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## **Traditional communities mobilising musical and agri-food cultures for a decolonial resistance-conservation in the Bocaina, Brazil**

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### **Comunidades tradicionais mobilizando culturas musicais e agroalimentares para uma resistência-conservação decolonial na Bocaina, Brasil**

Sumário baseado na Conclusão

Nas áreas costeiras do Brasil, as comunidades tradicionais enfrentam ameaças do desenvolvimento baseado na ‘modernização’. Esse modelo hegemônico vem colonizando suas vidas cotidianas, estigmatizando-as como ameaças à natureza, degradando sua base de recursos naturais, expandindo interesses imobiliários e direcionando seus padrões de produção-consumo para uma economia voltada para o lucro. Esse modelo de modernização repousa sobre um binário natureza/sociedade, justificando as agendas das elites para se apropriar dos recursos naturais ou protegê-los de comunidades ‘retrógradas tradicionais’.

Ao resistir a essas ameaças, alguns grupos tradicionais vêm recuperando e transformando tradições em novas relações solidárias, dentro e entre comunidades, redefinindo assim, identidades coletivas (Almeida, 2004, 2006). Sob o lema geral da justiça socioambiental, o Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) reuniu três grupos tradicionais da Bocaina: indígenas guaranis, quilombolas e caiçaras. Eles desenvolvem sistemas agroflorestais agroecológicos como uma identidade comum, com o lema da FCT, “Conservar é resistir”.

Suas culturas tradicionais e letras de músicas adquiriram significados políticos em torno dessas lutas. Assim, sua identidade étnico-musical expressa resistência contra uma hegemonia política opressora, como em muitos outros contextos conflituosos (cf. O’Connell et al., 2010; Turino, 1993). Em cada comunidade, as tradições musicais foram renovadas por meio de pequenos grupos performáticos, oficinas e educação diferenciada nas escolas. Essas formas desempenham papéis complementares ao incentivo à ampla participação (cf. Turino, 2008). Essa renovação cultural ressignifica suas culturas tradicionais por esforços comuns contra o modelo neocolonial dominante e por caminhos alternativos de desenvolvimento. Embora o modelo dominante tenha provocado conflitos internos, os intercâmbios solidários ajudam a contê-los ou superá-los. Enquanto as três culturas permanecem distintas, as comunidades convergem em atividades conjuntas como agrofloresta, festivais e protestos.

Como tradição de ajuda mútua, o mutirão antigamente ligava as culturas musical e agroalimentar por meio de atividades como colheitas, festas e construção de casas (cf. Diegues, 2005; França Filho, 2011). Conflitos territoriais recentes deram novos significados ao mutirão e às velhas canções, ao mesmo tempo em que estimularam novos, especialmente sobre o racismo neocolonial e a pilhagem de recursos. As letras das músicas têm formas metafóricas, irônicas ou alusivas, expressando relações prazerosas, lúdicas e solidárias. O treinamento musical ajuda os jovens a desenvolver autodisciplina para agir com responsabilidade como membro da comunidade.

As culturas musicais e agroalimentares foram integradas novamente por meio de várias práticas, por exemplo, sistemas agroflorestais, programas de educação etnicamente diferenciados, festivais públicos e Turismo de Base Comunitária. Este último convida os visitantes a se envolverem solidariamente com os anfitriões da comunidade. Juntas, essas atividades mobilizam culturas musicais e agroalimentares para uma resistência-conservação decolonial. Constroem uma cultura composta intercomunitária, um senso mais amplo de pertencimento ao grupo (cf. Zaoual, 2010)e, assim, reforçam mutuamente as reivindicações sobre a terra.

## Contents

Introduction.....	3
1 Perspectives on musical roles.....	3
1.1 Ethnomusicology perspectives: song as environmental politics.....	3
1.2 Decolonial perspectives on development.....	5
2 Bocaina’s territorial conflicts: nature/culture binary versus sociobiodiversity.....	6
3 Guaranís: <i>mboraí</i> .....	8
3.1 <i>Mboraí</i> build youth capacities.....	8
3.2 <i>Mboraí</i> strengthen communal belonging.....	9
4 Quilombolas: jongo and rap.....	10
4.1 Jongo evokes territorial conflicts.....	10
4.2 Campinho da Independência stimulates a revival.....	11
5 Caiçaras: fandango.....	13
5.1 Fandango expresses estrangement.....	13
5.2 Music revival complements solidaristic linkages.....	14
6 Conclusion: composite culture for a decolonial resistance-conservation.....	15
Acknowledgements.....	17
Biographical note.....	17
References.....	18
Figures.....	21

### Abstract

In recent decades Brazil’s traditional communities have faced threats from the prevalent ‘modernisation’ model colonising their everyday lives. In the Bocaina coastal region, the Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) has brought together the three communities around demands for *justiça socioambiental* (socio-environmental justice) through a common identity around agroecological agroforestry and sociobiodiversity. Their musical performance encourages wide participation and strengthens *mutirão* (mutual aid) traditions, thus linking their musical and agri-food cultures. These have been mobilised to conserve natural resources, assert territorial claims, resist dispossession and express a common future among the three communities. Their composite culture contributes to a decolonial resistance-conservation. These roles are illuminated by ethnomusicology and decolonial perspectives.

Key words: decolonial resistance-conservation, Brazil, traditional communities, music-dance performance, socio-environmental justice, agroecological agroforestry, sociobiodiversity, community-based tourism (TBC)

## Introduction

Various traditional communities have gained livelihoods from cultivation and fishing activities in Brazil's coastal areas for several centuries. But in recent decades their resource access has been jeopardized by several changes: faster road access from large cities, real estate speculation and predatory tourism. Conservation Areas have been meant to protect the remaining "nature" from local people. In all these ways, traditional communities have faced dispossession by the dominant modernisation model of development, as promoted by Brazil's governments and large companies.

In Brazil's Bocaina sub-region, southeast of the port city Santos, the Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) has responded to such threats by bringing together groups from three such communities. Their cultural identities have been renewed around the common demand for *justiça socioambiental* (socio-environmental justice), featuring agroecological agroforestry as a development strategy. They have shared their musical and dance cultures in several ways, especially at public festivals and their own celebrations (FCT, 2014, 2016).

This article examines these three communities' struggles through the following questions:

- 1) How do the Bocaina's traditional communities mobilise musical and agri-food cultures?
- 2) How does this mobilisation help to strengthen a common sense of belonging, within and among the three communities?
- 3) How do these activities promote socio-environmental justice through an alternative development pathway, while helping to resist dispossession?
- 4) In these contexts, what roles does music play?

As a summary answer, the three communities mobilise their musical and agri-food cultures for an alternative to the dominant development model. Widespread musical participation complements mutual aid traditions of 'joint cooperative work', widely known as *mutirão*. Beyond being preserved, such traditions have been renewed through inter-community cooperation against the neocolonial modernisation model and for solidaristic alternatives. Together these activities contribute to a decolonial resistance-conservation. Hence music and dance can play a transformative political role, as analysed here through ethnomusicological and decolonial perspectives.

The article is structured as follows: 1) Perspectives on musical roles: resistance, group belonging and sociodiversity; 2) Guaraní's mboraí; 4) Quilombolas' jongo and rap; 5) Caiçaras' fandango. The Conclusion summarises the arguments regarding decolonial resistance-conservation. The author has translated all Latin American sources, some in Spanish and more generally Portuguese-language sources from Brazil.

