

Contributions to the analysis of the genesis and collective use of the territory in faxinal communities

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Abstract: In this article we present explanatory clues about the genesis, transmission and active maintenance of customs and traditions of collective use of the territory by members of the Faxinal communities. Empirical data were obtained through interviews with residents of two communities located in the central-west region of Paraná. We identified the genesis of this way of life linked to two ethnic groups linked to the original peoples. In addition, we present evidence of how knowledge and social practices were passed on, learned and actively maintained by other social groups that make up what the communities from Faxinal currently are. The analysis highlights the relationships of this tradition with the historical accumulation of Latin American peoples, contrasting with the abstract and colonized interpretations that relate its genesis to European experiences, as well as contributing to the understanding of this way of life from the relationships and practices of social appropriation of nature established in the territory of collective use.

Keywords: Cultural-historical focus, *faxinal* communities, psychology, collective use of territory.

Introduction

The transformation of *Pachamama*, *Abya Yala* or Mãe Terra (Mother Earth) into large estates serving the production of commodities has been the backdrop to the history of the native peoples living in Brazil and Latin America since colonization. The long and constant struggle against the logic of private appropriation of nature and work, which began more than 500 years ago, continues to be waged by various groups, communities and collectives that live in our country and continent. The rich cultural and social diversity of these populations has a common mark: the conception of human being and nature based on the search for equating individual and collective needs, with respect for the limits imposed by laws and natural cycles.

It is a fact that the incessant plunder of wealth in Latin America and the advance in the formation and development of peripheral and dependent capitalism (Marini, 1973) were accompanied by the extermination and/or denial of the various societies and cultures that lived here. Nonetheless, many of them continue to resist oppression and genocide. It is from the cultural accumulation of original peoples, appropriated and transformed by other ethnic-racial groups, that this research will deal with the histories and contexts of people who do not surrender to the *commodification* imposed by the “god” of capital, and groups that resist to maintain other ways of organizing the production and reproduction of community life. In summary, these communities,

whose existence is real and concrete, are the strongest expression that other forms of organizing the relationships of social appropriation of nature – that is, of work – are possible. Furthermore, they prove that the material and immaterial form of production of life – hegemonically presented as unique and omnipotent –, subsumed in the private appropriation of the goods of nature and work, is not the ultimate destiny or end of humanity, but rather a civilizing limit of the continuity of our existence, since it is based on the irrational overexploitation of work and nature as unlimited resources.

In this sense, the study presents explanatory evidence about the genesis, transmission and active maintenance of customs and traditions of collective use of the territory. The empirical data were obtained through interviews carried out with residents of two communities located in the same municipality in the central-west region of Paraná. The survey was conducted between 2016 and 2019 (Struwka, 2019a). During this period, three two-weeks immersions were made in each community – occasions in which the researcher stayed at the homes of the interviewed residents or local leaders in order to follow the families’ work and leisure routine, participate and contribute to both family and community everyday practices and understand their histories and contexts. The conversations-interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim.

We will not identify the name of the municipality where the communities are located, in order to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents. We emphasize that the territories for collective use are still in intense dispute. During the last immersion, in July

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2019, the leaders were being threatened and the territory was at risk of being illegally captured again by a logging company allied with State agencies.

The cultural-historical focus guided the conduct of this investigation, especially the theoretical-methodological construction of Lev. S. Vygotsky. Based on this conception, we consider culture as everything that was developed by human beings, from the first wooden and stone instruments to the meaning making process that give sense to the world to which the subject belongs. Myths and religion are also understood as symbolic instruments. It is thus understood that everything that exists in nature from the direct or indirect intervention of human action is cultural production. Initially, this intervention is not carried out in a planned, conscious or intentional manner, but rather as a strategy for active adaptation to the environment, with the objective of solving problems and difficulties – and with the possibilities found in real and concrete life. Fundamentally, it is from their practices in relation to nature, with other human beings and with the accumulated and systematized cultural and historical background that human beings produce the society and culture to which they belong. In essence, the human being is a cultural being, including biological and physiological aspects (Beatón, 2005, 2015; Marx, 1858/2011, 1846/2007; Vygotski, 1931/2012; Vygotski & Luria, 1930/1996).

It is thus understood that the genesis and development of the psyche (cognition, affection and volition) are products of real and concrete life lived by human beings throughout their development in society. They are essentially a synthesis of the unity between activity and communication that materializes in social or interpersonal relationships, and which is actively appropriated by the subject, through the complex dynamics of attributing meaning to lived experiences (Beatón, 2017; Vygotski 1933/1996). Thus, if we must understand the principles that guide the system of relationships that organize activity and communication in each society – values, ideas, behaviors, actions, beliefs that are valued or rejected in each generation –, it is equally essential to understand how this social organization (conscious or unexplained; planned or spontaneous) influences each subject in the active appropriation of these contents and in the constitution of their uniqueness (Beatón, 2005, 2015).

