course, in the Empire's first decades, there were many popular revolts in several regions that instilled a deep sense of the paucity of civilization of the lower classes among the elite. In 1858 the president denounced these actions and blamed them on "(...) *the scarcity of religion in the lowest class of society, the part from which derive the majority of criminals, on the large extension of almost completely unpopulated territory, on the shortage of personnel in the districts on whom to award the posts of police official, and above all on the impunity prevalent at the occasion of jury court holdings*" (Lamare 1858: 5). Of eleven indictments in trials, only three of the accused were found guilty. Thus the *right to property is not to be as respected as would be desirable*, especially small-scale thefts and *an astonishing amount* of stolen cattle never appearing in the records because the victims face a respectable number of difficulties to seek the cooperation of the *competent authorities*. As the president knew well, the impediments to justice originate in the segmented structure of the clientelistic state and the power base of the local potentates. In this admission, the political compromises of the regional and national society with the local level reveal the failure of the central state to impose a uniform system of justice with its corollary near-total inability to exercise its claims as the sole legitimate source of violence. At the frontier these defects of the model of a modern nation-state – the notion that increasingly became the ideal of civilization – were even more pronounced. The elite considered the poor as 'the savages within', and the Indians as 'the savages without'. Both, therefore, are to be included in and controlled by the state. The correspondence between Indians and rural workers is less fortuitous than might appear at first sight. Simultaneously, the use of local and uncontrolled violence mainly by the locally and regionally powerful escapes our notice. Although such incidents are unmentioned, it is safe to assume that there were hostile clashes, retaliation and incalculable Indian deaths.

The conflict continued to harass the district's inhabitants. At the end of 1858 the

Cabixi killed a civilian near São Vicente and a soldier near Pilar (Lamare 1859: 5). As this president did not believe in reprisal, he did not lend his support to military vengeance of *the primitive sons of nature*. Outside civilization, the Indians pertain to the natural domain, both are primitive and to be vanquished and dominated, but his belief in a more fundamental humanity engendered his preference for evangelization. The good and hardworking Guarayo Indians of the river serve as a most convenient counterpoint, especially as they are sedentary, horticulturalist, hammock weavers and canoe makers, and the strongest and most handsome of the province. They are, above of all, *tame* and of the *multitudinous tribes* the author visited, they are the most well disposed to civilization. They epitomize the exact opposite of the characterization of the Cabixi. As both the prime example of what should be the future for the Indians and useful as the shield to the inferior Indians, another settlement was proposed on the middle Guaporé. The end of the settlement was marked by the death of the last Guarayo in 1929, killed by a Nambikwara arrow (according to Villas Boas cited in Santos 2000: 43). Perhaps it is no coincidence that these Indians live now in Bolivia and are unknown in Brazil (Price and Cook (1969: 688) even presumed that the Guarayo were *probably extinct*). In fact, in an 1872 report Cardozo claimed that these Indians originally came from a Bolivian village (1873: 146). Apparently, under certain historical conditions being something like a primitive, uncompromising, recalcitrant and unrepentant nomadic warrior people has its advantages. One of the conditions in which it may pay to not be peaceful is when dealing with the small population of a district as large as Mato Grosso. In 1859 the district was comprised of the smallest population of eleven parishes of the province, a mere 1,703 people according to the count executed by the head of the provincial police (although the census was incomplete when the figures were published with five more parishes to be included; Alencastro: 1861).

The military detachment placed at the Indian village on the Guaporé succeeded in aiding the Cubatão mill when the Indians besieged it and succeeded in hitting someone with an arrow. Later in the same month of January, a man enrolled in the National Guard left the city on his way to his country property on the Guaporé and at a distance of one league outside the town confronted a party of Parecis who fired eight arrows. He died instantly and was found by two men searching for cattle (the region between the mountain range of the Sararé, Serra de São Vicente or Serra da Borda, and the river is mostly flat lowland with grassy vegetation). Once again, even at this late stage, the report assigned the blame to

the Pareisi. It is tempting to conclude that the outsiders frequently confused the Nambikwara with all of their closest neighbors, not just the Cabixi sub-group. The proximity to town is remarkable, this occurred closer than the previous incidents described. The town could not ignore such impertinence without taking some prompt action. The military commander immediately sent out a group to search the savannas and woods in the area. The party did not come across the Indians, but noticed their tracks near the fatal event. The National Guard raised forty men and pursued the offenders, but as they lacked a tracker, they had no success. The military commander wrote that in his opinion the Indians must have taken refuge away from the road and villages. The Municipal Council thought otherwise, they argued that the Indians supposedly lodged near the *extinct village of Pilar* had crossed the Sararé River and occupied the savanna and the woods near the town. From here, they easily traveled close to the outskirts of the *City*, endangering all who venture out of its perimeter, like washerwomen, cattle handlers and those who gather wood to burn. After Pilar (in the Sararé region near the mountains), was abandoned, the Indians re-conquered almost all the space previously lost, and so the *City* itself was at risk. If the commander was right, the strategy of internal refuge bore its fruits. If the city council was right, the occupancy of the Cabixi proves that they already re-conquered most of the region.