### 1 Perspectives on musical roles

The case study here provides an entry point into general political roles of music and dance traditions, especially in conflictual contexts. These roles will be analysed by considering ethnomusicology perspectives on music as environmental politics; and decolonial perspectives on traditional communities devising alternative development pathways.

#### 1.1 Ethnomusicology perspectives: song as environmental politics

In many traditional cultures, musical performance promotes a broad participatory experience, social interactions and thus group belonging. According to Thomas Turino, such participation is 'the least understood and valued within the capitalist-cosmopolitan formation' (Turino, 2008: 92). Within the latter context, musical performance serves mainly as presentation or art: "one group of people (the artists) providing music for another (the audience)". Here performers may represent something other than themselves for an audience (ibid: 51).

Turino highlights traditional forms of musical participation, noting that in some communities, especially rural ones, people still sing and dance together as part of their way of life. For others, "old time music and

dance are the basis of a cultural cohort that comes together for those activities"; it 'is mainly a community in relation to the dance and music activities (Turino, 2008: 159–160). Thus, musical performance is made accessible to all. When musical performance plays this social role, moreover, participants may "model ideal relationships as the participants imagine them to be," and thus "experience them in action" (Small, 1999: 15). Such ideal models have a potentially self-fulfilling role. Indeed, musical performance may help shape societal futures for various political aims. Ethnomusicology has sought to distinguish among them.

From an ethnomusicological perspective on societal conflicts, O'Connell notes:

Either the field has viewed music as a locus for resistance, a subaltern response to political hegemony and social injustice whereby asymmetrical power relations are critiqued in musical texts and performance styles, or it has viewed music as a medium for compromise, in which musical texture and rhythmic structure reflect varying degrees of social cohesion. Although both positions are often informed by an idealist agenda that envisages sound as a medium for social improvement, they do show that music provides a unique text for interrogating the multivalent character of conflict and for suggesting a possible resolution to conflict (O'Connell, 2010: 10).

In some conflicts, musical appropriations have sought to unify people along ethnic-cultural lines, while targeting a threat or opponent. Here are two politically different examples: 1) During Kosovo's civil war in the late 1990s, new songs celebrated Albanian heroes and lamented victims; these songs aimed to provoke inter-ethnic violence and to quell intra-ethnic dissent among ethnic Albanians (Sugarman, 2010). 2) Among rural indigenous highland migrants to Lima, musical performances initially blended urban-Western forms with highland mestizo traditions. Later their performances reproduced Indigenous musical styles from their home regions, expressing mutual aid traditions; this shift complemented a rising political movement against Peru's criollo hegemony and its assimilationist agenda (Turino, 1993). Thus a musical-ethnic identity can either serve or resist an oppressive political power.

Eco-ethnomusicology offers further insights into how musical participation can express territorial belonging and resistance to hegemonic agendas. The latter have promoted a nature/society binary, whereby elites protect natural resources from subaltern peoples who depend on them. Likewise, ecomusicology has sometimes reaffirmed a stereotypical divide between 'the cosmological and anthropological orders' (Ochoa Gautier, 2016: 109).

Nevertheless song lyrics often contrast dispossession with an idealised sociobiodiversity, asserting or imagining a nature-society resonance. A number of ethnomusicologists have highlighted such conflicts. Following are three brief examples.

1) Haiti: Although the Haitian Revolution had an initial success, the country soon underwent a neocolonial domination, resource plunder and environmental degradation. "Development" initiatives have been a putative remedy, but they often threatened the country's sovereignty, undermined local solutions and imposed a nature/culture binary dispossessing people. By contrast, "Voodoo ecological metaphysics recognizes that some of the most profound crossroads people face today are questions about their relationships with nature" (Dirksen, 2018: 129). Voodoo songs criticise Western models for "using up" nature as if it were separate from society; the lyrics express alternative concepts of nature, as a vision connecting the present to a better future (ibid: 122). Such conflict arises from a human-nature dualism in Western developmentalist interventions, which "carry the weighty history of neocolonializing geopolitical endeavors" (Dirksen, 2021).

2) South Africa/Mozambique border: Conversely, socio-economic inequalities often worsen socio-ecological injustices. Near South Africa's Mozambique border, Zulu communities have been dispossessed by a conservation policy imagining Nature Reserves as a pristine wilderness, made available only to the affluent few. For nearby residents, high electrical fences separate women's fields from their ancestors' lands, while also confusing people's memories of them (Impey, 2018: 8, 183; cf. Diegues, 1993). Given the drastic landscape changes over several decades, and men's migration to seek work elsewhere, women's walking songs lament their loss but also express a group belonging, which resists their exclusion (Impey, 2013). In so doing, these songs challenge the modernist nature/culture binary.

3) Brazil's Northeast: For a long time, northeastern Brazil has faced racist attitudes conflating endemic drought with backward people, as a basis to prescribe capital-intensive construction projects rather than socially equitable programmes. Some songwriters framed severe drought as a socio-environmental issue, stimulating new links to traditional musical culture. Although *Forró* was intended mainly as a dance music, its lyrics have an implicit politics, as acknowledged by prominent songwriters. As Silvers observes, some songs made specific demands '... for the recognition of the Northeast, its people, and their plight; for donations to be sent to drought victims; for government assistance in the form of loans, money transfers, public works, and drought-proof employment; for divine intervention; for rain,' and, as a mass-mediated music, *Forró* became "musical shorthand for protest, exile, drought, and the Northeast itself" (Silvers, 2018: 49, 68). This renewal illustrates a more widespread pattern in that by taking up environmental problems, people reshape musical cultures through politics and social-group differences (Silvers, 2018: 6).

## 1.2 Decolonial perspectives on development

The above examples exemplify a nature/culture binary, promoting resource appropriation and social exclusion as progress. This is complemented by a degradation-conservation binary, whereby potential damage warrants measures to conserve an imagined pristine wilderness or to appropriate "biodiversity" as inputs. By contrast, a decolonial post-capitalist perspective aims to valorise humanity's ethnic-cultural diversity and promote biodiversity in harmony with nature (Leff, 2001: 50).

This has been widely conceptualised as sociobiodiversity (Cavalheiro e Araujo, 2015), often linked with agrobiodiversity. Together these concepts emphasise peasants' everyday social roles in generating and managing biodiversity, by contrast with its degradation and private appropriation by agribusiness (ANA, 2018). The concept sociobiodiversity helps resist the neocolonial modernisation model.

That dominant model has been critically analysed by several writers in engagement with subaltern groups. Colonial zones continue today in modern Western thought, constituting the contemporary system (Santos, 2007: 71). "A homogenising colonialist attitude historically erased ethnic cultural diversities, diluting them in classifications which emphasised the subordination of the 'natives,' wild' and 'illiterate' lacking the erudite knowledge of the colonizer" (Almeida, 2004: 23). Or more subtly, some agendas seek to preserve traditional "heritages" by reifying and fragmenting them (Parent, 2010), thus becoming amenable to a touristic marketplace.

In that conflictual context, the term "traditional communities" has been an ambiguous, contested concept. It can pejoratively denote backwardness, warranting remedies through assimilation and modernisation, as euphemisms for a neocolonial agenda. As an alternative perspective, traditional communities needed protection of their human and cultural rights, especially given the conflict with conservation zones; this perspective came from state agencies, at least until the 2016 political shift to Right-wing governments (MPF, 2014).

By contrast, critics of capitalist modernisation resignified the term "traditional" for resistance which could create a different future. Tradition "incorporates collective identities, situationally redefined in a continuous mobilization," especially in defending land rights against dispossession (Almeida, 2004: 10). In resisting various threats, some traditional groups have been transforming "tradition" for novel solidaristic relationships, both within and across communities (Almeida, 2004, 2006). Such communities have been seen as active allies in joint struggles for a collective land reform and against neocolonial racism, especially through links with other social movements.