Thus, we emphasize that affirming the social and cultural nature of the human psyche does not mean falling back on mechanistic and empiricist readings, considering it a direct or linear copy of the context. On the contrary, we reaffirm its unique dynamics, with its own laws, principles and explanations, being (for us) so far better integrated and explained in the law of the genesis of the development of the psyche, mediation and experience – understood as the indivisible unit between the environment and the subject's particularities (Beatón, 2005, 2017; Vygotsky, 1933/1996). These systematizations and explanations must continue to be analyzed and worked on collectively, as bases for the construction of the new

psychology – a concept that will guide the analyses and explanations present in this research.

Characterization of faxinal communities

The Social Mapping of *Faxinais* in Paraná, carried out between 2005 and 2007, identified the presence of 227 *faxinal* communities in the state, with an estimated population of approximately 9,500 families. These communities are distributed in the southeast mesoregion and in the metropolitan region of Curitiba, center-south and center-east regions. Despite the large number of communities mapped, researchers point to the absence of definitive numbers, since it was not possible to carry out the investigation in all regions of the state (Souza, 2008).

Tavares (2008) identified the participation of four social groups that contributed to the formation and development of *faxinal* communities. The first group is composed of the original peoples who occupied southern Brazil, especially those who fled from the Jesuit occupations. The second is made up of men and women, black men and women, who subverted the fate of enslavement by fleeing the farms in search of land where they could live in freedom. The third group is formed by peasants who managed to escape the massacre produced by the Contestado War, a conflict that took place on the Santa Catarina plateau between 1912 and 1916, whose reason was the usurpation, by the Brazilian State, of land already occupied by peasants to be donated to the multinational company Lumber (Tonon, 2002). The last group to join the Faxinal communities was that of European immigrants. Coming mainly from Eastern Europe, in greater numbers from Ukraine and Poland, in addition to the Portuguese, Italians and Germans, these immigrants were brought by the Brazilian State with the mission of “whitening” the country and producing cultural and technical development, given what was understood as “backwardness” – which was related to the culture of blacks and *caboclos* who inhabited the south of the country (Moura, 1988).

These groups are heterogeneous and present particularities in the relationship with the territories of common use, depending on the conditions and interests of the group involved. In this sense, it is not possible to generalize the history of formation of faxinal communities as something homogeneous in all regions, nor to deny the contradictions and conflicts that exist between ethnic-racial groups, as we will see in the analysis of this research.

Common use of the territory, called breeding or *faxinal*, stands out among the fundamental characteristics of this way of life. In this space, families build their houses, raise animals on the loose and extract natural resources, such as yerba mate, pine nuts, wood, etc. These activities are their main means of livelihood. In areas of collective use, native forest is maintained and managed through extractivism. In addition to the territory for

collective use, part of the families have small areas to plant cereals, tubers and other crops, used in family food, as a complement to animal feed, to sell to traders or for community exchanges. The dynamics of production of these foods differ from community to community, and agreements on access to and use of natural goods present in the territory of collective use change (Tavares, 2008).

Other particularities of this way of life involve the exchange of workdays among residents, both in production and in maintaining the territory for collective use; adapting to free-range animal husbandry and maintaining the forest; and the possibility of living and using the collective territory without having title to or ownership of the land, especially when there are relatives, friends or close people and families living in the territory of collective use (Tavares, 2008).

Based on these particular forms of appropriation of natural assets, in 2005, the faxinal communities were placed in the category of traditional peoples and communities – a categorization that opened up possibilities for them to formally recognize their territories as of collective use and possession, as a form of title to land hitherto non-existent in Brazil.

Hegemonic readings on the origin of the faxinal communities

As for the explanations about the genesis of these customs and traditions, materialized in the territories managed by the families that live in the *faxinal* communities, we identified several studies that focused on this theme; we will highlight those that we consider most relevant. Before approaching them, however, we believe it is necessary to make a critical analysis of studies on different forms of collective appropriation of common goods, especially of territory and land, in Brazil. We found a limit in the historical analysis of common use lands, as in a significant part of the research the interpretations begin in the period of colonization or division of the hereditary captaincies (1534) – as if there was nothing relevant before this period or, even more serious, as if the accumulation of societies and cultures that already existed here had not been appropriated by different social groups, including those that even today resist private property and large estates. Due to the space limitations of this article, we will focus only on explanations and interpretations about the communities surveyed, emphasizing that they were also influenced by these conceptions.