The municipality painted a convincing picture of its lamentable situation and pleaded to receive military reinforcements. Not surprisingly, this plea ended in a request for the authorization to organize an *expedition to capture* the Indians. The president in this period, however, learned from his predecessors that this action usually did not deliver the desired results but instead apparently influenced the perpetrators to repeat their *ferocity*. Moreover, when consulted, the Ministry of Agriculture reminded the province of the 1863 prohibition of violence except in defense (Penna 1864: 64-6)[xl]. The notion of not taking revenge and of no pre-emptive violence must have disconcerted the inhabitants. The way out is to hide any vengeance, with the certainty of any discovery to be irrelevant because no one would ever be brought to court for killing a wild Indian. This approach only very recently shows signs of some real change but even today, except in particular and notorious cases, the very large majority of Indian murderers are not convicted. Despite the military power based in the city, the countryside proved more vulnerable than the Whites probably thought possible. In 1865 the president laconically dedicated one short paragraph to address the problem: “*In October the Cabixis and the Parecis produced an aggression: a*

*quarter of a league from the City of Matto-Grosso they killed a peasant and his wife and burned the bridge over the Guaporé River which became unusable"* (1865: 71)[xli]. Note again the mention of both the Pareci and the Cabixi, even though the event in question is unlikely to involve the two groups, perhaps by now this is simply a matter of a long tradition. Maybe the fact that in the forties the Paresi preferred dealing with the people in Diamantino and were entirely hostile to those in Mato Grosso derived from the accusation now being leveled at them by those citizens[xlii]. Regardless, the burning of the bridge on the road to the capital meant a severe blow to regional Brazilians and emphasized the fears evident in the previously mentioned quote by a settler regarding the necessity of reinforcements and the dangers of the wicked Cabixi (Moutinho cited in Price 1983b: 134). Cutting the transport lines of the enemy is a classic wartime maneuver and is especially efficient when it also severs communication with the outside.

The constant naming of the Paresi as aggressors contradicts the image of peacefulness mentioned in other times. In 1872 appeared the most extensive report available to me that discusses the then known Indian peoples. All are characterized by their most salient aspects. The Parecis are surprisingly claimed to be renowned for their warring abilities. They roam from Diamantino to Mato Grosso and a few speak *the national language*. "*It is noted that they have not been openly hostile to landowners and travelers but, it is said, sometimes they join forces with the Cabixi to perpetrate violence*" (Cardoso 1873: 144). For much longer than Price's sources indicated, the Paresi did get some blame for the siege of the Sararé region. Their neighbors were the *Maiambares*, a group with a large population, but *reduced* to 200 and with little interaction with the Brazilians. The Maiambares visit them sometimes in the company of the same Paresi. Here too the association is clear and the two peoples form two of the subsets of the wider ensemble that eventually became known as Paresi. The Cabixi, once the third subset of the Paresi, very likely designate some other people by this time:

*"The family of the Cabixis is numerous.*

*They occupy various settlements on the savannas of the Parecis to the northeast of the village of São Vicente, with an area of 15 to 20 leagues. Until today, they preserve themselves indomitably. The Cabixis always manifested hostile dispositions towards the society from which they flee. The villages and the inhabitants of the district of Mato-Grosso constantly suffer from the assaults and*

*raids of these savages who, in the wake of their passage, leave destruction, fire, death, and theft*" (Cardoso 1873: 145).

