

Land conflict in Brazil – Support needed NOW

Kariri-Xocó Indigenous People fight for survival and their rights

Corporate media, big media, mass media, alternative media, state controlled media, free media, rightwing media, leftwing media, liberal media..., different labels and still they have something in common: When it comes to Indigenous Peoples they don't mention them, much less their centuries-long plight and fight for survival and their human rights.

Let's take the example Brazil.

A land that, when "discovered" by Portuguese, Spanish, French and other European sailors (following older, Asian, traders who had left their route knowledge and maps for the not so inventive Europeans), was described by the arrivers as "paradise".



Because of its inhabitants mainly. Who, according to the first Europeans around, were living in total individual freedom (instead of serfdom), in a state of plenty both naturally and culturally (instead of scarceness, hunger and controlled ignorance) and in a state of impeccable health and happiness (instead of the plague and other pests and guilt and corruption).

Quite a few of the sailors decided instantaneously to not board their ships for the return trip (to European hell) anymore. And were welcomed mostly by the

Native Peoples, traditionally very strong and open absorbers and integrators of individuals from other cultures.

Half a millennium later, the Europeans-turned-Creoles have turned everything upside down and are having it their way (again). Serfdom and striking poverty (class and/or racial society orders with abysmal differences between the very rich and the very excluded), monocultures both *in Nature* (single crop agrofascism from horizon to horizon) and *in Culture* (one-way hibernation mass culture via TV), all-out corruption and (thus) violence, diseases without medical assistance, administered mass ignorance, and life in general as a plight (again) for the majority of the people living in Brazil. Or, rather, in Brazilian hell.

The once ~5 to 6 million Indigenous People are down to less than 1 million (and only half of them living within Indigenous communities, the other half dwells in urban shanty towns). And those brave survivors of a genocide machine of half a millennium are still being brutalized to the max. Yet, the media, your media, the one you let work your brains, reports nothing on it. Super-bowls, Standard & Poor ratings, and mega-lies like the one of the "War on Terrorism" are considered more important for your disinformation menu.

With journalists having mostly become active prostitutes who sell/cater to the best payers, or corporate slaves writing under the whip of/for the bosses, or self-proclaimed "critical" urban office-writers at best, writing on real down-to-earth situations and occurrences in hinterlands they have never seen or experienced and much less assimilated.

I know what I say. I have been with the Indigenous Peoples occupied and brutalized by and within Brazil (Paraguay and other American countries) for the last two decades. And if you hear something about these peoples and their situation in the media it is either plain lies, mostly planted by big business and their governments, or bla-bla-bla of people who, at best, have met an Indigenous person or community once and take the rest out of their fantasy (and/or cultural superiority complex).

The third week of March, 2015, I have spent with the Kariri-Xocó people in the northeastern state of Alagoas. We are very much acquainted with each other, since I visit them and do occasional works with them for over ten years.

I was called in emergency. Since yet another massacre loomed. In a 515-year-long row of massacres against the Indigenous Peoples "of" (rather: caught within) Brazil.

What had happened? What had led to the possible imminence of yet another spree killing?

"Just" the ordinary Brazilian story. That repeats itself over the years and places. That is, so to say, common place.

In the year 2007, after 507 years of being hunted down, enslaved, stripped of their possessions and sheer humanity, prohibited to speak their language and killed at the spot for practicing their cultural rituals, the few remaining Kariri-Xocó people finally were granted a small reserve by the state. 5,069 hectares on the northern side of San Francisco River, (by car) roughly an hour and a half west of the rivers Atlantic mouth.



They thus became part of the contemporary collection of success fairy tales of governments and journalists (of the above-mentioned kind) and became at the same time the preferred rhetorical target of the Brazilian agrofascists (the strongest group and lobby in Brazil today, controlling both the executive and the legislature and most of the "political" parties, see <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2014/10/31/18763567.php> and <http://dissidentvoice.org/2013/11/brazils-true-order-and-progress-story/>), who repeat tirelessly their slogan "too much land for unproductive and obsolete Indians" (with the clear and little veiled objective of creating a nationwide climate for a rapid final solution to the "Indian problem").

Why "success fairy tales"?

Because *in fact* the 503 Kariri-Xocó families (roughly 3,000 people) have only 650 hectares in their hands, or only 12,8 % of the little what they have received (back) on paper in 2007.

The "other" 4,419 hectares (or 87,2 %) continue occupied by *posseiros*, land owners who had achieved – legally or illegally (the latter is more frequent in Brazil) – land titles prior to the declaration of the Indigenous Reserve and have to be compensated by the state according to law. Something that in reality almost never takes place. Due to overall governmental inertia. And what creates an ever more bellicose climate between the Indigenous Peoples and the land owners all over Brazil. (As it is intended it seems.)