One of the first works carried out on the *faxinais* is that of Horácio Martins de Carvalho (1984), who attributed the formation of the common breeding site to the historical result of the creativity of workers who had the condition of small agrarian bourgeoisie of the region. The relationship between the formation of communities and the presence of an agrarian bourgeoisie was strongly criticized due to theoretical mistakes and the transposition of European model analyses. Subsequently, Chang's (1988)

investigations related the beginning of the formation of *faxinais* with the *tropeirismo* fall and the rise of yerba maté extraction at the late 19th century. For the author, *caboclos*, farmers and settlers were the protagonists in the formation of these communities. Gevaerd Filho (1989), on the other hand, seeks to explain the beginning of the faxinal communities by comparing their agreements to the formation of the right to *compascus* (common grazing) present in Portugal. With a different interpretation, Nerone (2000) will also make use of the customs and traditions present in Portugal, but the author will locate the roots of the faxinais in the Iberian Peninsula. For her, the history of the community tradition of the Germanic and Roman peoples is the explanatory sign of the formation of the communities present in Brazil. In her words, “it is clear that land use in the Faxinal System does not constitute an original Brazilian model derived from other historical formations, but the evidence leads to the interpretation that its genesis is an Iberian heritage, adapted to regional circumstances” (Nerone, 2000, pp. 37-38).

The research with the greatest scope and relevance in this theme was that of Tavares (2008). From a significant systematization of information, the author points out the genesis of communities from the alliance between the culture of two peoples: the indigenous fugitives from the peonage system, from the Jesuit missions or reductions and from the enslavement exercised by the São Paulo *bandeirantes*; and runaway African blacks who did not form *quilombos*. For the author, the faxinal culture is a formation based on the union between the following practices: (1) lands of common use, carried out by the indigenous people and learned in the Jesuit reductions; (2) animal husbandry, carried out by fugitive former enslaved Africans who learned it on the large cattle ranches on the Curitiba plateau; (3) yerba maté extraction, carried out by both social groups.

If, on the one hand, we recognize the effort of systematization and the historical analyses carried out by the author, especially for recognizing the role of native peoples in the genesis of customs and traditions passed on and learned in the faxinal communities, on the other, we point out some limits in his analyses. Linking the learning of the collective use of the territory by the original peoples to the Jesuit reductions seems to us to be a mistake. After all, how did the different millenary societies and cultures that occupied America and Brazil live? Should the most original and genuine aspects of the original peoples' culture also be attributed to the colonizers' deeds?

As we have already pointed out, we consider that these analyses and interpretations are related to the denial of the societies and cultures that lived in Brazil and Latin America, together with abstract interpretations based on the history of Europe. This analysis is evident in the way the author begins his final considerations, when he states: “The practice of common land in Brazil has its

historical origins in the Iberian Peninsula. In Portugal, in the communal form of the Baldios, with the common use of land and its natural resources by Portuguese peasants” (Tavares, 2008, p. 731). In this interpretation, it is not only the Faxinal communities that have their genesis in the “overseas” continent, as the author points out: “with this, it is possible to conclude that the various forms of land in common use, called Terras de Preto, Lands of Indians, Terras Soltas, Fundo de Pasto and others, have part of their historical origins in Portugal” (Tavares, 2008, p. 731).

We draw attention to this issue, given that the gravity of these interpretations lies in the fact that they continue to be hegemonic – and this alerts to the urgency of reviewing our historical roots, based on the particularities of Latin America. The denial and invisibility of the cultural accumulation of original peoples reaffirms, once again, the need to advance in the production of knowledge from our history and the original and genuine experiences produced here, overcoming the logic of the ideological “centrality” of Europe and the U.S.

Genesis and collective use of territory: analysis from the cultural-historical approach

Our investigation into the genesis of customs and traditions of collective use of the faxinal territories has been built since 2014. For six years, I have been in contact with families from communities located in different municipalities in Paraná. From these different experiences, built on the basis of a lot of dialogue, two elements were repeated in observations and reports. The first was the ethnic-racial diversity in the composition of communities, since, as described above, various ethnic-racial groups “integrated” into the collective use of territories. The second was the lack of explanations on the part of residents about the history of the formation of faxinal customs and traditions, as well as the principles that guide and organize this particular way of carrying out actions, behaviors and practices. The responses received, repeated in most communities, were: “*it is a custom learned from the elders*”; “*we learned that way from the old ones, and keep doing it*”; “*When I was born, it was like that*”; “*ah, but that comes from way back, it’s something from the elders*”.