Such mobilisations have revived mutual-aid traditions. From its Tupi Guaraní origin, *mutirão* means "work in common" (Navarro, 2005). Such activity tightens social bonds, facilitating knowledge exchange and sometimes marriages (Diegues, 2005: 296-297). This joint work rotates tasks without a hierarchy. As non-commercial relationships within quasi-economic activities, *mutirão* generates social cohesion and group belonging (Diegues, 2005; França Filho, 2004). "Mutirão is a form of popular, communitarian self-

organization to concretize projects or to resolve public problems which people experience every day” (França Filho, 2011: 98).

From his decolonial perspective, the geographer Milton Santos noted:

People together create culture and in parallel create a territorialised economy, culture, discourse, politics. This neighbourhood culture valorises an experience of scarcity, convivência and solidarity... It expresses its symbols, manifest in speech, music and richness in forms of interchange and solidarity among people (Santos, 2001: 144-145).

From such cultures, a sense of group belonging often depends on informal economies, grounded in local social bonds, argues Hassan Zaoual. Informal economies illustrate ‘the importance of non-commercial relations, not only for social cohesion but also for the economy itself’. Spanning traditional groups, such relationships can generate ‘composite cultures’, i.e. novel social bonds of group belonging (Zaoual, 2010: 30-31).

Such cultures can provide a basis to link territorial identities, intercultural exchange and solidaristic activities, even remaking tourism:

In a world plagued by the loss of references, the necessity of belonging, as well as an intercultural exchange, expresses the actors’ desire to search for meanings... Tourists want to be responsible and solidaristic actors in their interchanges with other worlds (Zaoual, 2008: 4).

This agenda was eventually popularised as “community-based tourism,” featuring music and dance.

The next section examines how the Bocaina’s traditional communities have jointly developed agroforestry as a decolonial resistance conservation through mutual aid traditions. This provides a basis to understand each community’s linkages between musical and agri-food cultures in subsequent sections.

## 2 Bocaina’s territorial conflicts: nature/culture binary versus sociobiodiversity

The Bocaina sub-region lies between the Litoral Norte Paulista coast and Sul Fluminense near Rio de Janeiro. For several centuries this coastal area was the tranquil home of three communities. They are: indigenous Guaraní of the Mbyà language group; quilombolas (i.e., descendants of escaped slaves who had formed their own societies in forest areas); and caíçaras, former Portuguese immigrants who lived near the other two groups in remote areas. These groups continued their traditional lives, light agroforestry, fishing, crafts and music-dance cultures.

In the 1970s, however, the Rio-Santos motorway gave easier access, which facilitated development-as-modernization such as urbanization and civil construction, associated with predatory tourism and second homes. All of this was supported by the military junta (through 1985) and then afterwards by elected governments. Stronger financial incentives for “development” sharpened earlier land conflicts. Persistent violence forcibly expelled many residents and kept everyone under continuous insecurity (Strauch, 2020). For the traditional communities, their territories “have been threatened by exclusionary environmental policies, real estate speculation, a disorderly tourism, big infrastructure projects, urbanisation, climate change and other vectors” (Freitas et al., 2017: 316). Traditional territories and their cultures have been incorporated into a ‘touristic marketplace’ (Monteiro, 2013: 187).

Figure 1: Map showing 80% of Bocaina’s land as a nature reserve (red or green), thus generating land-use conflicts with traditional communities. Credit: Klima Naturali, <http://www.klimanaturali.org/2010/05/parque-nacional-da-serra-da-bocaina.html>

As urbanisation increasingly degraded nature, this threat stimulated a public policy to create Conservation Areas (*Unidades de Conservação*). Some overlapped with the residential or cultivation areas of traditional communities. Government policy initially excluded such groups and sometimes privatised the management, based on the prevalent nature/culture binary, criticised as “the myth of untouched Nature” (Diegues, 1993). This policy obscured and marginalised the conservation practices of traditional communities (Ferreira & Carneiro, 2005).

Responding to the multiple threats, in 2006 the Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) brought together three communities: indigenous guaraní, quilombolas and caiçaras (Seganfredo, 2017). The FCT attributed those threats to the dominant neocolonial development model (Gallo and Nascimento, 2019: 42). They popularised the indigenous Andean concept *Bem Viver* as follows "a simple life, closer to nature, in a village beyond urban speed and with more solidaristic relationships, with a practical and theoretical enactment of the territory..." (ibid: 294). For example, the FCT has hosted [events](#) entitled "Agroecology cultivating territories of Bem Viver," expressing sociobiodiversity.

The FCT demanded a community role in managing conservation areas overlapping with their lands. These demands led to a shared management with many bodies, especially the Observatório de Territórios Sustentáveis e Saudáveis da Bocaina (OTSS), which became the FCT's general partner. This arrangement permitted greater agri-productivity in some overlapping areas, alongside a better relationship with the native forest and natural resources (Lima, 2009: 39).

The FCT initiated agroecosystems, such as agricultural systems based on ecological principles; these were collectively managed through *mutirão* (Gallo e do Nascimento, 2019: 159). *Sistemas Agroflorestais* (SAFs, agroforestry systems) combined diverse species in order to maintain soil fertility without chemical fertilizer. SAFs articulated traditional life-modes with nature conservation for several aims: healthy food, forest recovery and water conservation (Gallo e do Nascimento, 2019: 222). Agroforestry products have been commercialized collectively, through such means as school meals procurement, public fairs and regional markets.

The Bocaina's communitarian model turned each place into a symbol of group identity, collective heritage and sociobiodiversity. The three communities were better able to deter individualistic gain from commercial activities degrading natural resources (Sansolo, 2017: 204). They developed production-consumption chains valorising agrobiodiversity as products of ethno-biodiversity, alongside youth participation and more equal gender relations (Gallo and Nascimento, 2019: 62, 152). These socio-environmental initiatives promote "territorial resistance based on their adaptive capacity facing adversities" (Strauch, 2015: 13). This agenda sought to remain on the land through sustainable development gaining wider support; see subsequent sections for each community.

This development trajectory brought many benefits, initially a Community Nursery for forest plants and distinctive foods. These were eventually showcased by a new Turismo de Base Comunitario (TBC), community-based tourism. TBC initiatives formed a network with the name Nhandereko, a Guaraní concept: we share "our way of being" with visitors. The network also shared experiences among various localities in order to strengthen internal democracy, income generation and resistance against various threats (Red Nhandereko, 2017).

In 2014 the FCT launched a campaign, "To Conserve is to Resist: in defence of traditional territories" ("Preservar é Resistir: em defesa dos territórios tradicionais"). At the launch event, the three communities shared their dances (FCT, 2014). A campaign motto focused on natural resources: To know how to use is the art of traditional communities ("Saber usar é a arte das comunidades tradicionais"). This campaign highlighted several threats: "The violations of human rights are concretised through environmental criminalisation, forced evictions, and restrictions on the right to come-and-go for access to natural resources essential for our survival and mode of life..." (FCT, 2017).

Figure 2: Three communities linked symbolically by agroecological forestry:  
"To Conserve is to Resist." Credit: Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais

The FCT has sought to maintain, protect and regenerate their territory under the concept *justiça socioambiental* (socio-environmental justice). This means "a just treatment and full involvement of all social groups, regardless of their origin or income, in the decisions on access or use of natural resources in their territory" (RBJA, 2011). Given their insecure tenure, the three communities have demanded legal title for their traditional lands (FCT, 2017; Unidiversidade. 2018).

