



The Indians are the guardians of the forest. For centuries they have developed their economy on the basis of shifting cultivation, totally adapted to the tropical forests, guaranteeing the regeneration of nature. They do not exploit their resources indiscriminately; spiritual values, knowledge of plants and of the habits of animals exemplify determining factors in their use and occupation of the land. The Indians' territorial conception, and the ecological adaptation of life and culture to the environment have prevented the destruction of the Amazon forest until today. But pressures, invasions and the reduction of Indian territories are diminishing the possibilities of these ethnic groups to survive, besides destroying the environmental balance which they have maintained and preserved for so many years.

The **Enawenê Nawê** live in the north-east of the State of Mato Grosso, where they depend on the rivers, as their diet consists essentially of fish. Their population has virtually doubled during the last decade and a half, today up to 192 people. Such facts are rare amongst Brazilian Indians.

The Enawenê Nawê have not suffered from massacres or epidemics which would have decimated them.

Nor have there been significant cultural changes since the first contacts with the Jesuit missionaries Vicente Cañas and Tomaz Lisboa. Their territory has still not been demarcated by the Brazilian government, despite the existence of an official proposal since 1979.

This indefiniteness facilitated invasions and gave rise to conflicts that culminated in the assassination of the missionary Vicente Cañas, in 1987. At the present time, besides the large ranches (*fazendas*), this Indian area is having to contend with a hydroelectric project for the headwaters of the 12th October river.

The Indians face the further threat of a pioneer front of diamond prospectors (*garimpeiros*), who are invading their territory through the Biological Reserve of the Ique river, polluting the rivers.

A team from the *Operação Anchieta* (OPAN) have been giving continuity to the work initiated in 1974.

The **Xicrin**, of the Cateté river, are a group of Kayapó hunters and shifting cultivators of the south of the State of Pará.

They live in rich forests and have been frequently affected by mega-development projects for Amazon forest.

One of their neighbours is the so-called Carajás Project, which constitutes the largest iron ore mine in the world under open sky, run entirely on charcoal.

In February, 1989, they participated, along with other Kayapó villages, in the Altamira protest against the construction of a hydroelectric complex and the subsequent flooding of the forests of the Xingu river.

in the State of Pará where mahogany trees are concentrated. Although their much sought-after land has already been demarcated, it has not been definitively legalized by the Federal government.

The **Nambiquara**, of the valley of the Guaporé river, live in the heart of South America, in a region of transition between forest and savanna. They utilize the two ecosystems for the obtention of food, medicines and artefacts. They plant their gardens in the forest, saving the small savanna areas for the villages

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Currently, the Xicrin's main problem results from the fact that their forests consist of one of the few areas in the State of Pará where mahogany trees are concentrated. Although their much sought-after land has already been demarcated, it has not been definitively legalized by the Federal government.

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These Indians were reached and almost exterminated by agricultural and livestock enterprises in the 1960's. Their lands were only demarcated in 1981, and archaeological sites and sacred places of the Indians were left out of the established boundaries.

Their forests are being pillaged, with the connivance of the authorities, year after year, by timber merchants.



Photography

Vincent Carelli

Graphic Designer : *Eduardo Cerqueira Lima*
Coordination : *Virginia Valadão, Valéria Mendonça*
Poem : *Silbene de Almeida*
Text : *Virginia Valadão*
Translation : *Vanessa Lea*
Collaboration : *Isabel Vidal, Sylvia Caiuby Novaes*
Films/Printing : *Pancrom Indústria Gráfica*
Acknowledgements : *Erismann Máquinas Ltda and Micronal S.A., São Paulo / Brasil*

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