Along with these explanations, reports of the experiences of loss of territories were linked, especially through attempts and effective grabbing of common use lands and their transformation into private property. The negative experiences, referred to as “*land individualization*”, were related to the senses and meanings linked to the losses, both of basic living conditions and of people who had to forcibly migrate from the community. Attempts and executions of land grabbing and privatization of territories, undertaken by private companies with State support, also generated

a lot of violence, impoverishment of families and submission to forced or wage labor. This context produced negative experiences that started to conform needs, motives, interests, emotions and meanings related to the maintenance of the collective use of the territory.

We understand, therefore, that the explanations given by the residents about the genesis and maintenance of the collective use of the territory or its customs and traditions, linked to family heritage and strengthened by the negative experiences of land privatization and overexploitation of labor, contribute for subjects’ ability to face the challenges of real and concrete, everyday life. Fundamentally, ideas, interpretations and explanations are related to the constitution of volition (will, strength, desire) that strengthens and guides actions in defense of their customs and traditions related to common use. However, we also understand that it is necessary to advance in the analysis and explanation of this complex and rich historical and cultural construction – especially regarding the genesis and development of this way of life, mutually determined by principles, ideas and conceptions materialized in their social relations, actions, behaviors and practices.

We emphasize that the reason why explanations about the genesis and development of customs and traditions are related to concrete experiences is, essentially, one of the expressions of the intentional inequality produced by the class division that prevails in our society. This stratification prevents access of the subaltern class to the most basic rights, such as land, work, education and quality health, and to the organization of cooperative productive processes with technologies adapted to the needs of each job and region, etc. In relation to formal school education, for example, we found that a significant part of adults and elderly people living in these communities is illiterate or semi-literate and, sadly, we see the low quality of education offered to young people, adolescents and children.

In constant confrontation with this context of denial and impediment to the appropriation and conceptual elaboration of the history and epistemology that guide them, we found Ianá (fictitious name), an 83-year-old elderly woman with great wisdom. She is referred to by the residents as an expert in the stories and tales of the region and the indigenous peoples. Daughter of the only teacher in the community, she had to become an educator so that the children would not be left without classes, a process that occurred untimely due to an illness that her father developed and that prevented her from continuing with this work. So, at age 14, Ianá took over teaching and other tasks of care for the school and students. Therefore, unlike most residents, the descriptions, ideas, feelings and explanations expressed by Ianá were influenced and formed through reading and writing and by living with her father, who also a reader and was interested in history. We emphasize this point because we understand that reading and writing produce significant changes in

the constitution of the psychic system and enable the subject to relate to reality, history and himself otherwise, through the use of concepts (Vygotsky, 1931/1996).

During the dialogues-interviews, Ianá reported about the “encounter” between the different groups that make up her family tree. A part of her ancestors comes from a group that came from another region, they are called *paulistas* (meaning “from São Paulo”). The other part is formed by people who already lived in the territory where the community is located and were part of the diverse composition of the original peoples. The encounter and the construction of coexistence, as historically occurred in Brazil and Latin America, involved submission, violence and the capture of women, their bodies and knowledge. One of these stories, reported by Iana, is about her husband’s grandmother. Ianá met her at an advanced age and characterizes her as a woman with a distinguished accumulation of knowledge and wisdom: “I still met her, you know?... She knew about everything, whatever I asked her, she knew, the type of plants, medicines, she knew everything” (Interview granted on 03/02/2018). About the beginning of the story, Iana shares¹:

Researcher: And did he [father] talk about this relationship?

It was not easy, this one ... I told you today, the deceased,... who was my husband’s grandfather, there was the São Pedro river that runs down here, [she mentions the name of a community member who was with us] you know very well what I’m talking about, which is close to her father’s house, and then the deceased ... went down to swim, it seems that there were several [indigenous people], where the waterfall falls, right? And the deceased was young, from the Indians, so she went down to take a bath. And she had a carnation flower in her hair, always when she went down, that’s why they named her [quotes the Indian’s name], but actually, in the Indian language, I didn’t even know what her name was. So what, the deceased ... started lusting after her, you know? But when she realized there were people close to her, she would run, you know? That land of the alteirão, [quotes the person’s name], that there used to be the village [tekoá] of the Indians, the taba [tekoá]! Which is several houses together, right? The Indians’s village too, they say. So then she ran from him! And he became interested, lusting after her: “how am I going to get to talk to this Indian? She runs from me”. They say he went and hid in a stone hut, he’s been lusting for a long time, and on that day, you know? And she had a whistler around her waist, because that whistler of theirs, when they felt in trouble, they whistled there