For many years each community has been demanding aculturally Differentiated Education in state schools, including music-dance and agri-food cultures. The FCT-OTSS partnership eventually won such demands. In 2015 Paraty's new Municipal Plan started a Differentiated Curriculum for each community (OTSS, 2018). Through all those activities, the FCT renews Brazil's traditional *mutirão*, linking musical and agri-food cultures, often expressing sociobiodiversity. Let us look at such linkages around each community in turn: guaraní, quilombolas and caiçaras.

### 3Guaranís: *mborai*

Brazil's Mbyà Guaraní have maintained their *mborai*, a cultural form combining music and dance. They have traditionally called their youths *xondaro'í* and *xondaria'í*, i.e. (male and female) warriors, a term formerly denoting military weapons. Nowadays the term provides a metaphor for conflicts with the state apparatus and profit-driven colonizers. This struggle needs weapons which were not traditionally Guaraní, e.g. posters/logos, pens, legal arguments, etc. (Stein, 2009: 138). Cultural weapons include *mborai* at protests and short films about them, as this section shows.

#### 3.1 *Mborai*/build youth capacities

The *mborai* feature the Xondará dance, where youths imagine seeking and reaching *Yvy Marãe'y*: a Land without Evils. Learning to be warriors, the dance steps simulate movements of three different birds, whereby dancers acquire strength, lightness and agility. More generally, their dances incorporate immaterial qualities of some birds: "Overlaps between bird and person are indicated in the polysemy of the term *nhë'ë* itself, which means 'animal sound', 'bird sound', 'human song' or 'spirit-word'". These dances express the many exemplary meanings of birds as beings which live in harmony with natural resources, alongside stories of humans imitating birds or turning into them, as in many traditional cultures (Stein, 2015: 212, 227-28). This practice relates to general features of Brazilian indigenous peoples, who have collectively domesticated elements of nature into their own corporeality and daily routines. Natural cycles are expressed by many songs such as the following:

At dawn we awake with happiness. At sunset we enter the ceremonial house and remain content because we can rest. *Xondaro'í* and *xondaria'í*, dance and sing. Sing so that the sun returns, illuminating the spaces (from the Guaraní original and Portuguese translation in Stein, 2009: 134).

Such indigenous practices lie beyond any nature/culture binary (Seeger et al., 1979: 13).

The *mborai* facilitate self-discipline in several ways. As a form of corporal training, song and dance help to develop children as competent persons to perform various socio-cultural capacities, especially speaking and singing (Stein, 2015: 216). As a leader explains:

The Xondará should be seen as a defence. It plays an everyday part in the Guaraní village; it is danced at the end of each day. The youths start to learn this dance and to develop balance in their own body.

Today it is used to swerve, to gain balance and health, and to prepare for being a warrior.

Through the *mborai*, the Guaranís have a time to cry, a time to laugh, a time for all feelings through the music". They communicate better with each other and other peoples, so that we can "create an alliance through this music" (cited by Montardo, 1999: 205).

Their dance performance encourages everyone's participation for common identities and social interactions (Stein, 2015, citing Turino, 2008). As a participatory performance, the *mborai* express memory, advice, teaching, concentration and reciprocity – *mborayú*, a related word (ibid: 215). Here various objects – adornments, pictures, musical instruments, song lyrics -- define a belonging to their ethnic group and territory (ibid: 227). The Guaranís' cultural reciprocity resonates with other traditional communities, especially in the FCT context, as we shall see.

Figure 3: Coral Guaraní Tenonderã,  
<https://www.facebook.com/Coral-Guarani-Tenonder%C3%A3-200839427002902>

In the Bocaina region, Mbyà-Guaraní musical traditions have been promoted by the Coral Guaraní Tenonderã. With the motto, "the Guaraní path to follow," they sing "Come all warriors (*os guerreiros e as guerreiras*) to dance, sing and celebrate our house of prayer. Our ancestors gave us the Guaraní way of life.



Live to be Guaraní” (Scapino, 2020). Their *mboraí* have a close link with ritual preventions and cures in the house of prayer (Stein, 2015: 227). Their dances have been deployed for political protest against greater threats, as explained next.

### 3.2 *Mboraí* strengthen communal belonging

As historical background, during 2003-2016 the PT-led governments strengthened Federal support for Indigenous peoples, especially for improving traditional agriculture, livelihoods and state services. Agri-extension experts engaged Indigenous groups “to establish public policies for loans for studies which incentivise agroecological production, fruit cultivation, reforestation and wildlife management” (FNS, 2007: 156). In the Bocaina, agri-food production was improved especially through the program Partilha Agroecológica (Agroecological Sharing; OTSS, 2016). This was a partnership between OTSS, Verde Cidadania and the local Articulação de Agroecologia (ANA). Through that programme, Guaraní villages made mutual visits to learn more about agri-production methods. Topics have included: agroforestry systems (Sistemas Agro-Florestais, SAFs), artisanal fishing, plant uses, agroecological mutirões, and agroecological cuisine (OTSS, 2016). Through knowledge exchange with other villages, Indigenous groups constructed a common agroforestry identity, based on mutual aid within and across communities.

For at least a couple decades, Brazil’s Indigenous peoples have been demanding a culturally differentiated education for several reasons: “Our music, language, hair, dances and expressions ‘of the South’ tend to be seen as primitive, exotic and with less cultural value, to the detriment of what has been consolidated as the pattern to be followed” (Zephiro e Martins, 2015). Their demands were accommodated by the National Council of Education: Schools in Indigenous areas should collaborate with “specialists in traditional knowledge” for storytelling, musical instruments, prayers, midwives, rituals, advice and other necessary functions (CNE, 2012: 2); music became central to the Guaraní’s differentiated education, initially in Paraty.

For Community-Based Tourism (TBC), the Nhandereko network has been encompassing the three traditional communities (see next section). Guaraní initially established TBC in three villages with the motto “Living Guaraní Itinerary.”. Visitors got to know customs from traditional modes of life, for example, artisanal production, small-scale agriculture, wood fires in houses, Mbyà language, religion, dance and music (Monteiro, 2015: 56-59). According to a local leader, “We earn income and sell our artisanal products, as well as demonstrating the resistance of indigenous people” (OTSS, 2020).

As a constant threat since 2016, Right-wing Federal governments have undermined earlier progressive gains and the agencies responsible for them. Under Federal law, Indigenous peoples’ lands were protected and were meant to be formally demarcated, although relevant agencies delayed decisions about legal title, thus weakening Federal protection from profit-driven incursions. Let us survey three public protests deploying Guaraní *mboraí*.

- 1) Territorial demarcation: Since 1967 FUNAI (Fundação Nacional do Índio) had the main responsibility to protect the interests of indigenous people. In January 2019 President Bolsonaro decided to transfer the agency from the Justice Ministry to the Agriculture Ministry, which favours agribusiness. This shift threatened indigenous people’s environment as well as their prospects to gain land titles. Guaraní protests featured the Xondará, where dancers run in a circle and continuously jump over a stick. In Ubatuba this dance-as-protest blocked the main street and square (Ubatuba Sim, 2019).
- 2) Health services: Early on, the PT-led government had established a special health system (Sistema Único de Saúde or SUS) for indigenous peoples. This mandated a local, holistic provision – encompassing nutrition, housing, land demarcation, environment, etc. – guaranteeing the right of indigenous participation in decision-making (FNS, 2007: 87). The main responsibility lay with the Secretária Especial da Saúde Indígena (SESAI). In 2019 the Bolsonaro government sought to abolish the agency and to transfer all responsibility to municipalities. The Guaraní Choral members explained:

We won many gains with much sweat of our grandparents. Many people say that we don't belong to the municipality; often we face discrimination when simply requesting a service from the municipality. We want our differentiated service, as our elders taught us, with our religion, beliefs and medicines which our villages know how to make (CGT, 2019).

