

Archaeology of Ribeirinho Culture in the Lower Amazon Basin, 1600-1800

By

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Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School of Vanderbilt University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Latin American Studies

May, 2016

Nashville, Tennessee

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my thesis committee: Dr. William R. Fowler, my primary thesis advisor, who generously gave much of his time to not only provide valuable feedback, but also much needed encouragement as I began writing this thesis. I am particularly grateful to my second reader, Dr. Charles E. Orser, Jr., who first inspired me to take on this project. Dr. Orser's patient guidance throughout this process has allowed me to see the great potential in pursuing long-term archaeological research in Amazonia.

At Vanderbilt University, I would like to thank Dr. Tom Dillehay, Dr. Norbert Ross, Dr. Jane Landers, and Paula Covington for their guidance and support throughout both this research process and my graduate studies.

In Brasil, I would like to thank the members of the OCA team: Dr. Helena Lima, Dr. Fernando Marques, Dr. Anna Brown-Ribeiro, Bruno Moraes, Dr. Morgan Schmidt, and Kevin McDaniel, all of whom played a very important role in introducing me to archaeology in Gurupá, and to the wonderful facilities at the Museu Emílio Goeldi in Belém. I would also like to thank Dr. Richard Pace and Dr. Glenn Shepard for their support and encouragement throughout my stay in Brasil.

This project would not have been possible without the financial support of the Tinker Travel Research Grant, for which I am in much gratitude.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

From the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth century, the convergence of Portuguese settlers and missionaries, sub-Saharan African slaves, and indigenous peoples in colonial Amazonia led to complex cultural and ethnic transformations. In the challenging Amazonian environment, Portuguese invaders were forced to depend heavily on indigenous Amazonians, and to a lesser extent sub-Saharan African slaves, for both labor and survival. As a result, this dependence fostered complex webs of mutual entanglement between and within groups, that over time resulted in profound changes in the cultural and ethnic make-up of the region.

Today, while many indigenous cultural and ethnic features persist, and in some places flourish, the Lower Amazon Basin is predominated by *ribeirinho* culture. The term *ribeirinho*, meaning ‘riverbank dweller,’ is a designation that is widely used throughout the Brazilian Amazon to identify the descendants of mixed Portuguese, African and indigenous heritage, who today play a vital role in the management of this ecologically diverse region. While most *ribeirinhos* identify with mainstream Brazilian culture, various indigenous and African elements can easily be seen in fundamental aspects of their daily lives. Most visible within the lives of *ribeirinhos*, however, are the hardships produced by social inequalities and the degradation of their environments. In many ways, these aspects of their daily lives can be attributed to pervasive forms of structural and symbolic violence, which can ultimately be traced back to the colonial

encounter. By undertaking an archaeological investigation into the root of ribeirinho cultural formation, and then tracing out its transformation over time, I hope to understand the ways in which large processes, such as colonialism, capitalism, eurocentrism, and racialization came to shape not only the cultural and ethnic identities of modern day ribeirinhos, but also the inequalities faced by these communities both past and present.

In this thesis, I will design arguments for potential avenues for the future research of colonial sites in the Lower Amazon Basin, such as forts, settler villages and missions, in order to understand how unequal power relations within the colonial encounter would have taken shape through practice, and how they would have subsequently been inscribed in both objects and on the cultural landscape. By utilizing this framework, the outcomes of these colonial encounters have the potential to become infinitely more complex and defy over arching and essentializing generalizations commonly found in cultural change and continuity dichotomies (Silliman 2005, 2009). Exploration of the material culture found in the archaeological record, in addition to an investigation into historical source material, may help to shed light on the formation of a proto-Amazonian society made up of different groups experiencing varying forms of cultural change and/or continuity, simultaneously, across and even within sites. Essentially, a multiscale perspective, that takes into consideration the complexities of processes of cultural change and/or continuity throughout the long history of colonialism in this region, will not only help us better understand the formation of ribeirinho culture, but also the cultural and ethnic transformations experienced by Amerindian, African, and European groups.

Within a multiscale perspective, an examination of these large scale meta-processes of domination have the potential to reveal how they are transcended from a global to a local level (Orser 1996, 2014). Since the arrival of Europeans to Amazonia, these processes have led to the

widespread commodification of rivers, forests, animals, and the people of this region, causing prolonged human suffering and environmental degradation. For the past few centuries, master narratives of the exploration and conquest of Amazonia have had the effect of naturalizing Portuguese colonization and exploitation of this region (Funari and Senatore 2015; Voss 2015). In this sense, within these narratives “European culture reconstructs itself around a myth that creates an opposition between an alleged European geographical continuity and the world to the south... which forms the new center/periphery boundary. The whole of Eurocentrism lies in this mythic construct” (Amin 2009:103). Historical archaeology, however, is uniquely positioned to challenge these narratives as it is fundamentally equipped to recognize processes of inequality that are inherent within colonialism and the rise of modernity (Funari 2015; Orser 1996, 2014). As Charles E. Orser, Jr. (2014:10) points out, “one of the greatest strengths of historical and modern-world archeology is the ability to reveal the hidden histories of individuals and communities that have been ignored, forgotten, poorly represented, and even misrepresented in and by documentary history.” New approaches within the archaeology of colonialism in Latin America are also discarding essentialist viewpoints of cultural change, as well as binary colonizer/colonized classifications, and are encouraging archaeologists to bridge the temporal gap between prehistory and history in their discussions (Funari and Senatore 2015; Liebmann 2008; Lightfoot 1995; Silliman 2005). This study seeks to also disrupt the master narrative of Spanish and Portuguese colonization, which has naturalized the production and legacies of social inequality. According to Barbara Voss (2015:354), what these master narratives of conquest, cultural evolution, and indigenous complicity (to name a few) share, “is the way they close down, rather than open up, meaningful directions for research.”

Central to the production of the inequalities of these meta-processes are the fortifications, settler villages, and missions constructed to both expand, defend, and control colonial territories. These structures served not only these pragmatic objectives, but also held powerful symbolic meaning, which helped to reinforce a social order, justifying European exploitation and dominance. While many Brazilian historical archaeologists have focused on the colonial encounter, these studies have almost exclusively remained tied to mining in the Minas Gerais region, and plantation slavery of central and southern Brazil (Lima 1993; Funari 1994; Symanski and Souza 2009; Symanski and Zarankin 2014). Currently no significant archaeological work has been conducted at sites like these in this region, and with the exception of a few very recent and ongoing studies in Santarém and Belém, there has been very little traction for historical archaeology in the Lower Amazon Basin (Symanski and Gomes 2015). As a result, one of primary objectives of this project is to assess the archaeological potential of sites located within the present day Municipality of Gurupá, a historically rich area that has been occupied since before the arrival of Europeans.

Located on the southern banks of the Lower Amazon River in the present-day town of Gurupá, Fort Santo Antonio is a promising site for archaeological survey, as it was a vital local for Portuguese exploitation in Amazonia. For most of the seventeenth century, this fort served not only as a highly strategic defensive outpost, but also as a jumping off point for slave raids, some of which reached into some of the furthest parts of the Amazonian interior. Fort Santo Antonio is unique in that represents a site of culture contact, making it a place of complex, competing ontologies, in which one ontology eventually came to dominate the other(s). Today Fort Santo Antonio represents not only the material legacies and aspirations of the Portuguese empire, but more importantly, the legacies of domination and resistance, many of which continue

to be played out on the Amazonian landscape.

In contrast to Fort Santo Antonio is the former village and mission of Carrazedo. Located approximately 35km upriver from Gurupá, Jesuits formed a mission here in the mid-seventeenth century, and for the most part, kept indigenous converts separated from Portuguese colonists. This site's potential significance lies in the possibility to show contrasting processes of cultural change and/or continuity from Fort Santo Antonio and surrounding sites. If these processes can be demonstrated in the archaeological record, then arguments may be made against many of the generalizations that essentialist viewpoints of the cultural and ethnic identities that emerged from the colonial encounter in this region.

Equally important to the archaeology being proposed in this area, are the roles that local communities and individuals stand to play in the proposed research. According to Paul Mullins (2007:97), "an engaged archaeology should articulate repressed or ignored political demands, or it risks simply painting evocative emotional pictures of the past with no clear connection to contemporary inequality." For this reason, archaeologists working at these sites hope to involve community members in the archaeology that is taking place. With the collaboration of the greater Gurupá community, one of the long term goals of this project will be to establish a small museum or cultural heritage center at the Fort Santo Antonio site. By creating monuments that reflect the untold history of this region, the Gurupánese community can not only become active participants in the dissemination of their local history, but may also hopefully create for themselves economic opportunities through the promotion of tourism and employment (Funari 2000; Shepard 2012).

While purely preliminary in nature, in this thesis I hope to further a research agenda that seeks to embrace the inherent complexity of colonialism in the Lower Amazon Basin. By

recognizing the complex and multi-faceted identities that emerged from the colonial encounter we are able to “avoid essentializing approaches that categorize precontact indigenous Americans as ‘peoples without history’ or postcontact indigenous identities as merely artificial ‘reinventions’ of past cultures” (Hill 2013:179). Revealing the complex agency of subaltern groups to shape their own histories helps to reclaim voices which have been marginalized, forgotten, and/or misunderstood within the annals of history (Said 1989). While a constructed academic narrative is clearly not the same as a subaltern voice, historical archaeology does hold the unique position in providing material evidence and interpretations that may help address the now famous question: “Can the subaltern speak?” (Spivak 1988).