And also exactly as it happens in other conflict locations in Brazil it is the biggest land owner of the *posseiros*, the squire, who is most interested in conflict/final solution. After all they profit well, often for decades, with the occupied land, especially by cattle rising, and selling meat to the US, Russia, China...

In the concrete case of the illegal occupation and exploration of Kariri-Xocó territory it is a *latifundiário* called Adelmo Perreia, who occupies alone over 50% of the "Indigenous Territory" (apart from his other possessions all over the state of Alagoas and the neighbor state of Sergipe).

When the Kariri-Xocó community on February 27th, after more than seven years of asking, pleading and waiting submissively in vain on the government, the Federal Bureau of Indigenous Assistance (FUNAI), the Federal Police and the Judiciary to *de facto* hand over the paper territory and thus give them the real means to plant, reforest and survive in dignity and accordance with their culture, decided to briefly block the highway that leads through their territory and that various state capitals along the northeastern coastline (Recife, Maceió,

Aracajú, Salvador), Adelmo Perreira immediately employed a group of heavily armed gunmen (some 40 according to Indigenous scouts) on “his” illegally occupied chunk of land inside the Indigenous Reserve to make sure that no attempt of reintegration by the Natives could take place without bloodshed. Furthermore he came up with an interim injunction document from a judge from the state of Pernambuco that considers illegal the declaration of the Indigenous Reserve “because there are no Indians on the respective land” (kept Indian-free by gunmen)!



That shows perfectly how much of the rule of law really exists in Brazil.

Firstly, there is no juridical means left against the Indigenous Reserve. It was a Supreme Court decision. Last instance.

Secondly Indigenous Territories are federal affairs, and not state affairs. Much less the ones of a state (Pernambuco) which is not the state where the Territory is located and/or the supposed breach of law was committed (Alagoas).

Rich and politically backed people can do anything they want in this country. Kill, steal, enslave, destroy communities and the environment, illegally profit, hold private armies..., everything goes.

While the 515-year-long victims of the genocide promoted by invading Europeans and their Creole descendents continue without any rights nor protection against the former. And no media whatsoever (see above, the beginning of this report) cares or dares to inform about the truth in Brazil (and all other countries) with Indigenous Peoples still alive against all odds and

resisting ethnocide and genocide in the name of "progress" being brutalized at will.

The Kariri-Xocó people have now, on March 04, started to reintegrate one small piece of their continuously occupied land by the means of peaceful unarmed occupation. They made a *retomada* (take-back) of one of the plots occupied by a *posseiro*.



They, hundreds of women and men, babies, children, adults and elderly alike, are now there for the third week in very difficult conditions (no drinking water, no sanitary facilities, no protection but their own, very scarce food supply) but determined and strong-minded.

Since they hope that by doing so the authorities will finally too DO SOMETHING to make their paper territory become a real territory at last.

Yet, the media once again ignores their struggle and nobody in Brazil has heard of it. And the federal government and FUNAI and the judiciary continue their nothing-can-be-done game pointing their fingers at each other. While gunmen are waiting for the fire order against the families that dare to protest for the reintegration of what is rightfully theirs. By common sense, by indigenous and international laws and even by the contemporary Supreme Court decision of Brazil.

Now here comes the final and most important part. YOUR part.

The Kariri-Xocó and all other Indigenous communities in a similar situation (and there are many!) ask you to act in solidarity.



Please phone-call or write (a letter or an e-mail) to the Brazilian representation next to you (embassy, consulate) and make your voice heard, ask why rightful Indigenous Land like the one of the Kariri-Xocó People in the state of Alagoas, São Braz and Porto Real do Colégio municipalities, continues occupied by illegal land owners without any action taken against.

Ask why big landowners can illegally assemble gunmen gangs (on Indigenous Territories).

Ask why Brazil calls itself a state under the Rule of Law.

Ask for immediate action to protect the Indigenous People and their (human) rights.

In case you are part of one, also ask your Amnesty International, Survival International (...) action group to act on the Kariri-Xocó's behalf now.

And last not least: spread the word please. Use all the social media you can to do so. YOU and YOUR FRIENDS, SISTERS and BROTHERS are the one and only hope for us!

One World – One Love – Many Cultures

*Written by Ardaga aka Huu-té Dschaam Dscheu
Fourth week of March, 2015*

*(All six pictures included were shot at the site of the retomada
During the third week of March, 2015)*