- 3) To defend the Federal service from government attack, guaraní nationwide held many protests. In the Bocaina they blocked the highway BR101 near Ubatuba. Demonstrators held placards with the slogan: "Priority to indigenous health," and "SESAI is ours.". Youths continuously danced the Xondará to maintain the blockade, despite the Federal Highway Police (Mirim, 2019a).

In another attack, the Bolsonaro government attempted to weaken social services and pension payments. This provoked protests throughout the country. In Paraty the Guaraní held a protest with FCT t-shirts and speeches from other community representatives. The Coral Guaraní Tenonderã sang: "We have power when we are all together. We sing this music to be happy" (translation from their language). Placards said:

The indigenous people are here in Paraty from five villages. Demarcation now for indigenous land!  
Guaraní people want indigenous health.... Take your dirty hands off my retirement.... You have FLIP but not schools on the coast! (Mirim, 2019b).

The latter slogan referred to the Festa Literária Internacional de Paraty (FLIP). For protestors, the state was favouring affluent groups, while failing to provide schools in guaraní villages. In all those ways, they have mobilised musical cultures to assert a communal belonging which could defend their public services and territory.

Their long-time demand for "Demarcation Now" has been promoted by the world-famous musician Gilberto Gil. His film combines jazz with the above film of the Coral Guaraní Tenonderã (Gil, 2021, drawing on CGT, 2019). Lyrics include:

We don't see your sociocultural death as natural because we sympathize... Demarcation now!  
For the Indian to have the application of the Statute  
How beautiful [would be] your corner like a stronghold  
And shield it against the mean, raw white who stole what was yours.

This musical remix connects the Guaraní's demand with other peoples who have undergone and resisted colonial plunder.

#### 4 Quilombolas: jongo and rap

During the Portuguese Empire many slaves escaped captivity, fleeing far away from the colonizers, often in remote forest areas. They established their own communities in refuges called quilombos. Hence today their descendants are called quilombolas. Combining music and dance, their jongo originated from slavery as "songs of protest, repression and resistance," often in a code obscure to the slaveowners (Stein, 1990: 246). Since slavery, jongo has expressed *mutirão* in several contexts including harvests and house building (Andrade e Tatto, 2013; Mattos, 2015). It is simultaneously a song (*cântico*), divinatory practice, confraternity, etc. It criticises everyday social reality, but without losing joy, often in coded language (Alcantara, 2008: vii; Justino, 2013: 2).

##### 4.1 Jongo evokes territorial conflicts

The 1988 Constitution required the public authorities to grant titles to lands occupied by quilombos. But this has been hardly implemented by the Federal government; few quilombo communities have gained official tenure. Meanwhile they maintain a proud collective memory, helping to confront their present-day oppression and exclusion. Their jongo renews a culture of mutual aid and resistance. Quilombos nationwide have continued to face threats from land grabs and luxury condominiums. In the Bocaina's Angra dos Reis, the 1970s Rio-Santos motorway gave the land a much greater commercial value. It lacked effective environmental protection. Guaraní and quilombo lands had no clear demarcation, which are still generally delayed by judicial procedures. Earlier violent threats were intensified to expel long-time residents; more land plots were sold, more roads opened, trees felled and rivers polluted (Cruz, 2018).

Near the town Angra dos Reis, resistance is illustrated by Santa Rita do Bracuí, a small village. Quilombos there have been struggling to stay on their ancestors' land and gain a land title, while developing agroforestry as a community-wide project. In the inter-generational dialogue, the quilombo youths affirm their commitment to their quilombo heritage, renewing their jongo culture (film by Lide Uff, 2014).

In these struggles, jongo plays a central role. Its name has an African origin, possibly from the kikongo expression *nzongo myannua*: a bullet from the mouth. As the Umbundu proverb, says 'A word is like a bullet' (Alcantara, 2008: 13, 15). Not simply reproducing an ancestral custom, its practitioners feel like creative agents; through jongo, they reveal new feelings, even if repeating the same lyrics (Alcantara, 2008: 64). Facing multiple threats, quilombolas take collective shelter "in singing, dialoguing and discussing the reconquest of territory and freedom." For example, a *cântico* says: "At the edge of the sea I saw a warrior who swore on the flag. He sounded the bugle. Like his entire army, he fought for me" (Alcantara, 2008: 44).

*Cânticos* often recognize a superior authority, evoking long-time struggles against captivity and dispossession:

I ask permission from the queen of the sea to salute our people. I will open my congo, ai! I came here  
And I didn't delay. I came to greet the people of this place. I arrived here at Jongo standing on the  
ground. In the balance of these waves I came from Angola. I dragged my foot in the angoma [drum] dust  
to ask for Mother's protection (ibid.: 76).

The drum or queen can symbolise ancestors' spirits awakening a revolt, as in these two quotes:

I stepped on a stone. The stone balanced. The world was crooked. The queen straightened it....

As I was sleeping, angoma (the drum) called me. O, if people rise, the captivity ends  
(ibid: 82; citing Stein, 1990: 302).

Those traditional lyrics have gained new meanings, especially as urbanization threatens the quilombos' culture and territory. Their protection needs youth discipline and collective organization. As a community organizer has said:

How can we protect our lands? Through jongo the youth maintain their quilombo identity, distant from the wounds that society has inflicted on them. Jongo and capoeira help to discipline the youths... Now their school teaches a differentiated education so that the youth can better absorb this culture, so that people take up the struggle for identity and territory.

As some youths say, jongo helps to strengthen a quilombo conscience, to rescue memories of past struggles and combat racial preconceptions (Mapade Cultura RJ, 2014).

Some *cânticos* highlight struggles to defend quilombo territories and to withstand the wounds which the community has suffered (interview in Pinheiro, 2015: 73). In the Bocaina, jongo has been renewed jointly by youth and women for "black consciousness." At Fashion Week, the group [Desfile da Beleza Negra](#) (black beauty parade) provides an anti-racist intervention with jongo and African-themed colours (TV Andradas, 2019).

#### 4.2 Campinho da Independência stimulates a revival

For several decades the quilombo community in Campinho da Independência had been struggling to gain a land title. Finally it succeeded in 1999, becoming the first in the state of Rio de Janeiro. This struggle was led by the Associação de Moradores do Quilombo do Campinho (AMOQC). Two decades later its President commented, "The land title per se did not improve the community's life. What did so was our capacity to bring improvements," in particular: Community-Based Tourism (TBC), agroecological agroforestry, cultural activities and the struggle for an ethnically differentiated education. All these activities provided means to renew the local ancestral knowledge which existed especially among the eldest, called *griôs* (Cancian, 2019). All these activities have been constructing a sense of belonging, according to *Black Soul*, a quilombo newspaper: "In Brazil the vision of being black reveals the diversity of ancestral peoples from whom we originated and thus the diverse experiences which we can have and can be: to belong" (Alma Preta, 2020).