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### **Precontact Amazonia**

For nearly 11,000 years Amazonia has been occupied by human beings. The earliest occupations in this region (~11,000 to 8500 B.P.) are attributed to tropical forest foraging societies who produced elaborate cave paintings (*Monte Alegre*), bifacial projectile points, and who survived by developing semi-intensive extractive agriculture. With the emergence of ceremonial shell mounds (~7500 B.P.), ceramics traditions (~6000 B.P.) and other agricultural advances in the mid-Holocene, traces of a widespread anthropogenic modification of the Amazonian landscape begin to take form, and with it the development of complex societies (Erikson 2008; Heckenberger and Neves 2010; Roosevelt 1991, 1999).

By the Late Holocene, slash and burn agriculture, soil modification, and wetland management comprised what many archaeologists consider, *the domestication of the Amazonian landscape* (Clement 1999; Denevan 1992, 2001, 2003; Erickson 2008; Heckenberger 2005; Heckenberger and Neves 2010; Neves and Peterson 2005). The domestication of landscape refers to the “conscious process by which human manipulation of the landscape results in changes in landscape ecology and the demographics of its plant and animal populations, resulting in a landscape more productive and congenial for humans” (Clement 1999:190)<sup>1</sup>. One of the most evident and telling markers of this domestication process was the creation of *terra preta do*

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<sup>1</sup> Originally quoted in Heckenberger and Neves (2010: 253).

*indio* or Amazonian Dark Earth (ADE) soils by indigenous Amazonians. These nutrient rich soils, developed over several generations through the “slash and char” process of producing and mixing of biochar in low temperature settings, eliminates the heavy concentration of iron rich, red oxisoils (*terra roxa*) that predominate throughout most of Amazonia (Erickson 2008:171). Over time, the development of these anthropogenic soils allowed for the emergence of intensive agriculture, which may have supported complex societies. This archaeological evidence has dispelled much of the environmental determinisms that have long typified Amazonia as a *counterfeit paradise* capable of producing only simple tribal societies (e.g., Meggers 1971, 2001).

The emergence of complex societies is thought to have occurred by ~2500-2000 B.P. The archaeological record suggests long-term occupation of ADE sites numbering in the low thousands (Denevan 1992, 2003; Heckenberger and Neves 2010; Neves and Petersen 2006; Roosevelt 1999). The majority of sites discovered, suggest settlements ranging from small residential centers (<10 ha) to larger residential and ceremonial centers (>30 ha) (Heckenberger and Neves 2010:256). These settlements, primarily located along the banks of the Amazon River and its tributaries, served as the sociopolitical and ritual centers of entire regional polities (Heckenberger 2005; Heckenberger and Neves 2010; Neves and Petersen 2005). Several language families, most notably Tupi-Guarani, Arawak, Gê and Caribe are thought to have been present in the the Lower Amazon Basin during this time, from which two of the most recognizable ceramic traditions are thought to have formed: the Amazonian Barrancoid (Incised Rim Tradition) (~2500-1100 B.P.), and the Amazonian Polychrome Tradition (1000-1250 C.E.). These ceramic traditions point towards broad prestige goods based economies, as well as long-term processes of ethnogenesis and cultural pluralism (Hill 2013; Lima 2008).



The discovery of the ways in which native Amazonians domesticated their landscapes has ushered in new ways to perceive this region's prehistory. The debunking of long-held assumptions of Amazonia's prehistory, as made up of exclusively small-scale primitive tribes inhabiting a largely pristine forest, has allowed for the emergence of an understanding of this region which takes into account its more nuanced and complex history (Denevan 1992, 2001, 2003; Roosevelt 1999). By moving away from environmental determinisms, we are now able to view the Amazonian landscape as "historically constructed, reflecting changing management practices that leave visible imprints of past human agency" (Neves and Peterson 2005:279). While this is vitally important to contemporary debates on biodiversity and precontact human agency, these discoveries also have important implications for postcontact histories. By exploring past human agency, we are now able to move beyond generalizing histories that have long portrayed postcontact Amazonia as a landscape shaped solely by European domination.

### **Sixteenth Century**

By the time the first Europeans ventured into Amazonia, native populations were estimated to have been somewhere between 5-6 million people (Denevan 2001:57). Serious exploration of this region did not begin until the 1540s, when Francisco de Orellana and crew ventured down the Amazon River as part of a larger expedition in search of the fabled land of cinnamon. This voyage, chronicled by Gaspar de Carvajal, was the first to encounter peoples of the Lower Amazon Basin. In his account, Carvajal reveals a riverine landscape filled with large, semi-urbanized societies ruled by powerful overlords (Hemming 1978; Smith 1990). While full of fantastical references to mythical and monstrous beings, early Spanish accounts like

Carvajal's have confirmed many of the archaeological findings concerning both indigenous demographics and the presence of semi-complex societies.

As European powers frantically sought to secure their New World domains, the signing of the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 created a line of demarcation between Portuguese and Spanish possessions at roughly 42°30'S and 50°W. As a result of this treaty, Portugal's possession of land in this region was severely restricted to all but the mouth of the Amazon River, with the rest of the basin falling almost entirely within the jurisdiction of Spain. However, with Spain focused on their newfound viceroyalties in Peru and Mexico, and Portugal concentrated on colonizing the central and southern coasts of Brazil, neither Iberian powers sought to undertake serious colonization efforts in this region, leaving the Amazon largely for the taking (Cleary 2001; Hemming 1978; Lorimer 1989; Whitehead 2014).

While Portugal officially established the captaincy of Maranhão in 1534 at the mouth of the Amazon and its surrounding environs, other European powers took Portugal's virtual absence in this region as an opportunity to exploit its people and resources. The natural resources most lucrative to European traders for export were restricted primarily to the *drogas do sertão* (extractive forest products), such as hardwoods, cacao, tobacco, rubber, cotton, animal products, and dyes, to name a few (Cleary 2001; Hulsman 2009). While Europeans went to great lengths to establish trade relations with native Amazonians, colonizing efforts were minimal and settlements remained limited to sparsely placed and poorly constructed trading outposts or forts (Hulsman 2009; Kelly 1984; Lorimer 1989; Whitehead 2014). The French and Dutch had the largest presence, establishing forts and trading posts in the Amazon delta and at the confluence of the Xingu River, respectively. Both the English and the Irish also sought to exploit the riches of the region, establishing small mining camps, trading posts, and sugar plantations, which

almost always ended in failure (Kelly 1984; Lorimer 1989).

With the emergence of these ephemeral settlements, came a new network of trade that not only introduced Europeans to Amazonian goods, but also brought into the lives of Amerindians the multi faceted uses of steel in the form of axes, knives, fish hooks and guns (Cleary 2001). These new trade items, along with the emergence of an extractivist agricultural economy, had profound consequences for precontact trade networks that had previously been composed of a “Labyrinthine river system [which] had operated to connect the floodplains with the uplands” (Cleary 2001:84). Yet, with the arrival of Europeans “trade links that had integrated the lowlands with the Andean highlands for millennia were ruptured, and the Amazon became more isolated within the continent while a network of external relationships... tenuously began to bind it to Europe (Cleary 2001:84).

### **Seventeenth Century**

While indigenous responses to European presence were certainly not uniform, it is clear that throughout Amazonia “colonial intrusions resulted in the radical transformation of native societies and their ultimate destruction as autonomous entities” (Whitehead 2014:86). Accounts of early encounters between Europeans and indigenous Amazonians paint a markedly different picture to the one that would eventually follow with Portuguese conquest of the region. While there were certainly instances of violence and enslavement prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, for the most part, trade was encouraged on both sides, and relations were based primarily on barter (Hulsman 2009:20).

By the turn of the century, Portugal had established a highly lucrative sugar industry on

the Brazilian coast, and sought to replicate this success in the Amazon. In order to do this, however, they would have to root out the other European powers who had established themselves in this region. Beginning with the French in 1615, and then further upriver with the Dutch in the 1620s, the Portuguese spent nearly three decades in their conquest of Amazonia. In many cases, the fortifications left by the French and Dutch had become so valuable to their previous owners that the Portuguese rebuilt these settlements, many of which became the foundations of modern day Amazonian cities and towns (Hulsman 2009; Kelly 1984).

By the time the Portuguese rooted out rival European powers, the large complex societies that once lined the banks of the Amazon River, had “disintegrated, partly under the onslaught of epidemic disease” (Whitehead 2014:87). The remaining populations that survived European intrusion, became either fragmented, tribalized and/or transformed into smaller neoteric polities (Cleary 2001; Whitehead 2014). With the threat of both lethal disease and violence, native Amazonians abandoned barter as a means of exchange for their labor. In turn, the Portuguese resorted to slavery and in doing so, set in motion a process in this region that wouldn’t end until the late nineteenth century (Hemming 1978; Schwartz 1978).

It is important to note, however, that slavery in Amazonia was not restricted solely to a European practice. Fernando Santos-Granero (2009:14) argues, that “native slavery in tropical America was not a colonial product,” as indigenous Amazonians commonly practiced non-chattel slavery, or what he terms “captive slavery.” While Portuguese and Spanish Kings were imposing chattel slavery on indigenous peoples as part of their modernization project, making this distinction acts to counter Eurocentric notions that posit European conquest as having “changed the history of Amerindian peoples forever, dividing it into an authentic past and a somewhat spurious present” (Santo-Granero 2009:6; see also Orser 2012).