and you listened wherever you were, right? Then he went and got her, that is to say, he kidnapped her, nowadays it’s kidnapping, right? He took the Indian woman and ran with the Indian woman, because when he saw she had that thing around her waist, he already took it from her waist, he left her without a weapon, right? And then there was their house over here, which belonged to the deceased ... his father. Up there, where we had a camp [of the occupation], further up, where the land was, where did they bought, right? Then it’s said there was their house and he came and slammed the doors and closed her inside the bedroom, but he said when she was furious, God forbid! But I say to you, it wasn’t like that, their living together; it was very hard, because they [Guaranis and Kaingang] were the owners of the land, right? They didn’t want other people to enter. Then, they say, he locked her inside the room, brought her a plate of food, but she did not want to eat at all... Our food was not adequate, right? She was screaming and kicking, God forbid in there, he said she was a wild beast. She had a bed, everything was there, but she, God forbid, if she saw them that way. Then time passed and passed, then one day she found her whistle there, he took her whistle and forgo it, she was taming herself to eat something, she wasn’t going to starve anyway, then she took it and whistled that stuff, God forbid! He said the chief came, he’s the boss, right? And the whole bunch! Then the man came out and asked for it, right? The man knew, right? He asked them for a peace sign, he didn’t want to fight with them, right? But they came to kill them all. She whistled inside the house of the old ranch, she whistled and they got there, they went all the way up there. They all went up there, lucky that his house was a good house. Then he told them he wanted to get married, it seems that he gave some sign to them there that he wanted peace and wanted to get married. Then they treated the marriage at great cost, they threw a party, he told them, you know? The late father. They had a party and they don’t dance like the other gang dances, they dance in circles. They danced around the couple who were going to get married. They fished for the party, you know? They made their food, and the deceased [quotes her grandfather’s name] made his too, so that, each one had a custom, right? He roasted a piglet and everything, and they did it, they passed it in a sieve, right? It was like a polenta they made, you know? Maize, to eat with fish. He said that when they had a party, God forbid how much they fished, you know? But then they got married, the deceased [quotes her grandfather’s name] married her, but because he took her by force, right. (Iana, interview granted on 03/02/2018)

The report is one of the many cases in which violence and force were used to bring groups closer together and for the “coexistence” of groups advancing

¹ The names mentioned in the interviews were removed in order to prevent the identification of the interviewees. We will insert ... to identify the deletion of that information.

on the territory occupied by the original peoples, as already analyzed by different researchers, such as Cunha (1992), Martins (1997) and Ribeiro (1968). For us, this report proves not only the capture and rape of indigenous women, but also reaffirms our thesis on the existence of the interrelationships that ensured the passage, appropriation and recreation of the ancient cultural accumulation of indigenous peoples to other ethnic-racial groups. In this case, the legacy passed on and learned was circumscribed to the limits exercised by domination and oppression relations. However, this should not be ignored as fundamental references for the particular and subsequent way of organizing relations in the Faxinal territories.

Ianá describes that much of what she knows about the region's biodiversity was learned from her grandmother or from the knowledge that she and other people passed on, shared and exchanged, and points to the original peoples as a reference. During the walks through the backyard, showing the variety of herbs, vegetables and fruits cultivated, Ianá constantly states that one of the main characteristics of these peoples was the care, selection, conservation and reproduction of seeds and animals. For her, this custom is linked to the way they organized the production and reproduction of collective life, actively adapted to the management of biodiversity in each region, source of their survival and food sovereignty. She also explains how these knowledge and practices were passed on and learned and are maintained among the community's residents.

Researcher: How did they [indigenous people] influence?

It continues until now! There is hardly anyone who doesn't care. There is in some corner, but it is someone who comes from somewhere else, right? No longer used to our custom. But we were used to taking the seed out... Everything, my mother-in-law, all the good seeds, she took them out to plant. For sometimes we needed it, a neighbor needed it because it didn't work for him, right? She shared it... All I know is from the Indians. Because the Indians, they stopped for a while in one place and, suddenly, in the next harvest, they were somewhere else. Why? They carried the seeds! All of them... I can't go on without taking a seed. If I cut a pumpkin, I remember: I have to take out the seed, because this is already inside my head, it came from our family, that we need it! I see people sucking orange, which is not of our quality, and throwing away the orange seeds! Throwing the pumpkin seed! I say "this one doesn't have Indian blood!". I keep them, I keep them, I plant them, I exchange them with the neighbors. Because that's how you maintain it, right? We take care, exchange and also receive from others. (Iana, interview granted on 03/02/2018)

We identified two central clues in the reports presented. The first is the presence of native peoples' culture in the actions, behaviors and practices of the community. The second, united with the previous one, is sharing and exchanging as central principles in the organization of relationships between people, in the management of nature and in the organization of work. These principles are materialized in the daily practice of sharing seeds, fruits, seedlings and animals – in order to guarantee the maintenance of diversity and food sovereignty, as pointed out by Ianá – but also in the practice of collective use of the territory. If on the one hand it is essential to highlight the reference to the culture of the Kaingang and Guarani peoples, on the other hand we also emphasize that sharing and solidarity are maintained and recreated as essential and current strategies in solving the problems faced in real and concrete life, since, as pointed out by Ianá, they guarantee food diversity, in addition to preventing and solving the problems generated by pests, plagues and other setbacks.