Since gaining its land title, Quilombo de Campinho more readily gained resources for a community-led development, starting from a shared management of Conservation Areas. This model was extended to Turismo de Base Comunitária (TBC), aiming to counter the mass tourism which had stimulated environmental damage and real-estate sales. Thematic dialogues involved many groups, especially public authorities, civil society and academic researchers. Together they advised the FCT how to plan TBC: “a tourism based on communitarian management and valorisation of local knowledge.”. From each activity, the income was shared in an egalitarian form among all team members, according to EcoSol principles (de Miranda Mendonça et al., 2016: 241).

Figure 4: Restaurante Quilombo de Campinho hosts events of quilombo culture.

Credit: Les Levidow

In parallel AMOQC developed Turismo Étnico do Campinho as a workers' cooperative. Ethno-Ecological Itineraries (Roteiros Etno-Ecológicos) provide visits to local leaderships, family-based organization, reforestation especially of the Juçara tree, artisanal production, a communitarian restaurant and jongo dance. Visitors get to know agri-food heritages, stories, environmental conservation, territorial guides, etc. (CdQ, 2014). According to an organizer, “What is best about our process is that everything is self-managed from start to finish, since Grandma Antonica told our community's history and capacity to direct its own destiny, its own paths” (interview in Pinheiro, 2015: 60).

The community gradually became more self-sufficient for income, skills and improvements. Previously many residents had to travel and stay in other places to earn an income. Through TBC more residents could do so through activities such as agroforestry as conservation, artisanal products, jongo workshops, the communitarian restaurant, local tour guides, griôs. Etc. (Pinheiro, 2015: 69). In all these ways, TBC has developed solidaristic interdependencies within and among economic activities, alongside knowledge exchange for their extension to other places. Exchange visits by youths across the FCT's three communities helped to build partnerships for joint activities (Barros e Rodrigues, 2019: 10; Strauch, 2020: 223). Together these activities provide “a self-recognition of our culture and traditions, which we had been losing and are now recovering for the community,”, said a coordinator (Marcondes, 2018).

As mentioned above, TBC has featured the restaurant [Quilombo do Campinho](#) since 2014. It provided a model for cooperative relations, social inclusion and sustainable production. All food ingredients are extracted from the agroforestry practices and thus showcase them (Pinheiro, 2015: 64). Its slogan is “Where taste has a tradition.” The restaurant is “a self-managed community enterprise guided by solidarity economy principles as a work philosophy.” Quilombo families organise jongo workshops, as well as samba and capoeira (CdQ, 2014). The restaurant became a new venue for the annual Encontro da Cultura Negra, which had begun in 1999. Although Guaranís protested against the elite FLIP, the quilombo festival now appropriated the name for a “Black FLIP.” The programme combines jongo-cântico (songs), ancestors' stories, knowledge-exchange, agri-food heritages and agroecological agroforestry; griots highlight their inter-linkages (FLIP Preta, 2019).

Jongo has been revived in several contexts, such as its role in quilombo cultures of belonging and mutual aid. For example, although rap is mainly an urban form, it has been extended to the Bocaina's rural community. Through rap, youths make sense of their everyday experiences. Lyrics highlight territorial conflicts, question the economic system, denounce racism, praise the griots' wisdom and honour the quilombos' living culture. Based in Quilombo de Campinho, the Grupo Realidade Negra (2007, 2009) appeals to quilombo youth for unity, cooperation and honest work. According to a member, the group tries to strengthen the quilombo movement for community solidarity and improvement, citing examples of other quilombo communities (Pinheiro, 2015: 82-83).

Reaching beyond its own community, Grupo Realidade Negra counters negative images and invites outsiders to visit:

Believe whomever you wish! On one side is asphalt, on the other side is the ground [earth]. This is Quilombo do Campinho, where I know the guys. Whoever wants can come here, do a visit, get to know our place, Paraty town, earth of black. Who could imagine that all this began with three women [activists]? If you want to come visit, there is no need for fear. Whoever comes is well received. Sit

down with the elders and learn a lesson about life... True friendship. All the people who left here are missed.... (ibid.)

'The Fifth Generation' honours the five generations who have continued the struggle to remain on the land, depicting community members of all ages. The lyrics celebrate

this connection between the mountains and the sea, from the artisanal fisherman to the family farmer; in handling life, she teaches us and so inspires us; between the natural and the artificial, from the traditional versus industrial... (Realidade Negra, 2022).

It laments "the lie of progress crushing culture, yours and mine." It has a rap style with ironic rhymes and a melodic background, thus seeking a broad audience. In those ways, *cântico-jongo* and modern rap both express quilombolas' experiences of territorial conflicts. These living cultures strengthen a common sense of quilombos belonging on the land to create their own future. Renewing *mutirão* traditions, agroecological agroforestry develops interdependencies among several activities and helps others to replicate them.

## 5 Caiçaras: fandango

For several centuries, many Portuguese immigrants lived in coastal areas distant from Imperial centres and became known as *caiçaras*. Derived from Portuguese traditions, their *fandango* combines a quadrille-type dance with lyrics. Its performance was always linked with *mutirões*, such as voluntary cooperative labour in crop cultivation, harvests, religious festivals, weddings and the four-day carnival. These traditions gained new significance in collectively resisting dispossession.

### 5.1 Fandango expresses estrangement

For centuries, *caiçaras* integrated their customs, values and capacities with other coastal groups, especially for fishing. This group was a marginal type of free peasant-fisher inside a slave society (Marcílio, 1986: 13). They incorporated skills and values from nearby Indigenous groups. The name *caiçara* originated from the Tupi Guarani word *kaá-içara*, a rustic protective fence intertwining twigs and branches (Sampaio, 1987). Over time it named beach huts constructed to shelter canoes and fishing equipment – and later named Cananéia inhabitants. Eventually it named all coastal residents descended from Portuguese immigrants (Diegues, 1988). The etymology symbolises their artisanal methods.

After several centuries, in the 1970s the coastal *caiçaras* were marginalized by development-as-modernisation, especially luxury tourist resorts, condominiums and real-estate speculation (Caá-içara, 2020). In Paraty they suffered land grabs, expulsions and thus difficulties to stay on their former lands. Moreover, potential income from tourism provoked competition among *caiçaras*, thus undermining their communal relations (de Abreu, 2020: 332-35).

A *fandango* song portrays the coastal town Cananéia as a victim of predatory tourism:

On Sad Wolf Street, a shark lives in blessed Cananéia. It is a paradise, as the tourists discover. From here, I just miss you. For those who came and for those who saw, I will say goodbye ('What Cananéia Has', song by Armando Teixeira; in Costa, 2012: 152; Magdalena, 2008: 4).

Its sarcastic lyrics express a lament for the community's loss and a hope for its recovery. Although west of the Bocaina, this town has symbolised a similar predation elsewhere.

Given the commercial pressures from land development, fewer *caiçaras* continued to cultivate crops for food production. Eventually most food came from elsewhere, especially from industrial processes. This shift undermined their former nutritious diet, the family labour system and its solidaristic mutual aid traditions (de Francesco, 2012: 29). By the 1990s many *caiçaras* had been expelled from the Bocaina area, though some managed to remain near Paraty.

As mentioned above, *mutirões* had been central to *caiçara* practices for centuries, especially through their *fandango* music and dance. This was central to events such as harvests, religious festivals, baptisms, weddings and the four-day annual carnival (Diegues, 2005). Through *mutirão*, people regularly met each other for chats, joint meals, music-making, instrument-making, etc. (Sabourin, 2009). But modernization marginalised traditional agricultural activities and likewise *mutirão*. As agri-food production lost its

traditional forms and rural spaces to the external logic of money, caixaras increasingly felt estranged from each other and nature (Costa, 2012: 149, 152).