In order to understand the relations that would take place in Amazonia, it is important to understand the ways in which very similar processes occurred during the sixteenth century on the Brazilian coast. After the breakdown of the barter system in the mid-1500s (again, for very similar reasons), the Portuguese began enslaving Tupinambá populations to serve as labor on their sugar plantations (Hemming 1978; Schwartz 1978). The brutality endured by the Tupinambá at the hands of the Portuguese is both legendary and undeniable, as they believed it to be their obligation to enslave peoples whom they essentially viewed as heathens. In the following passage, Gabriel Soares de Sousa, a Bahian sugar planter, recounts the justification given to colonists to enslave Amerindians. He writes:

The king has given permission for these Indians to be enslaved. He deems that they are incapable of being freemen and that they deserve to be slaves, owing to the dreadful crimes that they have committed against the Portuguese, killing and eating many hundreds, even thousands, of them, including a bishop and many priests (2010 [1592]:190).

With this sense of entitlement in hand, the colonists quickly decimated coastal Amerindian populations through enslavement, along with outbreaks of disease, and as a result would quickly turn to the interior for untapped sources of slave labor.

Eventually, a 1580 law would prohibit the outright enslavement of indigenous populations in Portuguese colonies. Loopholes in this legislation, however, allowed colonists to continue various forms of ‘just’ enslavement (Hemming 1978; Kiemen 1954; Schwartz 1978; Sommer 2005). While Amerindian slavery on the coast was, for the most part, a transitory phenomenon, the perceptions, relations, and legislation concerning Amerindian enslavement first established there, would find continuance in Amazonia for nearly two centuries.

Coinciding with Portuguese expansion into Amazonia, a 1624 law was passed essentially overturning the 1580 law prohibiting the outright enslavement of Amerindians. On the Brazilian coast this had, by now, become a non-issue with the incorporation of African slavery in the late sixteenth century. In Amazonia, the new legislation opened up access to the unregulated enslavement of vast populations of Amerindians that would remain largely uncontested until the arrival of the Jesuits during the mid-seventeenth century (Hemming 1978; Kiemen 1954; Sommer 2005; Whitehead 2014).

Indigenous labor, as in other colonial enterprises in the New World, was at the heart of Portugal's state, economic, and spiritual ambitions in Amazonia. For anyone attempting to travel, defend, capture, or colonize this region, indigenous cooperation whether forced or free was vital. As Neil Whitehead points out, the constant threat of Spanish encroachment in western Amazonia, "served to remind the Portuguese authorities of the dire necessity to control the native population," and with a lack of infrastructure, namely fortifications, it would only be "through the direct control of people that a claim to territory could be made real" (2014:97). Essentially, the possession of land in Amazonia was largely subordinate to the power derived from the control of labor. Barbara Sommer (2005:403) summarizes this well as she points out that, "unlike other regions of the Americas, in the vast Amazon basin, land had little intrinsic value. The control of Indians, through alliance or by force, conferred power."

Along with the power and territoriality that control of native Amazonians conferred, indigenous labor and knowledge of the tropical environment was instrumental in maintaining a successful colony in this region. While most indigenous labor would have been geared towards the emerging agricultural economy based on extractivism, the most important use of this labor was the harnessing of precontact political economies geared towards producing food surpluses of

manioc, fish, and turtles. Indigenous labor, therefore, was essential not only for Portuguese colonists' economic pursuits, but also for their long term survival in this region (Hemming 1978; Sommer 2005).

By the mid-1640s, word began to spread overseas of the horrific abuses being perpetrated by the Portuguese colonists in their pursuit of slave labor. William Denevan (1992:379), estimates that by 1650, indigenous populations had been reduced by 90%. Anthropologist Eugene Parker (1985:8-9) comments on this interesting predicament, stating, "while the settlers had little regard for the Amerindian beyond that of a labor source, the colonial administration was under orders from Lisbon to treat the Amerindian as a subject of the Crown, thus deserving of all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities such status entailed." The realization of these rights and privileges, however, were hardly experienced by Amerindian populations. Geographic isolation, Crown oversight, and a lack of any real infrastructure or regulation made this social contract futile. As a result, the Portuguese settler was free to capture and exploit Amerindian populations at their will, both economically and sexually – a tendency that would continue unabated until the arrival of the Jesuits in 1655.

In response to this, and to the Capuchin and Franciscan missionaries' lack of opposition to the slave trade, the Society of Jesus took it as their objective to protect the indigenous populations from the brutalities of the settlers, and in doing so secured their place as the evangelization force in this region (Hemming 1978; Kiemen 1954; Sommer 2005; Whitehead 2014). Upon their arrival, a complex power struggle ensued for the souls and labor of indigenous peoples, which resulted in either their becoming further tribalized and/or fragmented into more isolated parts of Amazonia, or incorporated into different colonial settlements through competing slave raids and evangelizing expeditions (Hemming 1978; Schwartz 1978; Sommer 2005, 2006).

While many Jesuits were vehemently against the brutal ways in which colonists treated Amerindians, they were ultimately in favor of their continued ‘just’ or legal enslavement (Sommer 2005:427).

Several strategies for procuring both slave labor and religious converts, many of which originated in southern Brazil, were adopted in the Amazon. The first method, *tropa de guerra*, or ‘just war,’ was a sanctioned form of slave raiding targeting groups considered to be hostile to religious conversion, which had the effect of making them into enemies of the crown. Additionally, acts of robbery or impediment of commerce, the consumption of human flesh, or the failure “in the obligations they solemnly took upon themselves at the time of their initial conquest” were included as reasons for making just war (Kiemen 1954:85). As one can probably imagine, the criteria for proclaiming a ‘just war’ on Amerindian populations was an extremely arbitrary and corrupt process.

The second method of enslavement, *tropas de resgate*, or ‘ransom parties,’ were expeditions that set out to procure Amerindians who had been captured in war by neighboring tribes. Vital to the justification of this method was the knowledge that the release of war captives would lead to both their physical and spiritual salvation. In the eyes of the Portuguese, most captives were believed to be executed through cannibalistic ritual. As a result, the Jesuits believed that these individuals were being prevented from receiving a proper Christian burial and as a result were ultimately being condemned to eternal damnation (Sommer 2005, 2006). From a missionary perspective, the liberation of Amerindians’ souls was probably an easy justification for their continued enslavement by Portuguese colonists. Once freed from their indigenous captors, these individuals would enter into the service of whomever had paid off their debt, for a period of five to ten years. Most, however, would never live long enough to see their freedom



restored (Hemming 1978; Kiemen 1954; Sommer 2005, 2006).

The third method for procurement consisted of *decimeintos*, which were primarily organized by Jesuits as a means of realizing one of their grandest ambitions in South America, namely, the creation of a devout indigenous proletariat. Operating *decimeintos*, Jesuits would convince Amerindians, through either persuasion or manipulation, to leave their traditional territories on their own accord for the Jesuit run villages known as *aldeias*. In many cases, Amerindians were forced to chose this option, as refusal on their part would legitimize ‘just war’ for Portuguese slavers.

After several weeks, sometimes months, the *decimeintos* would return back to mission settlements, and here the new Amerindian converts would be incorporated into a physical layout that was completely European. Organized in a rectangular fashion around a central plaza, and flanked on one side by a central church and on the others by rows of houses, these settlements were an assault on the Amerindians’ traditional residential patterns. As Stuart Schwartz (1978:50) points out, “to change those patterns was to breach the security of the traditional universe and to disorient the Indians in the literal meaning of the word.”

While those captured in either *tropas* were certainly condemned to a brutal life of slavery, those brought downriver of their own ‘free’ will in ecclesiastical *decimientos* would be baptized and would become part of the colonial workforce. After a brief adjustment period, Amerindians were expected to complete religious conversion, and eventually become incorporated into the emerging capitalist market as free wage laborers. While both the crown and church viewed these new converts as wage laborers, in reality, they were merely “*de facto* slaves” (Sommer 2006:767).

As converted wage laborers, Amerindians were expected to either enter into crown

service for various public works projects – primarily the construction of fortifications and shipbuilding – or become mission laborers (Cleary 2001; Sommer 2005, 2006). However, more often than not, Jesuits were unwilling to lend their converts to labor that fell outside either the mission or Crown sponsored public works. In some areas, Jesuits even enjoyed a near monopoly of Amerindian labor. In a petition to one of King Philip I royal advisors, colonist Gabriel Soares de Sousa argues for both the vital services that Amerindians provide to colonists, and the Jesuits’ apparent indifference to the colony’s survival:

The kings have been informed that the State of Brazil cannot survive without many slaves being taken from the indigenous pagan population and put to work on the plantations and estates. Without that provision, nobody would want to live there. That is a factor that the Fathers do not wish to take into account, as they are the ones who profit from these heathens (2010 [1592]:190-1).

While there were many complaints on behalf of the colonists – the Jesuits’ lack of concern for their economic well being, their various extravagances, and their inability to fully convert the native population – the primary accusations leveled at the missionaries always centered on the monopolistic control most missions had over Amerindian labor.

From the perspective of the Jesuits, justification for their position came from a royal mandate ordering them “to assume control over all Amerindian populations under Portuguese control and, by means of a program of pacification, gain their labor cooperation” (Parker 1985:11). Padre Antonio Vieira, a central figure during this era, is largely remembered as a prominent critic of the brutal treatment of Amerindians by Portuguese colonists. In many of his letters to the Portuguese Crown, Vieira frequently mentions the the conflicts between colonists and missionaries over the control of indigenous labor, and laments the treatment of native

Amazonians by Portuguese settlers. Although Vieira often used his political connections to influence reform within Portugal's deeply flawed Indian Policy, his letters also reveal troubling colonial ambitions, in which he sought to expand Portugal's empire in Amazonia through the creation of a Christian Indigenous workforce (Hemming 1978; Kiemen 1954; Sommer 2005).