Thus, they were savage criminals competing with the Coroado (Bororo) for what might be called the title of most savage Indians of the Province. The Bororo's greater prominence arose mainly because of their proximity to the capital and the stronger interests involved. The northeast of São Vicente situates the Indians in the region from the upper Galera River up to the highlands of the Parecis Plateau. In other words, from the northern part of the Sararé lands in the Guaporé Valley onto the highlands to the north of the area of the former Cabixi who, according to their oral tradition, withdrew from the northern to the southern part of the Parecis Plateau. The distance of the area occupied reaches the current Nambikwara Indigenous Land but is indicative of the lack of real information as the true occupancy of the Nambikwara ensemble extended far more to the north. As seen, before Rondon most of the immense region returned to the condition of *terra incognita*. It is notable how the report contains information about Indians who refuse to have anything to do with the regional society[xliii]. The *Nambiquaras* reject any contact and yet the president confidently asserts this *horde* enlists a population of 600 people living at the confluence of the Peixe and Arinos Rivers. Apart from hunting and fishing, they work the land, contrary to the image of the current Nambikwara. Moreover, further along the Arinos River, the *Tapanhumas* are said to be quite similar in *manners and customs* to these *Nambiquaras*. How this knowledge came to be acquired is not explicitly mentioned and such statements must be taken cautiously. These peoples' image differs considerably from the Cabixi-Nambikwara construed by the same opposing ethnic group. These previous Nambiquara used to attack the canoes on the river, but if these attacks were launched from their own canoes than it is relevant that the current Nambikwara (like the Sararé) have only recently acquired some practice of canoeing and fishing with hooks[xliv]. The Nambikwara are not a riverine people, they are much more earthly, much more attached to the land.

This president firmly believed in progress by means of evangelization to bring the *savages* of the *wandering families* to the bosom of civilization and reap the rewards of their cheap labor. From his comments on the thirty *savage families* (i.e. peoples), of the province he applied the easy and familiar scheme of good *tame* Indians and those of *bad character* and disposed to violent resistance. These predicates are quite familiar by now but some changes in emphasis can be

discerned in later presidents. The next president, general Hermes da Fonseca, was a prominent person who had quite a significant role in the future *republic*. The issues of the lack of missionaries for a *tribe* like the *wandering* Cabixi and their *raids and depredations* diverged little from that of his predecessors. He did adopt the word *tribe*, a change of idiom here likely related to positivism and its particular brand of *progress*, a belief partially represented in the notion of preparing the children for *social communion* and entailed taking them away from the families for *education* (Fonseca 1876: 19-20). He allied himself with the more humane line of evangelization, in contrast to the hardliners for whom violence was justified as the sole means for effective results. The president of the province (and future president of the republic) countered that force only tranquilizes the inhabitants, makes the Indians run, and is neither a humanitarian principle congruent with this century nor convenient for the empire (ib.: 21). In other words, contact should be made in *good manners* to inspire *confidence and gratitude* and bring these *unhappy people* to *civil communion* for their original state of this part of the human race is: "(...) *wandering and ignorance, without notions of civilization, live according to their instinct, but still with social rules that qualify them to civilize themselves easily when entering in good relations with us*" (ib.: 21). Here one finds the clearest recognition of the difference between the official policies and the reality on the frontier conjoined with the positivist belief of the perfectibility of humans, and their equal status as fellow members of the *human race*:

*"Unfortunately in the interior of the Province many of our fellow citizens do not think so, and no doubt isolated in remote places they attempt to avoid the Indians by repelling them with force, with threats, and even with weapons.*

*It is necessarily encouraged by old preventions, by bad and uncorrected customs, that these Indians show themselves irritable and revengeful: it is no doubt in reprisal because of these treatments that they, when possible, assault, rob, kill, devastate and destroy"* (Fonseca 1873: 22).

In his opinion these unenlightened citizens live mostly in remote places, but this is more likely an understatement as even some of his own predecessors believed more in force than persuasion. The general appealed to the sentiment that Western civilization is superior and hence should furnish the principles of action for the regional, civilized elite of this remote province.[xlv]. By virtue of the humane treatment of Indians as the royal road to civilization for their own benefit,

as *experience has demonstrated*, the *bad customs* can be corrected and peace secured. The examples of various friendly Indian peoples are raised to illustrate the argument before ending with the strong recommendation to his esteemed fellow politicians that they cooperate in the effort to civilize the totality of the interior, although this is not explicitly said. He followed this with a request that if any news about an offensive against the life or liberty of the Indians reaches them, they should notify the competent authorities in order to bring the delinquent party to justice (ib.: 22). This was a highly utopian thought, the same politicians often are implicated in the conquest of Indian land and resources. The notion of equal protection under the law, even for the savages, is far from being realized even today. The expression of these ideals distinguishes the speaker as someone with a positivist influence and the speech exposes a framework that is reminiscent of the ideas and concepts later expressed by Rondon. Some basic notions are shared with the humanist military who preceded him and prefigured his own conceptions. Perhaps the stated government policy by such a high ranking officer in his native province, even if never actualized, somehow shaped Rondon's political stance. At the time, however, such ideas must have had very little impact on the reality of native peoples in Mato Grosso.