Rosa, who lives in another faxinal community, located in the same city as Ianá, points out the sense of sharing seeds and seedlings:

Researcher: What is the point of sharing the seeds, Rosa?

Rosa: Ah, but that's how we learned to do and do. See, if I have a seed, I share it with my neighbor, with that one and that one. I have and so does he! And if it happens that mine is no good, his will be, and that's how we move things forward. Oh, there are plenty of stories here about pests that ended up killing the sowing and an acquaintance from the other place bringing it to us. (Rose)

Researcher: Who did you learn these things from, Rosa?

But that's my father's! He was bugre [ethnic-racial characterization of those who have ancestry from native peoples], you know, I told you that his mother was one of those Indians caught in the woods. Surely this already comes from blood, right? He had such a love of nature, girl! Wherever he went he brought some seed. In the little land down there, it was beautiful to see, there were all kinds of plants, some that you have here, I brought them from there. So, that comes with us, comes from that part of him. (Rosa, interview given on 01/27/2018)

Like Ianá, Rosa carries in her family history various forms of violence, starting with the kidnapping of indigenous women. She also brings with her knowledge, feelings and practices that refer to the cultural accumulation of these peoples – ways of experiencing and organizing the work, learned from the influence of her father and which were maintained and recreated

by her and by other people, who continue to carry out these ways of relating to nature and to others, reiterating that these are ways of doing evaluated and validated in everyday life, as she herself points out about sharing.

We will present another excerpt from the interview with Ianá that highlights the essential influence of the culture of the original peoples in the genesis of the collective use of the territory. It is important for us to advance in the analysis that despite the violence and oppression present in the “encounter” and “coexistence” between these groups, the relationships, communication and practices carried out enabled the appropriation of the accumulated and systematized culture over thousands of years and continue to be the strategy used for the production and reproduction of the social life of the residents who occupy these territories.

Researcher: And in relation to land use, did they [father and grandmother] tell you what it was like?

It was in common use! Always, these lands there, they were in common use. To grow, to plant. There was no such thing as “no, that land is measured there by so and so”, like there is today, right? First of all, I am going to clear that land there, I would go there, cleared and planted and that’s it, there was no owner! Now, this was the Indians’ custom, they did everything collectively, labor, food, their house, it was all like that, common. (Iana, interview granted on 03/10/2019)

In this sense, contrary to how the research presented in the previous item explains, Ianá’s report allows us to make another analysis and link, objectively and historically, the genesis of this form of appropriation of nature to the original peoples, in this case, the Guarani and Kaingang who lived in the region. To corroborate the analysis, we resorted to the anthropological studies developed by Souza (2002) on both ethnicities. We note similarities between the way these peoples organized themselves – economically and politically – and the faxinal communities. Of the possible approaches, we can mention the economy aimed at meeting family needs, understood as the needs of the group, and the central position of food in production. Another similarity refers to the organization of work relationships, in the form of a collective effort and through collective practices. According to the author, “village consumption and circulation also become viable, underpinning an intricate political-economic system based on principles of benefits and considerations, as well as reciprocity” (Souza, 2002, p. 226).

Another point of support for the explanatory evidence pointed out is the records of the presence of the aforementioned ethnic groups in the southern region of Brazil, which also contributes to overcoming the historically reproduced ideology that the lands of the Third Plateau were not occupied and were part of a “demographic void” – a “void” that needed to be occupied by the “conquering pioneers”. Against this colonizing history, we rely on the research of Noelli and Lúcio Mota (1999), which brings the

reports written by the Spaniard Álvar Cabeza de Vaca, in 1542. The document confirms the presence and organization of the Guarani and Kaingang peoples where the investigated communities are currently located. Furthermore, it is the first report to present the political and cultural organization of these groups. In the words of the authors: “there was a political division between these various groups of the same cultural matrix, politically organized into chiefdoms (a group of villages under the leadership of a prestigious chieftain, who dominated certain portions of well-defined territories)” (Noelli & Mota, 1999, p. 3).