To their credit, the Jesuits did offer many indigenous Amazonians an alternative to the brutality of the Portuguese colonists. While it was the Jesuits' objective to convert and protect the indigenous population, the "demographic consequences of evangelization were profound largely because evangelization usually involved the resettlement and concentration of native populations in close proximity to European settlements" (Whitehead 2014:96). Essentially, the mission style settlement of living in close proximity, became "very effective machines for propagating disease" (Cleary 2001:87). This in turn would further fuel an intense power struggle over an ever decreasing indigenous labor pool between colonists and missionaries that would last for roughly a century.

Throughout this period, Portugal's Indian Policy wavered dramatically between bouts of abolition and the reinstatement of slavery. Power struggles between colonists and missionaries, in addition to the difficulty of procuring African slave labor, were the primary reasons for this constant fluctuation. Even in times of abolition, when the Jesuits were able to amass a large congregation of indigenous converts, more often than not, they would either become subject to colonists' demands for labor, and would be illegally forced out of missions to work on settler plantations, or to participate in slave raids, all of which could last for several months (Hemming 1978; Kiemen 1954; Sommer 2005, 2006). While the missionaries often tried to accommodate the settlers desire for native labor, "the real source of this conflict was simply that the demands of the spiritual regime of the missionaries were not politically compatible with those of economic

development” (Whitehead 2014:100). Whether this region was experiencing a period of abolition or reinstatement of slavery, is largely inconsequential, as there appears to have been very little stopping colonists from enslaving native Amazonians.

### **Eighteenth Century**

While the Jesuits were able to bring certain stability to the region, their monopoly of Amerindian labor left the Portuguese settlers with few options for procuring labor, as well as a growing animosity towards the Jesuits’ order. Over time the Jesuits would further alienate the Amerindian labor supply from the settlers by creating a hybrid language of Portuguese and Tupi-Guaraní known as *Lingua Geral*. With the *Lingua Geral*, the Jesuits were able to establish greater trust and trade networks amongst Amerindian populations (Hemming 1978; Parker 1985). As Jesuit profits increased, the settlers found it increasingly difficult to meet Crown tax obligations and market demands which led to a complete disregard of the anti-slavery laws put forth by the Crown in 1680. Essentially, with the emergence of full-blown capitalism in the region, slavery had become so rampant that “by 1724 [it] had become an institution of sorts in Amazonia” (Parker 1985:21).

Continuing well into the eighteenth century, this tug of war for control over labor was only disrupted in the 1730s by several outbreaks of disease that decimated the majority of the indigenous slave and convert population. With the colony in crisis due to severe labor shortages, slave raids pushed further into territories than they had ever before (Hemming 1978; Sommer 2005; Whitehead 2014). By 1743, on his way to French Guiana, French naturalist Charles Marie de la Condamine noted that the native population along the banks of the Amazon had by this

time “submitted or retreated far away” (Whitehead 2014:97).

With Amerindian populations nearly decimated, along with a serious lack of both European migration and the importation of African slaves, the colony neared a state of collapse (Hawthorne 2010; Hemming 1978; Sommer 2005). While many colonists had been arguing for a greater importation of African slaves, prior to 1750 fewer than 3500 African slaves had been shipped to Amazonia. Colonists during this time were simply unable to afford African slaves, and with the added geographic isolation of the region, as well as Portugal’s poor political influence in the Upper Guineans, African slavery did not take off in this region until fairly late in comparison to the rest of Brazil (Hawthorne 2010:31).

The importation of African slaves did not begin in earnest until the 1740s, when the Portuguese Crown sought to stimulate the colony after the indigenous demographic disaster. Between 1755 and 1815, nearly 70,000 African slaves entered the captaincies of Maranhão and Pará. However, as Walter Hawthorne (2010:26) points out: “In the 1740s, both the African and crioulo populations in Amazonia were miniscule. At that time the backbone of the landholders’ labor force was made up primarily of Indians.” By 1787 with cotton and rice plantations steadily growing, and indigenous labor pools steadily declining, a surplus of African slaves by landholders emerged in the region (Hawthorne 2010; Schwartz 1978; Symanski and Gomes 2015).

While African slaves were slowly starting to replace some of the former roles held by Amerindian slaves, remaining indigenous populations primarily continued to serve the Society of Jesus. In response to their overwhelming economic success in the face of the colony’s near collapse, and the continual stream of complaints from Portuguese settlers over the Jesuits’ monopoly of indigenous labor, the Portuguese crown, under the guidance of Sebastião José de

Carvalho Melo (later the Marquis de Pombal), issued, in the early 1750s, the *Diretório que se deve observar nas Povoações dos Índios do Pará e Maranhão*. This decree essentially laid out the Crown's plans for the takeover of the mission system in Brazil, and along with it the expropriation of Amerindian labor (Hemming 1978; MacLachlan 1972, 1973; Oliveira 1988; Parker 1985; Sommer 2006).

Under the reforms of the Directorate, the Portuguese began what would become an ill fated half century attempt to once again reign in what remained of Amerindian labor in the Amazon. Key to the implementation of this decree were newly appointed Portuguese born village administrators, who were instructed to increase the size of former Jesuit villages, replace the now widely spoken *Lingua Geral* with Portuguese, and to impose European customs, such as clothing and the concept of the nuclear family into the everyday lives of Amerindians (MacLachlan 1972, 1973; Parker 1985; Sommer 2006). Essentially, these reformations sought to “vigorously promote Portuguese cultural identity in the region” in order to create a European style peasantry (Sommer 2006:770). Lastly, and key to the success of the Marquis de Pombal's reforms in Amazonia, was the *União de sociedade civil*, a program of intermarriage, which sought to join together “conquerors and the conquered under the same laws without distinction based on origins” (MacLachlan 1972:358). At the heart of the Directorate program was the firm belief that an agricultural economy based on the plantation economy of the central and southern coasts could be recreated in Amazonia (Parker 1985:28). This was essentially a continuation of a very persistent, and arguably stubborn, desire of the Portuguese to extract what they viewed as an infinite source of revenue. However, history would continue to repeat itself as the same problems of poor soil management, greed on the part of village directors, and an ever decreasing amount of Amerindian labor, would eventually lead to the demise of the Directorate initiative in

the Amazon (MacLachlan 1972, 1973; Oliveira 1988; Parker 1985).

With the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759, and the fifty or so years of the Directorate program, the roles of colonizer and colonized eventually faded away with the emergence of a creolized majority, which would come to predominate the Lower Amazon Basin landscape (Hemming 1978; Nugent 1993; Sommer 2006). Under the Directorate, colonists forcibly shaped “the Amerind into the mold of a Portuguese settler,” with the result being the transformation of Amerindians into an integral part of the region’s economy (MacLachlan 1972:359). However, one of the interesting aspects of the Directorate era was the way in which it made worse a key problem it was trying to improve upon: namely, the move away from the traditional subsistence strategies of the Amerindians in order to establish a successful proletariat agricultural economy. Essentially, it would be this very aspect – a persistent reliance upon traditional extractivism and subsistence strategies, which would survive – becoming one of the key characteristics of traditional populations in the region, and one of the most resilient aspects of indigenous life in Amazonia (Harris 2000; Nugent 1993; Parker 1985).

### **Modern Era**

With the turn of the nineteenth century, the formation of a creolized Amazonian peasant class, or as some historians and anthropologists (Hawthorne 2010; Moran 1974; Nugent 1993; Parker 1985; Ross 1978; Wagely 2014) consider *caboclistization*, a distinctly new cultural and ethnic identity had emerged in Brazil. The *caboclo*, as Eugene Parker (1985:39-40) explains, is a “transformed Amerind,” or “the logical outcome of the relentless economic manipulation of the ecology and culture of the region, and this adaptation was the only alternative to extinction or

isolation amidst the deep reaches of the rainforest.” The term *caboclo* originates from the Tupi expression *kari'boka*, which roughly translates as “children of the white men,” was originally used to refer to racially mixed individuals within Amerindian populations (Parker 1985:xix). From the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century onward, this term became wide spread and has since been used as a somewhat generic way to identify mestizo members of a common Amazonian peasantry (Harris 2000; Moran 1974; Nugent 1993; Parker 1985).

While in most academic texts and national discourses traditional non-tribal communities throughout the Brazilian Amazon are still commonly referred to as *caboclo*, most of the descendants of Portuguese, sub-Saharan African, and indigenous Amazonian peoples define themselves as *ribeirinhos*. This identification is part of a wide range of designations and self-recognitions that modern non-tribal traditional communities throughout the Brazilian Amazon have appropriated, which include, but are not limited to: *campesinatos* (literally “peasants”), *beiradeiros* (edge dwellers), and *vareiros* (flood plain dwellers) (Harris 2000; Little 2002; Nugent 1993; Torres 2008, 2011).

The importance of emphasizing these markers of identity is vital to understanding the current dilemmas faced by ribeirinhos and other non-tribal traditional populations. Brazilian anthropologists Manuela Carneiro da Cunha and Mauro W. B. de Almeida (2000:335), consider most ribeirinho groups as “traditional populations.” The criteria under which they define traditional populations is summarized here:

Traditional people are groups that have created or are struggling to create... a public identity that includes several if not all of the following characteristics: use of low-environmental-impact techniques; equitable forms of social organization; institutions with legitimate enforcing power; local leadership; and, lastly, cultural traits, selectively reaffirmed and enhanced (Da Cunha and Almeida 2000:335).



This terminology is important because it marks a step away from the more pejorative use of the term *caboclo*, which within popular national discourses, typifies individuals of this categorization as unstructured and lazy, and often places blame on them for what is seen as the “economic backwardness of Amazonian” (Nugent 1993:47).