The directory and its deficiencies took up most of the policy reports on the civilizing efforts in the last years of the Brazilian *empire*. Some of these concur with the delineated framework. As stated by another president in 1879, to evangelize the Indians it is necessary to know the Indians, their customs, language and disposition, to impress on them being *friends* and so “(...) *to, in the end, recognize in their own inferiority the advantages of civilization*” (Pedrosa 1879: 81). This conveys an absolutely fundamental tenet that has been a constant in all variants of the ethnocentric conceptions to justify the entrance of the inferior Indians into civilization and history, and, as discussed in Part II, one that extends to all actions taken by Rondon and SPI. Different peoples retain different *intellectual cultures* and the total ignorance of some peoples should instill patience in the superiors so as best to persuade the savages to change their habits with caution, without anyone *constraining them*. The point is that the effective *locus* of power and decision in the commanding of the process of contact and posterior change never is accepted to be on the side of the inferiors. The touchstone is the obviousness of the disparity between inferiority and superiority. Here lies a sort of trans-cultural bridge that not even Rondon crossed (indeed, it is very rarely ever crossed). In fact, in this president's eyes, the totally ignorant

do not really deserve the soft hand of persuasion. The *inhuman bandeiras* may have *disappeared* but the wild savages who assail the agriculturalists create such hatred between the two races that the evangelization may be unfruitful and “(...) *an implacable fight, without any suspension, will ensue*” (Pedrosa 1879: 82).

The Cabixi fall into such a category. The *Paricys* and *Cabixys* living in the state of savagery on the Parecis Plateau gained a directorship in the 1880s after the to-be-nominated director *casually encountered some villages*, talked to the inhabitants and found they had friendly dispositions. This must have been seen as quite useful as the same *Paricys* and *Cabixys* are accused of various murders committed on the road between Caceres and Mato Grosso; as usual the Paresi were seen as allies of *the fierce Cabixis* – another early conception of a *fierce people* – who victimized so many travelers on the road (Relatório 1881: 27). This nomination is commonly bestowed upon to a more important man in the vicinity of the Indian villages and it is no accident that the report candidly added that the captain and discoverer in question already employed some of the Indians in his rubber extraction business. Such a remark highlights the initial movements of the socioeconomic exploitation of the Paresi and, with the rise of the rubber boom, forebodes the attempts to forcefully integrate the Nambikwara into production activities. Rubber will provide the stimulus not just for the conquest of land but also for the forced integration of native people as exploitable workers.

The *savage Indians* continued to inflict *damages* to the province. In 1886 the Parecis *of the bank of the Guaporé* again attacked five agricultural establishments near Matto-Grosso, destroying the fields and obliging the owners to flee to the town. Later the same year, the *Parecis* arrived in the city, killed two people and wounded one soldier. Once more the government accused the Paresi, and if this in any way reflects the local feelings, then it appears that the Nambikwara were being confused with the Paresi. At various moments in this century, the blame was assigned to the Paresi while it is fairly certain the actors were Southern Nambikwara. I can only conjecture about the motives for this confusion, but in the capital the guilty party sometimes was the Paresi and not just the Cabixi. This time, the central government rejected the deployment of the public armed forces to exterminate the wild Indians, even when an expedition was *necessary*. By this period *civilization* began to be more hesitant to permit the pure force of arms and simple destruction. This occurred during the term of the president who sent six civilized Indian women and one man with an armed expedition to persuade the

Bororo to accept peace. They brought presents and promises of friendship in order to prove that war did not benefit even these *primitive Brazilians* (Pimentel 1886: 13-4). An erratic but, in the long run, gradual shift from outright military genocide to the implicit forceful imposition of a humane friendship slowly emerged in the discourse of the province's highest official authorities. This trend reflects a drift in values and conceptions in turn dependent on the changes in the dominating framework of thoughts and practices in the distinguished centers of *western civilization*[xlvi]. The results of this *friendship* for the indomitable Bororo transpire from the admirable words of Rosa Bororo. The Cabixi, in a marginal and increasingly peripheral region with hardly any persistent attractions for the national society except its pride and prejudice, and a few resources for a limited number of people, did not accept any truce or so-called *friendship*. Other sources collected by Price (1983b: 134-5) credit them with the burning of São Vicente in 1877 and the massacre of eight people (including five soldiers and two women) near the pass through the mountains that extends to the south of the Serra da Borda. In this mode of absolute rejection and permanent warfare these Indians reconquered the land and almost turned the tables to the point of threatening to destroy the town of Mato Grosso (later renamed Vila Bela).