Given the new economic pressures, some caixaras were illegally extracting resources from forests. In particular, they were selling palm hearts (palmito) by cutting down the juçara tree, crucial for forest biodiversity (Aguilar, 2002: 5). The traders were the beneficiaries, as the extractors well understood. Their bad conscience was made worse by their own exploitation and lost friendships, as expressed in a fandango song:

Let's say goodbye; the people are disillusioned. When I pick up the guitar, I already know whom to ask for: how it is so beautiful, two friends sing together. Whoever takes the palm heart gains nothing. Whoever buys it has money... This trade is worse than being a prisoner. It would be better to stop it' ("Compra de Palmito," cited in Costa, 2012: 149).

Having undergone dispossession in those various forms, many caixaras have sought collective solutions in reviving *mutirão* through agroforestry and musical traditions. For some caixaras and quilombos, a common solution was a palmito-juçara development project, as explained below.

## 5.2 Music revival complements solidaristic linkages

Some caixaras developed a Sistema Agroflorestal (SAF, agroforestry system), which helped revive the *mutirões* tradition. A workshop on "Agroecology and its Traditional Roots" provided initial expertise and a nursery for forest plants. As a key pioneer, Seu Altamiro developed backyard agroforestry, a SAF model amenable to wide replication (Angelo, 2011: 2). A well-kept SAF "brings food close to the house" by providing fruits, spices, medicinal herbs and wood (De Francesco, 2012: 56). Likewise reviving *mutirões*, initiatives created more plant nurseries and recovered fields for agroforestry development (de Carvalho, 2010: 79). The new SAFs combined important subsistence supplies with resource conservation (UFRJ, 2010). These SAFs have been replicated widely. Local caixaras began to affirm their sense of belonging with expressions such as "Our place has no equal." Young people from distant families called each other "cousin," denoting social proximity in a community (De Francesca, 2012: 114).

More ambitiously, in 2011 the FCT helped to initiate Projeto Juçara, named after the endangered palm tree. Its fruit is rich in healthful anti-toxins and anti-carcinogens, offering a large potential for commercial products and thus an incentive for conserving the tree (Embrapa, 2012). This project fit the Environment Ministry's national plan to promote productive chains of sociobiodiversity, meaning that they result from local activity with added value for environmental conservation (Gebrim, 2012).

Brazil's agri-research agency, Embrapa Meio Ambiente, sent a "technological caravan for family agriculture." This advised producers on adapting their artisanal methods to professional ones in order to process the fruit pulp on a large scale (Embrapa Noticias, 2017). Projeto Juçara has aimed to become financially self-sustaining in several ways: selling the fruit pulp in shops and export markets; generating income for owners of protected forests; and likewise for businesses that process the pulp into diverse food products. As a versatile ingredient, juçara fruit eventually contributed to a new popular drink, a diverse gastronomy, community-based tourism and regular festivals celebrating these developments. The festivals have been jointly organised by caixara and quilombo communities, featuring both their musical traditions (Ubatuba, 2019). Thus the juçara development has helped to build an inter-community territorial identity (interview, FCT, 07.09.2017).

Agroforestry development has inspired a revival of *mutirões* in several forms. The caixara agenda for culturally differentiated education has included agroecology and music (de Carvalho, 2010). Schools in caixara areas began a new curriculum emphasising cultural identity, autonomy and belonging (Barro e Rodrigues, 2019). The [Projecto Sementes Caixaras](#) (2018) has organised music workshops, especially teaching youth how to construct the typical instrument, the rabeca. In Ubatuba the Grupo Fandango Caixara has been organising similar workshops in schools. They valorise the caixara culture for the future generation to know its roots (Burihan, 2019).

Figure 5: Juçara Festival features caixara and quilombo music.

“Come celebrate another harvest with us.” Credit: Prefeitura de Ubatuba

Schools also helped to develop Community-Based Tourism (Turismo de Base Comunitaria, TBC). The materials featured multiple functions and cultural heritages of sites such as a boat landing and beach (Narrativas Caiçaras, 2019). The students helped to construct tourist guides with photos, maps and texts. Thus they raised their self-esteem and affirmed their cultural identities (Barros e Rodrigues, 2019: 11-13).

Spanning all those activities, *mutirão* provides a basis for solidaristic labour at cultural events and beyond. These linkages have been explained by Mario Gato, a caiçara folklorist, teacher and musician, especially in the [ProjectoSementes Caiçaras](#):

The fandango event is a form of *mutirão*, which is a form of resistance. Everyone helps the others: one person makes food, another helps to serve it, another brings a dishwasher, another puts up banners, etc. The event ends up happening in this way... In the historical context of this people, doing the fandango reminds you of the solidaristic labour of a collectivity where everyone participated, played and benefited. Most important is bringing people closer through *mutirão* (Gato, 2020).

In these ways, *mutirão* has provided a solidaristic basis for group belonging. This is central to the skills necessary for canoe-building and artisanal fishing. As the theme of many caiçara songs, the traditional canoe is a symbol of communal resistance. As a trans-generational initiative, the Caiçarada annual festival brings together the music, dance and resistance, as made explicit in a film featuring Mario Gato's ensemble. The film concludes with a popular song, *Pescador*, inspired by caiçara culture (Scapino, 2021).

## 6 Conclusion: a composite culture for a decolonial resistance-conservation

In Brazil's coastal areas, traditional communities have faced threats from development-as-modernisation. This hegemonic model has been colonising their everyday lives, such as by stigmatising them as threats to nature, degrading their natural-resource base, expanding real-estate interests and pushing their production-consumption patterns towards the profit-driven economy. This modernisation model rests on a nature/society binary, justifying elite agendas to appropriate natural resources or to protect them from backwardly “traditional” communities.

In resisting these threats, some traditional groups have been recovering and transforming traditions for novel solidaristic relationships, within and across communities, thus redefining collective identities (Almeida, 2004, 2006). Under the general motto of *justiça socioambiental* (socio-environmental justice), the Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) has brought together the Bocaina's three traditional communities: indigenous Guaraní, quilombolas and caiçaras. They have developed agroecological agroforestry systems as a common identity, featuring the FCT motto, “To conserve is to resist.”

Their traditional cultures and song lyrics have acquired political meanings around those struggles, and their ethnic-musical identity expresses resistance against an oppressive political hegemony, as in many other conflictual contexts (cf. O'Connell et al., 2010; Turino, 1993). In each community, musical traditions have been renewed through small performance groups, workshops and differentiated education in schools; these forms play complementary roles in encouraging widespread participation (cf. Turino, 2008). This cultural renewal resignifies their traditional cultures for common efforts against the dominant neocolonial model and for alternative development pathways. Although the dominant model has provoked internal conflicts, solidaristic interchanges have helped to contain or overcome them. While the three cultures remain distinct, the communities converge in joint activities such as agroforestry, festivals and protest.

As a mutual-aid tradition, *mutirão* had formerly linked musical and agri-food cultures through activities such as harvests, festivals and house-building (cf. Diegues, 2005; França Filho, 2011). Recent territorial conflicts have given new meanings to *mutirão* and old songs, while also stimulating new ones, especially about neo-colonial racism and resource plunder. Song lyrics have metaphorical, ironic or allusive forms, expressing pleasurable, playful and solidaristic relationships. Music training helps youths to build self-discipline for acting responsibly as a community member.

Musical and agri-food cultures have been integrated anew through several practices, for instance, Sistemas Agroflorestais (SAFs, agroforestry), ethnically differentiated education programmes, public festivals and Community-Based Tourism. The latter invites visitors to engage solidaristically with community hosts. Together these activities have built a cross-community composite culture, a broader sense of group belonging and thus mutually reinforcing claims on the land (cf. Zaoual, 2010). Table 1 summarises such activities and forms within each community.