In academic texts, the populations associated with this problematic terminology are usually depicted as belonging to a rigid monoculture, or as an “ersatz” or “incomplete other” (Nugent 1993:43). Considered by many contemporary scholars as fundamental works on traditional populations in the Brazilian Amazon, the works of Eduardo Galvão (1955) and Charles Wagely (2014 [1953]) were the first works to specifically study and identify these communities. Heavily influenced by the culturalism of Franz Boaz and the cultural ecology of Julian Steward, these works sought to naturalize indigenous populations, leaving traditional peasantries to be depicted as homogeneous products of a failed colonialism. However, one of the most damaging depictions of these non-tribal, traditional populations within early works was their portrayal as antagonists to both Amazonian ecosystems and indigenous populations (Adams et al. 2009; Harris 2000; Nugent 1993).

Over the next two decades hardly any serious anthropological consideration was given to these groups, with most social science research focusing on the indigenous communities of the Amazon. Only in the early 1970s did a new vein of researchers emerge. Led by Emilio Moran (1974) and Eric Ross (1978), the ethnographies produced by these anthropologists continued to homogenize traditional populations by using ecological determinisms and ahistorical approaches as their theoretical frameworks (Adams et al. 2009; Nugent 1993). Although riddled with these limiting traits, which continued to problematize the relationship between identity and environment, these works began to foster an emerging concern over the marginalization

experienced by these groups (Adams et al. 2009; Harris 2000; Nugent 1993, 1997; Parker 1985).

During the mid-1980s the notion of a pervasive sociopolitical invisibility of the Amazonian peasant began to take on a prominent role in the ethnographies of non-tribal traditional populations. Stephen Nugent (1993, 1997), Richard Pace (1998), and Mark Harris (2000), were all part of a new line of thinking, which attempted to reveal the heterogeneity of both these groups and the various environments in which they inhabited. Within the ethnographies of Pace (1998), Harris (2000) and Hugh Raffles (2002), a new emphasis was placed on the identities of these groups by combining historical processes, political ecologies, and a focus on the unique everyday lives within these traditional communities. A new generation of Brazilian researchers, Mauro Almeida (2000), Eduardo Brondízio (2009) and Maurício Torres (2008, 2011), has also recently emerged, paralleling these new approaches, while also emphasizing the rural management practices of non-tribal traditional populations and their roles as sustainable extractivists. In most of these latter works, there is also a determined drive to discontinue the use of the pejorative term *caboclo*, in favor of an emphasis on the various forms of self-definition of these groups. The most recent works within the anthropology of the non-tribal traditional populations of the Brazilian Amazon strive to dispel invisibility by breaking free from misrepresentations and outdated theorizing. By focusing on the diversity inherent within non-tribal traditional populations, and by increasing the social and academic attention being given to these groups, greater visibility is being created for them. Ultimately, the marginality of non-tribal traditional populations in academic texts is becoming less problematic, enabling a greater emphasis on the current social injustices being done to these groups.

## CHAPTER III

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A fundamental objective of this project is to develop theoretical tools that will allow for a better understanding of the processes of cultural change and/or continuity in the present day area of the Municipality of Gurupá during the early colonial era. In order for this to happen, several of the problems concerning ethnic and cultural identity formation and transformation that exist within both the historiography and the ethnohistorical literature must first be addressed. By problematizing these issues, a more nuanced understanding of these processes and peoples may emerge.

Chronologically, this preliminary study addresses a large temporal scale. According to Funari and Senatore (2015:6), “master narratives of the Spanish and Portuguese presence in America in general tend to overlook the temporal depth it had. They go on to state, that a “homogenizing and synchronic look works against the possibility of understanding the deep changes taking place in the diverse geographic contexts throughout time” (Funari and Senatore 2015:6; also Silliman 2005). For this reason, this approach will take on a multiscalar framework that leaves open a loose temporal outlook, as well as a broad synchronic examination of the global, regional and local levels of the colonial encounter in this region. When examining both the historical and archaeological record within this multiscalar framework, emphasis will be

placed on forms of power, practice, and landscape, and how these elements shaped cultural change and continuity.

As discussed in the previous chapter, many historical accounts have framed their narratives concerning cultural change within simplistic binary contexts, arguing that colonial encounters led to indigenous peoples becoming either decimated, tribalized, or assimilated through their interaction with colonial agents and institutions (e.g., Hemming 1978; MacLachlan 1972, 1973; Schwartz 1978). Within ethnographies of the Lower Amazon Basin, there has also been an argument that by the end of the eighteenth century, cultural and ethnic mixing had resulted in the formation of a pan-ethnic ‘caboclo’ identity, which has since predominated the Lower Amazonian Basin landscape (Parker 1985; Ross 1978; Wagely 2014 [1953]). While most of these sociopolitical trajectories are accurate to an extent, they ultimately fall into the “trap potentially inherent in the change-continuity dichotomy,” which neglects the complex negotiations that occurred within colonial settlements (Silliman 2009:213). Essentially, these new perspectives discredit the “ethnic essentialism,” which “continues to be an ideology that promotes inequality and justifies structural violence” (Silberman 2015:xii).

Over the past few decades, archaeological studies of colonialism and slavery have sought to move away from discrete identity formation found in traditional models of acculturation in order to better understand the complex cultural and ethnic identities that were transformed as a result of colonial encounters (Beaudoin 2014; Hu 2013; Lightfoot 1995; Lightfoot et al. 1998; Pauketat 2001; Silliman 2005, 2009; Symanski and Souza 2009; Voss 2008). The first studies dealing with culture contact utilized ratios of European and native artifacts to measure acculturation. The proportion of European goods in native contexts (and vice-versa) were used to determine the degree of culture change, and to seriate cultural deposits. These simplistic

approaches, however, were soon discredited as they “depicted passive and unidirectional models of acculturation” (Lightfoot et al. 1998:192; also Orser 1996). While more sophisticated approaches have emerged, examining the negotiation of agency and colonial structures, the need for a more contextual approach remains.

In moving beyond unilinear models of cultural change and/or continuity, the recent constructivist emphasis on the inherent complexity of colonial encounters has led to the development of concepts that recognize the *emergent properties* that resulted from a complex system of interactions between colonizer and colonized (Bentley and Maschner 2008:246; Hu 2013:371). Emergent properties recognize that cultural and ethnic change do not operate in a closed system. Instead, these processes are adaptive, and “emergent behaviors derives from interactions, which themselves continuously change internally, and because many systems are in contact with one another and so affect the landscape of them all” (Yoffee 2005:169). Cultural resiliency, creolization, and ethnogenesis are concepts that have provided new ways to interpret the complexities of emergent behaviors. By utilizing these concepts, we recognize that the identities that emerged from the colonial encounter cannot be “reduced to the colonizer-colonized dichotomy” (Funari and Senatore 2015:6), nor can they be seen “as simple and discrete groups with clearly defined ideologies or forms of practice” (Gosden 2014:478).

Within studies that take on these concepts are approaches that broaden perspectives beyond artifact based analysis and promote multiscale analyses of both the macroscale and microscale processes of colonial encounters in pluralistic settings (Beaudoin 2014; Hu 2013; Lightfoot 1995; Lightfoot et al. 1998; Pauketat 2001; Silliman 2005, 2009; Voss 2008). Using this approach, both microscale (individual responses to culture contact in the context of daily practice) and macroscale (influences of meta-processes (i.e., eurocentrism, capitalism) on the

layout of space within and across sites) analyses are performed in order to construct an overarching comparative approach that transcends the local, regional and global levels (Lightfoot et al. 1998:194). Ultimately, these recent studies have called attention not only to the complexity of cultural change and continuity, but also to the ways in which these processes can occur simultaneously both within and across sites.

### **Processes of Cultural Change and Continuity**

The significance of choosing these particular concepts for an archaeological analysis of Colonial Amazonia, lies in what I believe to be their potential ability to recognize the complex and often simultaneous nature under which cultural change and continuity operates within a multiethnic colonial site. However, in order to arrive at an understanding of how these concepts may work in tandem, a concept that incorporates the *situational* relations and identities created in the colonial encounter is needed.

Entanglement, is a concept that is well suited for this investigation. Within historical archaeology, this concept has predominately been used to examine the ways in which humans have become entangled with the materiality of the world around them (Hodder 2012; Martindale 2009; Orser 1996; Thomas 1991; Voss 2008). In colonial settings, objects had markedly different uses and meanings for different peoples in their attempts to resist, accept or manipulate unequal social relations. As Barbara Voss (2008:4) points out, “How people live, how food is cooked, the clothes people wear, the objects they use in daily life: these genres of material practice are silent tools used in the reworking of social identity.” For the purposes of this project, I will use an expanded version of this concept (*mutual entanglement*), which emphasizes the intercultural

processes of political and economic codependency (Dietler 1998; Jordan 2014; Stahl 2014), as well as a mutualist perspective, which recognizes that “all peoples have connections with others; all men, women, and children are embedded within the multiple nets created through interaction” (Orser 1996:53). By using this broader framework of mutual entanglement, the situation relationships and identities created between people and people, people and objects, and people and places can be examined.

Similarly, my use of entanglement relates directly to Rodney Harrison’s (2014:42) notion of “shared histories,” which seeks to understand “the mutual histories of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working and living together.” According to Harrison (2014:43), “the concept of shared histories must emphasize violence, unequal power relations, and cultural misunderstandings while simultaneously recognizing the importance of cross-cultural engagement.” Essentially, shared histories is a framework for understanding the notion “of *becoming* in which categories of colonized and colonizer must necessarily be troubled and treated with suspicion” (Harrison 2014:53). By utilizing notions like entanglement and shared histories we free ourselves from resorting to binary categorizations, and are instead able to begin to understand the nuanced complexities of culture change/continuity processes like cultural resiliency, creolization, and ethnogenesis that may have been occurring simultaneously across both sites and regions.