The foregoing speeches and reports represent a fair sample of the parameters, premises, concepts, language, justifications, and actions that governed the relation of the Brazilian society with the Nambikwara in this period. During practically the entirety of the 19<sup>th</sup> century ideas about civilization and its comforts in opposition to both the good *tame* Indians (supposedly accepting inferiority) and the bad, *savagely wild* Indians (rejecting *amity*) prevailed. The goodness or badness, the peaceful inclination or intrinsically bad nature, the agricultural or hunting character of the Indians always seem much more the work of the imagination, the diverse interests, and the classificatory principles of the Brazilian society then founded on firm objective, impartial, and empirical grounds. Although it is possible to trace the re-conquest of the Sararé region fairly well there remains some doubt as to the *Indians* who committed such *atrocities* and, in a war effort continued throughout the entire period of the Brazilian Empire, finally were almost successful in entirely expelling the descendants of the conquering intruders from the previous century. The rebellion that began with the discovery of gold and resulted in command of territory up to the outskirts of Vila Bela is a testament to persistence, tenacity and willpower. Even if Nambikwara peoples did not detain the original occupancy of the region,

the re-conquest as Indian territory is a feat rarely admitted as such or passed over as an incident in national history. It took almost a century of counter-attack, but the Brazilians abandoned the region and ceded the land to a number of local groups of Nambikwara peoples. By the time of the republic and before the construction of the Telegraph Line, the Nambikwara peoples became the uncontested masters of the territory and of the whole Guaporé Valley.

The original inhabitants (an expression of limited value as no one knows how long this former occupancy lasted anyway) either were Cabixi pertaining to the Paresi cluster, groups belonging to the Nambikwara cluster, or a *Paresi* aggregate in some way blended with *Nambikwara* in the exchange relationship described by oral tradition. Of the uncertainties of naming and classification the most poignant example is evident in the manner in which the Paresi continue to be blamed during most of the period of the empire when they definitely were not the assailants responsible for the majority (or all) of the assaults. Therefore the records do not yet rule out the possibility that the Cabixi of olden times settled in the major part of the Sararé region really were part of the Nambikwara cluster. From the historical documents produced by the conquering people no clear conclusion can be drawn. Perhaps Price's intuition in his dissertation is more accurate than what he described in his revision. It is quite possible that the major occupancy of the Sararé region pertained to a Southern Nambikwara sub-set who, subsequently to the waning of the force of conquest, employed their own means to recover the lost territory. In this hypothesis the commonality of this re-conquest with the occupancy of the savanna resides only in the Nambikwara capacity to expansion because in the latter case they entered into the void left by the Paresi (Cabixi)[xlvi]. The only certainty is that the Nambikwara traditionally occupy the major part of the Guaporé Valley, and, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they dominated the entire valley from the Sararé up to the Cabixi River and the area northeast of this river.

### Notes

[i] This title is a reference to Wolf's "Peoples without History", but then his title was meant to be ironical (Wolf 1992: 107). The recognition simply affirms that "*They are part of our history and we are part of theirs*"; and, in that sense certainly does not deny the existence of history previous to contact (ib.: 107). Wolf's objective - what he called the processual study of the intertwining of convergent fields of interaction - is here mine too.

[ii] Fiorini (2000 and 2001, personal communication) defends the thesis that this occupation is relatively recent at the expense of the retraction of the Paresi themselves. This question will be addressed later.

[iii] As we shall see below, reading the presidential addresses to the Provincial Assembly almost invariably mentioned these *problems*. Several times the President of the Province recognized this failure and even hinted that conducting military action – although strongly favored by the local population – did not scare the Indians into peace, but only provoked them more. Yet, usually they fail to mention the fact that the Indians are not customarily *the aggressors* but are merely defending their lands. The common view was that most of the *barbarous tribes* were considered *errant*, hence supposed to be with no particular attachment to the land.

[iv] And is his personal history and trajectory of social ascension not a perfect example of the synthesis of both the fruitful combination of different *racial origins* and the perfectibility of the human being with education? In a way he envisaged a kind of collective trajectory for Indian peoples analogous to his own *humble, racial* and ethnic origins.

[v] The gold in the same or adjacent region of *Corumbijara* had already been explored since 1742 (Pinto 1993: 23).

[vi] Fuerst (ib.) even supposes the Waintesu to be Mamaindê probably because the Mamaindê lived near the Cabixi River and thus may be identified with the name. Given the distance and the interposed Valley peoples, this is unlikely.

[vii] On his map Roquette-Pinto draws the Northern Nambikwara (his *Uáinteçu* and in that sense Fuerst may be right to identify them with the Mamaindê) along the Guaporé and in the Guaporé Valley until the Parecis Plateau, but not as south as the Sararé River (probably the next river, the Galera). Provided this is accurate, the Nambikwara expanded southward towards the Sararé in later years. However, the Guaporé valley was not explored at the time of Rondon and his map must be guesswork. Today Southern Nambikwara inhabit the lower part of the Guaporé valley and it is an interesting question whether this was so at the time of the gold rush. I will address this presently.

[viii] This leaves doubts about the veracity of the string of communities exactly in the area of the other upper rivers.