**Table 1: Music & agri-food cultures in the three communities**

The Table indicates links between musical and other solidaristic activities, extending *mutirão* in new forms, within and among the three communities.

Community	Guaraní	Quilombolas	Caiçaras
<b>Parameter</b>			
<b>Music &amp; dance</b>	Mborai	Jongo	Fandango
Lyrics themes:	Affirm natural daily cycles & continuity with ancestors: ‘Live to be Guaraní.’	Express territorial conflict: ‘The warrior fights for me.’ Appeals to nature spirits.	Lament loss of community bonds from predatory tourism and illegal palmito plunder.
Performance stimulates music training as <i>mutirão</i> and self-discipline	Coral Guaraní Tenonderã renews musical traditions. Xondará warrior dance, imitating bird movements, is deployed for political protests.	Encontro da Cultura Negra links jongo stories with agri-food heritages. Rap honours ancestors, denounces racism and invites visitors.	Ubatuba’s Grupo Fandango Caiçara and <a href="#">Sementes Caiçaras</a> maintain skills for instrument-making and musical performances.
Demands for land tenure	Continue to demand land demarcation as mandated by 1988 Constitution.	Campinho de Quilombo had a rare victory in 1999. Other villages pursue similar demands.	Demand for land titles continues but without a generic legal mandate.
Socio-biodiversity via Sistemas Agroflorestais (SAFs)	Partilha Agroecológica helps improve agroforestry for local use and product sales including Community-Based Tourism (TBC).	SAFs were extended with external technical advice. Projeto Juçara established short supply chains for products of the pulp.	Backyard agroforestry became a model for wider replication. Projeto Juçara stimulated an inter-community juçara culture.
Community-Based Tourism (TBC)	Living Guaraní Itinerary was initiated within the wider Nhandereko TBC network.	Campinho de Quilombo pioneered TBC with Viveiro (nursery), restaurant, Ethno-Ecological Itineraries, etc.	Students developed TBC materials highlighting caiçaras’ artisanal heritage.

Underlying the territorial conflicts has been aneocolonial nature/society binary, understood as a cosmological-anthropological binary in ethnomusicology (Ochoa Gautier, 2016). By contrast with this dominant stereotype, many songs express or imagine sociobiodiversity. For example: Guaraní’s mborai affirm natural cycles and imitate birds. Quilombolas’ jongo appeals to nature spirits for moral authority; festivals combine jongo with agri-food heritages and agroecological agroforestry. In caiçaras’ fandango, some lyrics lament the decline in communal bonds through the pervasive commoditisation of their traditional territory, natural resources and labour. These songs complement the indigenous concept *Bem Viveras* regards harmonious relationships with nature. As in many contexts, musical participation imagines ideal relationships (cf. Small, 1999). These ideal imaginations have a potentially self-fulfilling role through solidaristic practices.



The case study in this article relates to wider conflicts over Brazil's national identity. As a response to its earlier racist ideology of *branqueamento* (whitening), by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the *mestiçagem* narrative became prevalent. According to this dominant narrative, a multi-racial society had relegated racist colonial legacies to the distant past. The *mestiçagem* narrative appropriated many symbols such as the mestizo body, samba, carnival and football (Eakin, 2017). In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, peri-urban black youth generated social movements emphasising cultural differences and inequalities; these were expressed through rap, hip-hop, break-dancing and graffiti (Yúdice, 2006).

In this case study of a semi-rural coastal area, traditional communities highlight colonial legacies still live in the present, thus contradicting the *mestiçagem* narrative. As resistance, they renew traditional agri-food and musical cultures, while sharing them across the communities. In those ways, a novel composite culture contributes to a decolonial resistance-conservation.

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## Biographical note

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He sings songs from around the world and accompanies other singers on violin.

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## Figures

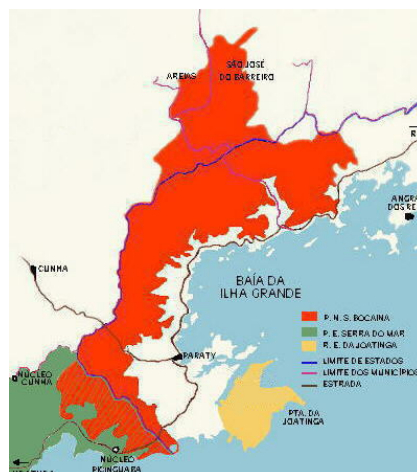


Figure 1: Map showing 80% of Bocaina's land as a nature reserve, either Federal (red) or Sao Paulo state (green) parks, thus generating land-use conflicts with traditional communities.

Credit: Klima Naturali,

<http://www.klimanaturali.org/2010/05/parque-nacional-da-serra-da-bocaina.html>



Figure 2: Three communities symbolically linked by agroecological forestry: 'To conserve is to Resist'.

Credit: Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais



Figure 3: Coral Guarani Tenonderã



Figure 4: Restaurante Quilombo de Campinho hosts events of quilombo culture.  
Credit: Les Levidow

**5ª Festa da Juçara**  
Venha festejar mais uma safra com a gente  
**12 a 14 de setembro**  
Sertão do Ubatumirim - Ubatuba - SP

**Programações:**

<b>Sexta-feira 12/09</b>	19h00 - Abertura	20h00 - Show - Novos Caiçaras	23h00 - Encerramento
<b>Sábado 13/09</b>	12h00 - Apresentação e abertura	12h30 - Folia de Reis da Maranduba	13h00 - Ieda Terra
	14h00 - Intervenção Teatro Juçara com Cia Rosa Carmo Queiroz	14h30 - Grupo Ô de casa	15h00 - Feira de troca de sementes e mudas
	15h00 - Contação de histórias com Claudia Oliveira - Espaço para as crianças	17h00 - Cont' de aldeia	18h00 - Capoeira de Ubatuba
	19h00 - Samba de Roda de Ubatuba		
		20h00 - Jongo do Campinho	21h00 - Roda de Samba do Campinho
		22h00 - Show - Naco e Rafa	23h00 - Encerramento
		<b>Domingo 14/09</b>	
		12h00 - Abertura	13h00 - Grupo Concertada
		14h00 - Tiê Trio	15h00 - Contação de histórias com Claudia Oliveira - Espaço para as crianças
		16h00 - Oficina de malabarismo com Nicolas - Espaço para as crianças	17h00 - Maracatu Itaomi
		18h00 - Fandango Caiçara	19h00 - Bingo
		20h30 - Show - Novos Caiçaras	22h00 - Encerramento

...e ainda: exposição e venda de culinária juçareira e artesanatos tradicionais. Não Perca!

Realização: Associação Banqueiros e Pescadores Tradicionais de Ubatuba, Associação Juçara - Museu Juçara de História, Associação Comunitária dos Banqueiros e Pescadores de Ubatuba, Associação dos Pescadores de Ubatuba, Associação dos Pescadores de Ubatuba - ABU, Conselho de Desenvolvimento de Ubatuba, Associação dos Remanescentes de Quilombos do Sertão do Ubatumirim, Associação Tradicional dos Caiçaras de Ubatuba, Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais, Fundação Pro-Sertão, Associação Ubatuba Mulher Juçara

Patrocínio: IPEMA, Ubatuba, PETROBRAS

Figure 5: Juçara Festival features caicara and quilombo music.  
'Come celebrate another harvest with us'.  
Credit: Prefeitura de Ubatuba