### **Cultural Resiliency**

Cultural resiliency is a useful concept that has the ability to take into consideration both resistance and cultural persistence within the multiethnic communities of colonial Amazonia. In many ways, cultural resiliency can be viewed as a counter argument to the passivity that has

often been forced upon indigenous peoples in the face of forced acculturation. As an active process of resistance and persistence by both individuals and groups, resiliency is “the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change so as to still retain essentially the same function” (Walker et al 2004:4)<sup>2</sup>. However, in order for resiliency to resonate, correlates must be made proving that traditions and values were still active, and that they served “as symbolic reference points for real behavior, and that they are strong enough to resist change” (Ascher and Heffron 2010: 10). Stephen Mrozowski (1996) comments on resiliency, noting that under the forced acculturation of the English, Native Americans in colonial New England adopted the English burial practice of placing their dead in coffins, yet maintained both the traditional orientation of their burials facing the southwest, as well as the presence of grave offerings. Based on these findings, Mrozowski (1996:470) argues that “the fact that these contrasts continued into the eighteenth century suggests that Native American beliefs did indeed survive.”

When considering cultural resiliency as a conceptual framework for interpreting processes cultural change and/or continuity, it is often difficult to draw a line between what should or should not be viewed as resiliency. In settings of cultural pluralism, this distinction becomes quite problematic. To illustrate this point, I use an example from Lightfoot et al. (1998), and their study of Fort Ross in northern California. As a setting of cultural pluralism, the Fort Ross landscape largely followed a colonial spatial structure, but was one in which most residents employed their own conventions related to the organization of household and daily practices. As Native Alaskan men and Native Californian women came together, cultural traditions were both maintained and transformed. According to Lightfoot et al., the notion of a creolized culture,

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<sup>2</sup> Originally quoted in Sauer (2015:9).



however, is unlikely as European material culture was not replicated in these households. Native Californian women, who maintained their day-to-day household traditions, did so as a result of the often precariousness nature of their new living arrangements (Lightfoot et al. 1998:208-9).

While this can certainly be interpreted as an example of both cultural pluralism and resiliency, I believe that the complex, emergent properties of open systems like cultural interaction can never remain static. Jacob J. Sauer (2015:9) illustrates this point well when he states that resiliency “emphasizes flexibility, stability, and adaptability in cultural systems, through which agents are able to incorporate useful changes, outside materials, and new ideas without losing autochthonous control of the system itself as it continues to evolve and adapt.” To the credit of Lightfoot et al. (1998:195-6), there is mention that these unions were often short lived and highly unstable, and that they ultimately produced new social identities while also reinforcing old ones. Taken in this context, it would seem more beneficial to view the Fort Ross landscape as one simultaneously promoting both processes of cultural resiliency and creolization.

### **Creolization**

Within historical archaeology, creolization has served to replace outdated terms like ‘survivals’ or ‘assimilation,’ in order to reveal the differences in material culture and spatial production between colonial ideals and creole practices (Dawdy 2000:1). While there are many definitions, the concept of creolization can be summarized as “a process whereby men and women actively blend together elements of different cultures to create a new culture” (Orser 2002:138). Biological, linguistic and cultural transformations are considered to be the primary changes that occur as a result of the creolization process (Dawdy 2000; Ferguson 1992; Orser 2002, 2004).

Traditional studies of creolization, have focused on European artifacts that are used in non-European ways, or as Leland Ferguson (2000:07) states, the ways that “creolizing cultures commonly... accept superficial traits of the colonizing culture while retaining and creating underlying vernacular structures.” Recently, studies of creolization are recognizing the absence of discussions of power (Orser 1996), and have incorporated the notion that this process of cultural change may be an integral part to the conflict and inequality inherent within colonialism (Ferguson 1992; Mullins and Paynter 2000).

Creolization has often taken on a problematic connotation, being viewed as an essentialist process which creates monocultures (Dawdy 2000; Ferguson 1992, 2000). Recent discussions, however, are moving away from ideas of single creolized cultures, and are instead viewing creolization as a complex process that produces “mixed cultures with divisions within the mixes, a series of interacting subcultures” (Ferguson 1992:xlii). Additionally, as Orser (2002:139) points out, creolization can be viewed as a process simultaneously “having universal characteristics – aspects that are true for all time and places – and as a process that is uniquely case specific – being related to specific peoples, places and times.” Within the colonial encounter, Europeans, Africans, and indigenous Amazonians must have experienced a blending of multiple practices, spaces, and material cultures in their daily lives. The usefulness of creolization, therefore, lies in its ability to recognize the often ambiguous, yet new identities that emerged from appropriations and adaptations found in the colonial encounter.

### **Ethnogenesis**

As a concept, ethnogenesis is the “encompassing of peoples’ simultaneously cultural and political struggles to create enduring identities in general contexts of radical change and

discontinuity” (Hill 1996:1). As the term itself is somewhat antiquated, James Clifford has refashioned the term to signify an “authentic remaking” as opposed to a “wholly new genesis, a made-up identity” (2004:20; see also Voss 2008:33). While the concept is a convenient explanation of a process that took place in certain places and at certain times, it does run the risk of overgeneralizing a region that was home to an array of highly complex and varied trajectories of identity and ethnicity for a number of groups.

Commenting on the limits of ethnogenesis, Barbara Voss argues that “ethnogenesis should not be adopted unquestioningly... since an emphasis on ethnic differentiation could obscure other social alliances, accommodations, and coexistences that depend less on hierarchical distinction” (2008:304). Tom Dillehay (2014:288) also points out that one must be careful in labeling ethnic change as resulting from ethnogenesis as many ethnic changes viewed by archaeologists are processes of *ethnomorphosis*: the political, social and demographic changes brought about by colonialism, causing ethnicity to intensify and change “into a more formal and politically and materially (archaeologically) visible entity.” Di Hu (2013:372) also highlights the complexity of ethnomorphosis as the “genesis, maintenance, and disappearance of ethnic identity.”

In colonial Amazonia processes of cultural resiliency, creolization, and ethnogenesis, brought about the formation of new cultural and ethnic identities. However, it is highly problematic to assume that resiliency prevented the complete loss of cultural integrity, that creolized identities stayed creolized for long, or that one homogeneously bounded, *caboclo* identity emerged from the colonial encounter. What is needed now, is an analysis that reveals the heterogeneity of cultural heritage in neoteric cultural and ethnic groups in the Lower Amazon Basin. Addressing this modern issue, leads to one of this project’s most fundamental questions:

what effects did the colonial encounter have on residents within different colonial settlements and contexts (i.e., missions, villages and forts), and how did differences in colonial settlements produce differing trajectories of cultural change and/or continuity?

### **Power, Practice and Landscape**

In his discussions on the spread of European modernization and the subsequent inequalities that followed, Orser (1996, 2004, 2014) utilizes a multiscale perspective which seeks to understand the meta-processes of colonialism, capitalism, eurocentrism and racialization. Framing an archaeological inquiry within these large scale processes, which Orser (1996:22) argues “underlie all historical archaeological research whether or not the archaeologist realizes it,” allows one to properly differentiate the prehistory-history divide in order to identify European expansion and the subsequent effects this had on native populations in the Americas (Matthews 2002; Orser 1996). Additionally, “the use of multiscale analysis in modern-world archaeology ensures that many truths might be revealed in any particular sociohistorical context and that these truths may appear to conflict,” which is especially relevant for sites and regions that comprise a multiethnic population (Orser 2014:125).

When considering a scale of analysis, site or household samples are good in that they are fine grained and allow for a perspective of the individual, as they are often located within “locus of enculturation for subsequent generations” (Beaudoin 2014:317). However, their small sample size risks a certain amount of bias in the contexts of generalization. For that reason, a multiscale analysis which takes into consideration the local, region and even global levels, simultaneously allows for fine grained analyses, regional comparisons, and possibly even large-scale

interpretations of social processes (Orser 2014).

Particularly useful at this level is the use of World-Systems Analysis (Wallerstein 2004), which emphasizes the horizontal and vertical network connections of the “socio-spatial setting,” a place where “a person learns the social rules as well as the social boundaries within which he or she must live” (Orser 2014:64). By examining this socialization process, one is able to understand the social hierarchies and hegemonies that not only make up the capitalist world-economy, but also the ways in which power trickles down to the regional and local levels of the colony, and is manifested into coercion.

## **Power**

In order to understand processes of cultural change and/or continuity it is fundamental to first recognize that the inherent inequality and unequal power relations between colonizer and colonized extends well beyond the local level. Both hegemony and coercion were integral tools that the Portuguese used to control native Amazonians and captive Africans. Manifested on a level that transcends the global to the local, hegemony can be viewed as “the projects and practices of control marshaled in interactions between societies linked in asymmetrical relations of power, and the processes of social and cultural transformation resulting from these practices” (Dietler 2005:54). By examining this process through a multiscale approach, one is able to see how a particular ideology becomes so engrained within a cultural system, that it becomes naturalized as acceptable, or even desirable (Gramsci 1971; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). Coercion on the other hand, is the practice of forcibly persuading an individual or group to do things which may often go against their physical, spiritual, or moral wellbeing. Unlike hegemony

– which is not necessarily about domination, but instead, moral control – coercion is based on raw power created between people.

When considering the creation and use of power at the regional and local scale, the notions of *instrumental power* (the obtaining of power through action and coercion) and *creative power* (the symbolic and persuasive creation of power) may provide analytical insights into potential archaeological and/or archival correlates (Monroe 2013; Stahl 2004). Both instrumental and creative power are particularly useful in colonial contexts, where multiple groups – in this case Portuguese colonists, missionaries and the emerging creolized population – are all competing for access to indigenous labor within and across sites. It is also worth pointing out, that neither instrumental nor creative power need be mutually exclusive. Within different colonial settlements, power over slaves and converts was most likely created and used in markedly different ways. Both forms of power may be employed at the same time, and as a result may add further complexity to the nature of sociopolitical relations in colonial settings (Monroe 2013; Stahl 2004).