[ix] The effort to domesticate and incorporate the newly gained lands starts from the naming and, here, the renaming of places and geographical features. The commander also changed the name of the Piolho River, as *piolho* is Portuguese for *flea*. This name did not garner much enthusiasm for official approval and he

renamed the river after Saint John, São João. In the end this attempt did not prevail against the *vox populi*, probably because the settlement did not prosper far into the nineteenth century.

[x] In the racial idiom of the time such children were called *caboré*.

[xi] The quilombo was destroyed and later rebuilt. A long time of occupancy and the lack of later punitive expeditions suggest that townspeople knew of the village. It may even have entertained some illegal relations with the colonial settlements in the region. Portuguese then becomes a logical language choice. The language of the quilombo also would depend on the origins of the slaves but when these are diverse and already taught Portuguese, the obvious choice is the colonial language.

[xii] Here the information came from two captured run-away slaves who even visited town to buy provisions and invited other slaves to join them in the forest. This area is mostly given on the border or as outside Sararé or Nambikwara territory (see, for instance, the map in Price 1978: 17).

[xiii] The presence on the list of the quilombo people of eight persons called *Indians* (men) besides the nineteen Indian women remains unclear. Perhaps they were captured as children together with their mothers. Otherwise these men may actually have been runaway slaves who could not be described so.

[xiv] For two reasons I myself couldn't do this. Not only did I lack the time and resources necessary to go to the relevant libraries but the FUNAI archives in Cuiabá were being reorganized.

[xv] The number of documents is limited and the information conveyed scarce. It would be very possible that epidemics did ravage after these long term incursions of Indian Territory of unknown quantities and the invasions by temporary mining settlements but such facts are never mentioned in this type of document. It is certain, however, that epidemics did rage in these regions among the White population. At the end of 1789 and the beginning of 1790 an epidemic of the "*pest of the dry season*" ravaged the mining region of São Vicente and killed many people, work animals and even wild animals like deer, tapirs and pigs (Anzai 2005: 270). The proximity of the camps and villages and the raiding of Indian villages suggest contamination was already a very real threat (and imported slaves brought their diseases too, like a dangerous form of malaria, to add to this precarious situation; *ib.*: 265). After all, epidemics frequently ravaged what deceptively are called *isolated* peoples.

[xvi] This is true in all layers of society. Ricardo Franco, the man sent at the end of the century by the captain general to map the Chapada dos Parecis and the

headwaters of rivers like the Sararé and the Juruena and always lived and traveled in the interior, remained unmarried but had two children with a Terena companion (Hemming 1995: 466).

[xvii] This anthropologist guided Price through his first moves in the field and later provided access to the village where he had just finished his own studies. They published one article together (Price and Cook 1969) but I never discovered anything else published by him. Neither does the Nambikwara expert Marcelo Fiorini (personal communication 2001). This is very unfortunate as the man studied the Nambikwara religion and seems to have a thorough knowledge of the culture.

[xviii] Even as stone axes were the most common. Presumably they obtained these instruments from rubber tappers on the lower rivers who advanced northward at the impulse of the rubber boom. These contacts usually meant enmity; a short time before Rondon's entry in the region rubber gatherers perpetuated a massacre on a river high on the northern part of the Parecis Plateau and in the direction of the Papagaio River (cited in Price 1972: 24). Lévi-Strauss confirms this river as the border between the two ensembles of Nambikwara and Paresi but later the Nambikwara peoples in this border region lost much land and its fragments were recollected in Utiarity.

[xix] Price opens the article with the phrase that "*Few people are entirely without history*" (Price 1983b: 129). This remark he would never have made in the current anthropological climate and I am sure he did not mean to say that the Indians only entered *history* when hit by the people who would elevate *history* as the major explanation of the changes in their own society. Recently, the anthropologist Melatti reminded his public in a lecture of how his title of a early talk of *how the Kraho entered history* provoked a befriended colleague to imagine a long line of Indians at a ticket office buying a ticket to *enter history* (Melatti 2002: 206). Actually, Melatti felt the lack of possibility to reconstruct history with any semblance of correspondence to the truth. He also encountered a class of narratives of a more historical content, most about war. They were published after his major work on interethnic contact.

[xx] As he is much more familiar with the Southern Nambikwara set, his map is conservative with respect to the Northern cluster. In fact, from the routes discussed, the Portuguese did not cross their main lands in the North. Here he calls them under the more certain designation of Tamaré (Price 1983b: 130).

[xxi] In a note Price explains that the narrator Américo differentiated them from the Nambikwara people of the same name. He refers to his very early co-authored

article (Price and Cook 1969: 690-1): the term *nì ya lhó sú* means *owners of the land* and is given as the self-designation of the Manduka (later Price never again speaks of self-naming as the Nambikwara do not name themselves in this way).