Along with the confirmation of the presence and political organization of these groups, the authors draw attention to the alliances made between these peoples and the groups of “whites”, in order to resist the enslavement imposed both by the São Paulo invaders and by the Jesuit reductions – elements which strengthened our position against linking the explanatory evidence of the genesis of the collective use of territory to the learning that took place in the missions. The authors also emphasize that it is necessary to overcome the dichotomous historical analyses of indigenous peoples against whites, as, in the author’s words, “One must consider the European conquering groups and their localized interests; as well as the Guarani and the Kaingang, who were enemies and who, strategically, established alliances between themselves” (Noelli & Mota, 1999, pp. 5-6). For us, these dichotomous analyses, in addition to denying the objective and historical relations of the region and the country between the original peoples and the various social groups that invaded these lands, deny the references to the entire culture accumulated over thousands of years and which was passed on through unequally established relationships, communication and practices.

In summary, we understand that customs and traditions carried out in the faxinal communities are a particular way of relating to people and nature that was produced, passed on and learned through a system of relationships established between different social groups, with the main reference the cultural accumulation of the original peoples – in the case investigated, the Guarani and Kaingang ethnic groups. Throughout history, in different ways and depending on the interests of the groups involved, these customs were maintained and improved by different ethnic-racial groups, including European immigrants who arrived in the late 19th century and early 20th century, especially Polish and Ukrainians. These groups, even though they have ownership and title to the land, use it collectively with the other residents, which proves that this way of organizing the system of social relations is not linked to just one ethnic-racial group, but it is one of the ways, strategies or methods of active adaptation of human beings to the conditions of nature and the social and cultural accumulation available in that context and historical moment.

In this sense, we understand that the relationships and practices carried out in the faxinal communities are mediated

by an accumulation of knowledge about cycles and laws of nature that form ideas, feelings, motivations and a conception in which sharing and care are essential in the relationship that members communities establish with others and with nature. We analyze that this method of organizing relationships, communication and activities produces a pleasant and positive experience in the subjects – based on their own well-being and the well-being of the family, community and nature – and, when implemented, dialectically, is positively validated and produces will, desire and strength to continue being performed in this way. In summary, we understand that these subjects have a method of organizing the production and reproduction of social life based on the quest to balance collective needs (community residents) and care for nature, fundamentally linked to the culture of the original peoples and, despite not being explained and elaborated, they have a particular conception of human being, nature and collective (community), and the non-elaboration of these contents is one of the limits that must be overcome.

We also evidence that the negative experience of transforming natural assets into private property for individual exploitation and accumulation created the need for individuals and communities to organize themselves against land grabbing and the invasion of their territories. One of the expressions of this organization is the denomination and recognition of the social and political identity of being part of the traditional peoples and communities of Brazil (Struwka, 2019b). However, we point out the importance of linking this debate to the genesis and development of a method of appropriating nature, and to the systematization and development of the principles that guide it. It will thereby be possible for subjects themselves to analyze critically what we consider to conform a particular method and epistemology that take place in their relationships, activity and communication. On the other hand, this social and cultural accumulation can contribute to the organization of other experiences of resistance to the privatization of common goods and the overexploitation of work, based on the construction of healthy and respectful relationships with nature and human beings.

Final considerations

The aim of this article was to discuss the explanatory evidence about the genesis, transmission and active maintenance of customs and traditions of collective use of the territory by the subjects that constitute the faxinal communities. From the analysis, we understand that this way of appropriating natural goods is a strategy or method historically developed by the original peoples – which, in the case investigated, are related to the Kaingang and Guaraní ethnic groups. This cultural accumulation was passed on and learned, maintained and actively recreated by other ethnic-racial groups – despite the relationships with the original peoples having occurred, in most cases, unequally and violently. This condition, together with colonialist hegemony and restricted access to critical educational

processes on the history of Brazil and America, continues to keep invisible the importance of native peoples' culture in the social formation of the faxinal and, we would add, Brazilian and Latin American communities.

Furthermore, the explanatory evidence present in this research proves that the development of social, moral and ethical values is not a fixed structure or defined by biological or physiological conditions. What we evidence, with the analysis of empirical data, is that values such as sharing and solidarity were actively learned by each subject, through their real and concrete participation in a system of social relations, communication and practices that were organized from these principles, and, fundamentally, are valued and validated in practice by people living in the territory of collective use. Thus, we reiterate that such values, ideas, explanations, feelings and needs are produced from the influence of family and community relationships, and are part of the practices carried out to solve problems and take advantage of the possibilities present in real and concrete life.

Finally, we point out the importance of advancing in the systematization and critical analysis of how these other ways of organizing community relations and the appropriation of nature are formed and what are the principles that guide them. It is necessary to investigate how and why these groups continue to maintain their customs and protect themselves from the harm caused by private property and the exploitation of other people's work – at least in these "strongholds" that are the territories for collective use.