Incorporating hegemony and coercion into discussions of processes of cultural change and/or continuity is essential, in that it allows for a simultaneous understanding of the meta-processes of domination, the biases and situational aspects of colonial texts, and the inherently unequal power relations that played out within the colonial encounter from the global to local levels (Dietler 2005; Harrison 2014). By understanding the ways that power was being both created and used, we are not only able to get a sense of colonial governmentality on multiple levels, but are also able to search for ways in which agency was being used at the local level to either accept or resist the control and/or influence of the Portuguese. As a result, both a bottom-up approach, and an understanding of entanglement, can only begin through the recovery of

archaeological correlates that speak to the everyday lives of the inhabitants of these colonial settlements.

## **Practice**

Particularly useful in the context of understanding the formation and/or transformation of ethnic and cultural identities is the use of practice theory, which has the ability to examine the daily lives and agency of individuals and groups at the local level. In a study that seeks to challenge overarching assumptions and generalizations regarding cultural change, practice theory is well suited for the task as it enables archaeologists to derive a “loose collection of possibilities rather than a deterministic and universalized model for how societies and cultures should work, persist, and transform across time and space” (Cipolla 2014:6110).

Cultural and ethnic identity can be understood as a highly subjective product of self-definition and social interaction, where “individuals may shift their identity in different situations or even permanently depending on their interests” (Jones 1999:305). As a result, one of the best tools for understanding this process is Bourdieu’s (1977) theory of practice, where the reproduction of culture occurs in the mundane routines of daily life. Particularly useful in Bourdieu’s theory, is the concept of *habitus*, which can be conceptualized as the dispositions that function to simultaneously work within and recreate structured social environments (1977:72). Through *habitus*, cultural and ethnic classifications are conceived in social conditions or dispositions.

According to Siân Jones (1999:306), the construction of ethnic identity is first formulated within the “commonalities of practice” that are shared by a particular group, and which is then given form through the creation of “symbolic resources.” In order for a concrete sense, or

consciousness of cultural or ethnic identity to emerge, however, there must be difference to which a group may compare and contrast itself. This is most apparent in cultural contact and/or colonial settings where a “reflexive mode of perception” may emerge through the “systematic communication of cultural difference with relation to particular ‘ethnic others’” (Jones 1999:306). Thus, Jones (1999:307) argues that through the intersection of habitus, a particular historical context of ethnicity is created that is both dynamic and highly variable. Through an understanding of the performative nature of a group’s “praxis of ethnicity,” archaeologists and historians can better understand the transient ethnic differences of particular historical and archaeological contexts (Jones 1999:307). Before this can occur, Jones argues that “it will be necessary to abandon the search for homogenous, bounded ethnic groups,” and “explore the ways in which discursive systems of difference intersect with values and modes of practice, the *habitus*, which characterized particular historical contexts” (Jones 1999:308).

However, within historical archaeology applying habitus has often become a problematic pursuit. As Orser (2004:129) points out, habitus cannot be “applied verbatim to every sociohistorical situation.” Many archaeologists using Bourdieu’s concept have “either merely referenced habitus in passing or have simply accepted it as a synonym for ‘activity’” (Orser 2004:129). This is an important insight that highlights the difficulty of both grasping the concept of habitus and applying it in a pragmatic fashion. By applying habitus in passing, many of the foundational aspects of ethnicity and power (i.e. racialization) are neglected (Orser 2004:142). As a result, studies utilizing practice theory in order to understand cultural and/or ethnic identity formation, instead become studies of the “mere disparities between variant kinds of habitus” (Orser 2004:142).

Also problematic in a ‘in passing’ application of habitus is the exclusion of Bourdieu’s



other key concepts which make up practice theory. Key to achieving a practical, working approach that examines the complexities of cultural and ethnic identity formation is the simultaneous use of habitus with Bourdieu's concepts of *capital* and *fields* (Orser 2004:133). Understanding the formation and use of various forms of capital (i.e., economic, social, cultural, and symbolic) within diverse social situations like the colonial encounter is directly related to the manifestation of power. For archaeologists, deciphering various forms of capital in the archaeological record allows for an understanding of not only power, but also the subsequent effects these relations would have had on cultural and ethnic identity formation.

Also key to a viable use of practice theory is an understanding of *fields*, which can be thought of as the situational contexts, both in time and space, of interpersonal relations (Orser 2004:136). Essentially, fields can be seen as “structured spaces of dominant and subordinate positions based on types and amounts of capital” (Orser 2004:137; also Swartz 1997:122-29). Within these structured spaces, is a struggle for legitimization, where all the actors involved view the struggle as something worth pursuing. This validation is essentially Bourdieu's (1977:164) notion of *doxa*, which can be considered the process in which a formerly unquestionable way of life is challenged and significantly altered by the introduction of a new orthodox social and/or political order (also Orser 2004:137). In examining the colonial encounter between colonists and Native Americans in nineteenth-century California, Stephen Silliman (2001), uses the concept of *doxa*, to reveal the appropriation of European material culture by Native Americans as a form of this process, as it represented a very clear break with a former way of life. In many ways, the process or phenomena of *doxa*, was most likely occurring at sites in Amazonia, especially where creative forms of power were being used to control indigenous populations.

As part of a theoretical framework that considers practice theory, it is important to

remember that the agency that individuals exercise in order to change within a structured environment can also be used to resist or prevent change (e.g., Lightfoot et al. 1998). In reviewing practice theory in historical archaeology, Timothy Pauketat (2001:74) has developed a new paradigm he terms *historical processualism*. Under this framework, Pauketat (2001:80) argues that “practices are always ‘negotiations’ to the extent that power, the ability to constrain an outcome, pervades fields of action and representation.” These negotiations, “in turn, always recreate traditions. Traditions, in other words, are always in the process of becoming” (Pauketat 2001:80). In this sense, cultural change and continuity always go hand in hand, and are always occurring simultaneously.

## **Landscape**

Lastly, a framework that incorporates an understanding of the production of space will enable this project to take into consideration processes being played out at both the local and regional levels. Within archaeology, the use of landscape analysis has become a commonly used, yet far from concrete approach (Anschuetz et al. 2001). Using this method of analysis, archaeologists seek to understand the ways in which humans both physically and symbolically shaped their spaces, and how in turn, these spaces acted to shape them. While not unique to this particular facet of archaeology, the landscape approach within historical archaeology is quickly becoming a prominent avenue for understanding the expansion of modernization into the Americas.

For many in the Western world, the idea of landscape is something that is either natural, or is one which serves as a cultural backdrop, having been shaped through human action. This view is usually confined to the surface of the land, creating what Barbara Bender (1993:1)

describes as an “an ego-centered landscape, a perspectival landscape, a landscape of views and vistas.” While these assumptions are true to an extent, they neglect a multitude of fundamental aspects that more accurately constitute landscape. According to Anschuetz et al. (2001:158), despite the fact that landscape approaches have become a prominent force within archaeological inquiries, “no commonly accepted understanding of what landscape studies are or should be exists.”

One idea, however, that predominates throughout landscape archaeology is the notion of the *cultural landscape*, which tends to represent a mere backdrop, or canvas upon which culture is imprinted. While the use of the culturalist interpretation of landscape is common, these interpretations neglect the true natures of landscape and their abilities to both shape and be shaped by human culture and behavior. They also neglect, or perhaps even erase, the significance of social relations. Commenting on the dynamic nature of landscape, Ashmore and Knapp argue:

Landscape is neither exclusively natural nor totally cultural: it is a mediation between the two and an integral part of Bourdieu’s *habitus*, the routine social practices within which people experience the world around them. Beyond *habitus*, however, people actively order, transform, identify with and memorialize landscape by dwelling within it. The environment manifests itself as landscape only when people create and experience space as a complex of places. People’s sense of place, and their engagement with the world around them, are inevitably dependent on their own social, cultural, and historical situations (1999:20-1).

In this sense, landscapes are dynamic, multilayered, and reciprocal in how they interact with humans (Anschuetz et al. 2001; Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Branton 2009).

Inherent within the landscape approach is the notion that landscapes are comprised of both multivocal and multilocal layers (Branton 2009). These *nested* landscapes essentially

acknowledge that individuals and groups often occupy the same social spaces, but experience them in very different ways (Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Branton 2009). Because landscape is not a “single uniform construct,” but is instead a multi-layered domain, it may serve to either solidify group cohesion, or serve as an arena of cultural tension and social conflict” (Anschuetz et al. 2001:165). According to Branton (2009:55), landscapes can be viewed as “the material expressions of power and control,” and can be detected through both “differential access to resources and the manipulation of the built environment to reproduce and naturalize the existing (or desired) ideology of the powerful” (see also Orser 2004:185).

Colonial settlements of the Lower Amazon basin, have the potential to serve as the perfect backdrop for the landscape approach as it was the setting of an intense period of cultural contact, where multivocal and multilocal identities were formed as a result of interaction and creation of landscape. In many ways, the idea of reciprocal interaction between humans and their environments can be attributed to Henri Lefebvre and his monumental work *The Production of Space* (1991), which is considered by many to be fundamental to the development of the “third wave of postprocessual interpretation” (Trigger 2006:472), and the so-called “spatial turn.” (Schmid 2008:27). The foundation upon which Lefebvre derived his theory concerning the production of space rests on the notion that a reciprocal relationship exists between humans and spaces, where space becomes a social product; it does not exist in itself. Additionally important is the relational aspect that space shares with time. In this sense, space is the synchronic ordering of social reality, whereas time represents the diachronic aspect of the production of historic realities (Lefebvre 1991:129-30). Here we see the reciprocal nature of space and time emerge. Since neither are purely material constructs, they are at the same time, “both result and precondition of the production of society” (Schmid 2008:29).