[xxii] An apparent slight problem with this assertion concerns the Nambikwara predilection to live in the open savannas within the more forested areas. The forest, on the other hand, protects against easy detection while the open inhabited areas provide an open space to scan and perceive a foreign advance. Both circumstances facilitate evasion in their own way. Also, small savanna-like areas interrupt the forest where the predilection for open space can realize itself.

[xxiii] Significantly he does not cite any narrative from his major fieldwork with the Kithaulu, who now live in the large Nambikwara Indigenous Territory on the Parecis Plateau. FUNAI officials confirm that some of the peoples inhabiting this land are not only regionally called *Nambikwara* but also feel entitled to be the Nambikwara *par excellence*. In a well written, concise and unfortunately rather unknown article by Price, the excellent summary of the lifestyle of the Nambikwara applies much more to the Savanna than to the Valley. At the same time he is very much aware of the differences in culture and language and of, as he reminds the reader, the arbitrariness of the *ethnic* label (Price 1981a).

[xxiv] Price (1972) first thought the Nambikwara were firmly established as horticulturalist, like when the myth of origin distinguishes between theirs and acquired plants and consequently divides traditional and new plants. Later he questioned the presumption based on a report that in the Guaporé Valley the myth does not exist and there is no horticulture. However, Santos (2000: 21), the most experienced agent among the Sararé, confirms the mythical narrative here. I will come back to this question as Price later reviewed his own position again when discovered why the other Valley peoples interrupted horticulture.

[xxv] One might ask if the obviously extensive environmental knowledge also implied in some sort of conscious intervention towards these parameters, just like the Kayapó and Ka'apor of the studies of Posey and Balée. A remark by Serafim (2000: 133) on the Wasusu evinces this possibility. He observed how a mother showed her child an edible plant growing along the path in the forest, a plant said to have been planted by her ancestors. In other words, there exists the possibility of an active management of forestry resources outside of the far more visible round gardens of horticulture.

[xxvi] The Indian policy, if one may call that the historical accumulation of contradictory and revisionist laws, always seems to have suffered from insufficient means to be implemented as proposed. This continues today and is

evident in FUNAI's funding shortage. This correlates to the value and political weight attributed to the *problem*.

[xxvii] The published inaugural speeches and reports of the presidents of the province run from 1837 until about the end of the Empire. I discuss the part I have access to.

[xxviii] This manuscript does not specify how far the distinction between these different branches is based on the settler's notions or on any divisions recognized by the Bororo themselves. The eastern branch (currently known as Bororo) used a specific name for itself but the other two, Plains and Cabeçal, are very much ethnographically unknown.

[xxix] Price's ex-collaborator and foremost expert on the Sararé, Arioaldo Santos, did not doubt the permanent occupancy of the southern Valley, but he read only the thesis and not about the posterior doubts and reconsideration (Santos 2000).

[xxx] Some of this translation is somewhat difficult to read and subject to revision as this concerns a manuscript and not a transcribed and published report. It is available at <http://wwecrl-jukebox.uchicago.edu/bsd/bsd/u427/000063.html> (accessed in 2001). All other related documents discussed in this section may be found at this site, too, from Pimenta Bueno onward.

[xxxi] Map apud Ferreira (1885) and reproduced in Santos (2000: 12). The president also mentioned the persistent *hostilities* by the Cabaçal Bororo and their obstruction of the *beautiful pastures*. Here security measures were taken and a proposal to settle them by attracting the Indians with *gifts* was implemented. This method of *attraction* does have a respectable history. The ecological conflict is evident.

[xxxii] Therefore Santos suggests the deliberate effort on the part of the Indians to elevate the smoke screen of a nomadic lifestyle. In fact, strenuous efforts to conceal the village and gardens and obscure permanency occurred but the notion of nomadic people does not seem to be an indigenous idea. The Wasusu today, for instance, are not only basically sedentary and horticultural, their frequent *treks* do not exceed a week and someone always remains in the village (Serafim 2000: 44). Of course, this post-contact case should not be thought of as definitely representative of past custom.

[xxxiii] It may be noted in advance that the Sararé in 1968 were also proficient hunters with their bows and arrows: "(...) *on some occasions the meat spoiled before they could it all*." (Price 1996: 427).

[xxxiv] This implies that the Nambikwara originally could have occupied the northernmost part of the Parecis Plateau, at the headwaters of the Camararé

River. Price resolves the oral history statement with the reference to the already established idea of the extension of their lands to include the Cabixi River. Plotting the occupations on the map raises some questions. Firstly, oral history does not agree with this idea and may be more reliable than the hazy seventeenth century sources. Secondly, a corridor from the south to the Cabixi River is still possible while leaving out the northern tip of the Chapada for the Nambikwara.