We thereby do not devote any abstract romanticism that the solution to our social question lies in the original peoples, neither do we ignore the contradictions and limits present in these societies, cultures and customs. On the other hand, we categorically believe that the particularity of these millenary societies will give us essential contributions to continue facing the social inequality produced by the hegemonic mode of accumulation and concentration of wealth. In this sense, it is also a function of psychology to understand how the construction of these educational processes, present in the production and reproduction of community life, produces other ideas, explanations, feelings, awareness, conception that mediate its actions, behaviors and practices.

We are convinced, based on the explanations and analyses of Simón Rodríguez, Karl Marx, F. Engels, J. C. Mariátegui, L. S. Vygotski, Guillermo Arias Beatón and the experiences of these years of research and militancy that, in order to build the so desired new society, we will need make a critical and dialectical synthesis of the cultures originating from *Nuestra América*, from our *Abya Yala* or *Pátria Grande* to guide the use of the best produced in capitalist society. In short, without the knowledge that mediates the principles of respect and care for nature, and without the well-used, humanely used technological development, we will not be able to build our second and definitive independence, a society with equitable and fair distribution of wealth for the satisfaction of human needs.

Contribuições para análise da gênese e uso coletivo do território em comunidades faxinalenses

Resumo: Apresentamos neste artigo indícios explicativos sobre a gênese, a transmissão e a manutenção ativa de costumes e tradições de uso coletivo do território pelos integrantes das comunidades faxinalenses. Os dados empíricos foram obtidos por meio de entrevistas com moradores de duas comunidades, localizadas na região centro-oeste do Paraná. Identificamos a gênese desse modo de vida atrelada a dois grupos étnicos ligados aos povos originários. Além disso, apresentamos evidências de como os conhecimentos e as práticas sociais foram repassados, aprendidos e mantidos ativamente por outros grupos sociais que constituem o que atualmente são as comunidades faxinalenses. A análise evidencia as relações dessa tradição com o acumulado histórico dos povos latino-americanos, contrapondo-se às interpretações abstratas e colonizadas que relacionam sua gênese às experiências europeias, assim como contribui para a compreensão desse modo de vida a partir das relações e práticas de apropriação social da natureza estabelecidas no território de uso coletivo.

Palavras-chave: enfoque histórico-cultural, comunidades faxinalenses, psicologia, uso coletivo do território.

Apports pour l'analyse de la genèse et de l'usage collectif des terres dans les communautés faxinal

Résumé : Cet article analyse la genèse, la transmission et le maintien actif des pratiques et traditions d'usage collectif des terres employé par les Faxinalenses. Les données exploratoires ont été recueillies en menant des entretiens avec les membres de deux communautés, situées dans la région centre-ouest du Paraná. Ce mode vie est issu de deux groupes ethniques descendant de peuples autochtones. Nous examinons comment les connaissances et les pratiques sociales ont été transmises, apprises et activement maintenues par d'autres groupes sociaux qui constituent les communautés faxinal actuelles. L'analyse met l'accent sur la relation entre cette tradition et l'histoire des peuples latino-américains, en s'opposant aux interprétations abstraites et colonisées qui rapportent sa genèse aux expériences européennes. On contribue à comprendre ce mode vie basé sur des relations et des pratiques d'appropriation sociale de la nature, développées dans le cadre d'un usage collectif des terres.

Mots-clés : approche historico-culturelle, communautés faxinal, psychologie, usage collectif du territoire.

Contribuciones al análisis de la génesis y el uso colectivo del territorio en comunidades faxinalenses

Resumen: En este artículo presentamos indicios sobre la génesis, la transmisión y el mantenimiento activo de las costumbres y tradiciones de uso colectivo del territorio, realizada por los integrantes de las comunidades faxinalenses. Los datos empíricos fueron obtenidos por medio de entrevistas realizadas a habitantes de dos comunidades ubicadas en la región Centro-Oeste de Paraná. Identificamos la génesis de este modo de vida vinculado a dos grupos étnicos, relacionados con los pueblos originarios. Además, mostramos evidencias de cómo los conocimientos y las prácticas sociales fueron transmitidas, aprendidas y mantenidas activamente por otros grupos sociales, que constituyen lo que actualmente denominamos "comunidades faxinalenses". El análisis evidencia las relaciones de esa tradición con el acumulado histórico de los pueblos latinoamericanos, contraponiéndose a las interpretaciones abstractas y colonizadas que relacionan su génesis a experiencias europeas, así como contribuye a la comprensión de ese modo de vida a partir de relaciones y prácticas de apropiación social de la naturaleza, realizadas en el territorio de uso colectivo.

Palabras clave: enfoque histórico-cultural, comunidades faxinalenses, psicología, uso colectivo del territorio.

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Received: 01/22/2021

Revised: 4/10/2021

Approved: 07/26/2021