[xxxv] As Pimenta Bueno said in 1837: "*Many different Nations of Indians wander in the uncultivated and very vast backlands of the Province, to a large measure still not treaded by our part [note the characteristic opposition between us and them]: of some we have news, and about others who certainly do exist we have well founded conjectures. There are 53 diverse Nations recognized, and only 40 of them are domesticated, some have been only heard of*" (1845: 18). He offers a picture of the rivers and immense lands *still under the dominion of these primitive occupants*. Opening these lands should bring all sorts of riches and the proper Indians could serve as *guides*. Thus, Rondon's employment of Paresi guides on Nambikwara land is an act founded on local tradition.

[xxxvi] This group was so closely allied with the Paresi that Rondon assumed they were a branch of that people (see Leopoldi (annex in Pivatta and Bandeira 1983: 174) in which he described the difficult and lamentable history of this people). In the twentieth century, they secured good relations with the Nambikwara do Campo, too (ib.: 59). Later, these relations were characterized as not peaceful, one report cited from Utiariti accuses the Nambikwara of killing and eating the mother of two Iranxe (ib.: 56).

[xxxvii] Still, the connection seems a bit odd, the Iranxe are not known to sleep on the ground, and even if they do not use hammocks, why they would receive the same name is mysterious. The Iranxe, and a related group, the Mynky, do speak an isolate language too but one quite different from Nambikwara. Price's assertion is not very convincing.

[xxxviii] Leverger also noted the decline of mining activities and the appearance of ipecac alongside the growth of cattle raising as one of the few profitable economic activities.

[xxxix] Some years later, there was an attempt to reinvigorate the settlement under the Directorate system and the initiator is given as deceased. The aim to safeguard the traffic on the river is then clearly stated (Penna 1864: 121; on 1862).

[xl] This again refers to the idea already cited to man several posts throughout the countryside and villages to show strength and strike back in case of attack.

The idea is to impress the Indians with restrained power to the point of pressing them into accepting an end to hostilities. This philosophy sometimes also appears in today's discourse.

[xli] The heading *Wild Indians* is fittingly hemmed in between *Notable Facts* (the suicide of a female slave and one free person) and *Prisons* (the best constructed building for this purpose is the one in the capital, the rest are small and need urgent repairs). That is, between the extraordinary of the normal order and the place outside of normal society reserved for those breaking the law.

[xlii] Castelnau wondered about this fact but could not explain it either (cited in Price 1983b: 135).

[xliii] In the case of the Mequen the president admits this lack of acquaintance and manifests surprise at the cause *an inexplicable avoidance makes them flee from civilized people* (Cardoso 1873: 146). They never pursued or assaulted anyone and did not accept any kind of gift left in the forest. This was another tactic to avoid any contamination with a people who likely already experienced *civilized* ways earlier. Again, the rhetoric of incomprehension presupposes the absolute conviction in civilization and *moral and material progress*.

[xliv] Of course it is unnecessary to use canoes to attack boats. The Katitauhlu recently learned some of these skills with the people who live or pass through the vigilance post on the Sararé River.

[xlv] At this time, Mato Grosso, as glimpsed by the references to the dearth of economic growth and population, was generally considered as a backwater of the country. It was sometimes used as a kind of internal exile for military who the central government wanted to punish.

[xlvi] The *West* is a problematic abstraction that unifies a number of subfields (roughly social categories between and within countries) clearly distinguished in their power to define the sociocultural reality of the world (in the sense of the struggle for definition and division of reality of Bourdieu). The notion of the *Western World* is not only an abstraction but is part of the imposition of meaning from a center that defines others as outsiders and then classifies them entirely in relation to itself. Thus the rest of the world is everything the center, according to itself, is not: underdeveloped, foreign, uncivilized, and primitive. This operates by subsuming all diversity within one enormous category; a category defined by what it is not, by absence, and never by a positive quality. This is a vantage point akin to the notion of *Indians* in Brazil. Naturally, the notion of Brazil, although *Western* from its own perspective, remains ambiguous by virtue of its location extraneous to the center. Appropriate in a way, for it stands midway between the Indians and

the civilized center. The elite and the state have always considered Brazil to be part of *European civilization* currently translated as *Western* and constantly imagined ways to actively promote this belief and sentiment. Hence the education of their own and other peoples.

[xlvi] The only way to accommodate both processes in one mode of expansion would be to suppose the rapid retreat of the Paresi-Cabixi and their replacement by Nambikwara before conquest.