Key to understanding spatial production is the notion that “space embraces a vast array of social interconnections, each of which maintains a specific location” (Orser 2004:183). Equally important to this understanding is Lefebvre’s triadic dialectic, which is derived from the the interrelated dialectical materialism of Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche, Lefebvre’s own theory of language, and French phenomenology (Schmid 2008). On a basic level, Lefebvre’s highly original, yet complex triadic schema, refers to the material, ideational, and symbolic dimensions of spatial production. Lefebvre’s triad are a set of concepts, or “representations of the relations of production, which subsume power relations” (1991:33):

1. *Spatial practice*: a material dimension of space which “embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion” (1991:33). Essentially, this representation is concerned with the everyday practices and network relations within social space production and reproduction.

2. *Representation of space*: is the ideational dimension of social space which is “tied to the relations of production and to the ‘order’ which those relations impose” (1991:33). This is essentially “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists... whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived” (1991:33). This is also the “dominant space in any society (or mode of production)” (1991:38-9).

3. *Representational space*: the symbolic dimension of space. This is “space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’” (1991:39). This is the “dominated — and hence passively experienced — space which imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects” (1991:39).

From the concepts developed in Lefebvre’s triadic dialectic, what we see is not the production of

things in space, but rather the production of space itself.

Additionally important to Lefebvre's theory of spatial production, is his incorporation of phenomenology. Here the triadic becomes realized through *experiencing* three basic points of reference: the perceived (everything experienced by the senses), the conceived (brings together elements of space to form an idea or knowledge of space), and the lived (the experience of space gained through everyday practice) (Lefebvre 1991:39-40). Essential to understanding the production of space, is the simultaneous incorporation of both aspects of the triadic dialectic, which allows one to understand spatial production "in an active sense as an intricate web of relationships that is continuously produced and reproduced" where we find the emergence of materiality, knowledge and meaning (Schmid 2008:41).

Lefebvre's theory of spatial production fits perfect with a landscape analysis of sites like Fort Santo Antonio, which like other forts "functioned as nodes in a mercantile empire, shaping early forms of capitalism, transforming the global political economy, and generating a flood of images and ideas on an unprecedented scale" (Sarmiento 2011:4). As Lefebvre points out, "the shift from one mode [of production] to another must entail the production of a new space" (1991:46). In this sense, forts like Santo Antonio served as a vital part of the production of space that would come to be characterized by European domination and all of its baggage.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH AREA AND METHODOLOGY

The proposed sites of investigation for this research are located within the present day Municipality of Gurupá located in the northeast region of the state of Pará, situated along the southern banks of the Amazon River near its confluence with the Xingu River. The municipality consists of two districts: Carrazedo, located closer to the confluence of the Xingu next to the municipality of Porto de Moz, and the district of Itatupã, between Gurupá and municipality of Santana in the Amapá State. The municipality covers roughly 4,864 km<sup>2</sup>. Situated at roughly 20m above sea level, the town of Gurupá is located at a latitude of 01°24'18" south, and a longitude of 51°38'24" west. In 2004, its population was estimated at 25,285 people (IBGE 2010).

While there has been little written, several secondary historical texts provide valuable insights into the early colonial history of the region, which sometimes mention Gurupá. Mathias Kiemen's (1954) account of Portugal's Indian policy in seventeenth-century Amazonia mentions Gurupá on several occasions, but does not provide details about its colonial settlements or inhabitants. Also worth mentioning is Charles Wagley's classic (2014 [1953]) ethnography, as well as Richard Pace's (1998) updated account, both of which offer brief historical overviews of Gurupá, as well as detailed looks at the area's descendant ribeirinho community. The only work to address the history of this region in detail is Arlene Kelly's (1984) Ph.D. dissertation. In this

text, Kelly makes extensive use of archival materials to reconstruct the history of Gurupá, from its foundation in the early seventeenth century, to just before the turn of the twentieth century when Brazil abolished slavery. Most relevant within Kelly's work, is her use of census records, which provide a demographic history of the municipality beginning in the mid-eighteenth century. Further archival work, at both the Museu Emílio Goeldi Paraense and the Arquivo Público do Estado do Pará in Belém, may provide insights to areas of this history that are poorly understood, namely, the relations between non-administrative colonists and the crown, as well as documents providing further evidence of the spatial organization and inhabitation of colonial settlements.

In the summers of 2014 and 2015, Brazilian archaeologists from the Museu Emílio Goeldi Paraense conducted preliminary surveys at several sites within the Gurupá area. As part of their research project *Origens, Cultura e Ambiente (OCA)*, these researchers are seeking to discover the precolonial and historic anthropogenic transformations that took place within the Gurupá region (Lima and Fernandes, 2016 [in press]; Ribeiro et al., 2016 [in press]; Shepard 2012). The area in question, is an ideal place to conduct this investigation as it is home to a cluster of colonial settlements, which have been occupied since the early seventeenth century, when European powers first entered this region (Kelly 1984; Kiemen 1954; Wagley 2014). To colonial settlers and missionaries, this area represented a strategic hub in communication and transport networks linking the Xingu region with the Central Amazon, and distantly with the Northern Brazilian coastline and Portugal. According to Brazilian archaeologist Anna Browne Ribeiro and colleagues (2016 [in press]: 8), “the municipality of Gurupá can be considered ecologically and historically representative of the Xingu-Amazon confluence region,” as it provides “access to resources from the black water Xingu and the whitewater Amazon Rivers



and mediated access to the central Brazilian plateau and the Middle and Upper Amazon.”

While there are a number of sites to consider, the OCA team is currently focusing on two sites, in which preliminary surveys have revealed continual occupation from the precolonial era to the historic period.

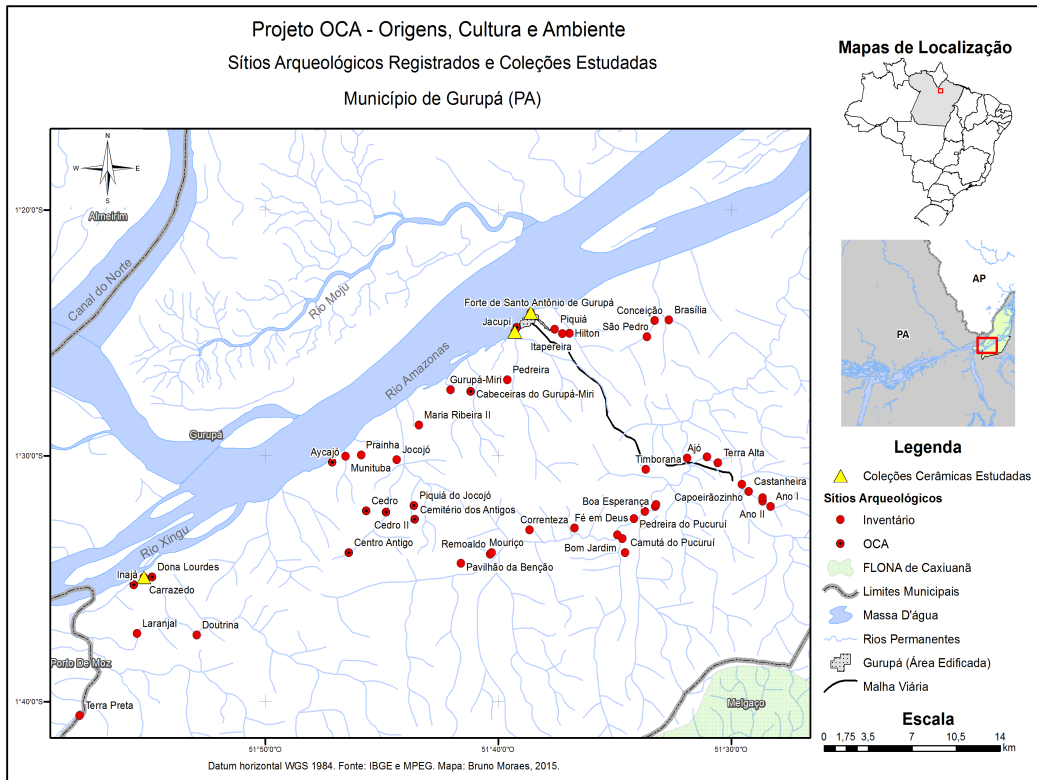


Figure 1. Archaeological Sites within the Municipality of Gurupá

These sites, a fort located in the town of Gurupá, and the ruins of a Jesuit mission in the nearby village of Carrazedo, have the potential to reveal answers to questions concerning both the mutual entanglement of former inhabitants, and the differing forms of power utilized within and across these sites. By uncovering these answers, new theories may be made regarding the different trajectories of cultural and ethnic transformations.

All archaeological research conducted at these sites will follow the requirements of the National Institute of Historic and Artistic Patrimony (IPHAN) for entry into the National

Archaeological Register of Brazil. Methods for collecting primary data will include: field surveys, remote sensing, ceramic laboratory analysis and the analysis of primary historical documents. Methods for obtaining artifacts will consist of both surface and sub-surface collections. Once collected, the artifacts will be sorted, cleaned using appropriate laboratory methods, and analyzed in order to understand their specific contexts. Data collected through maps, aerial surveys, and other descriptions made in the field will be systematized using GIS to create new spatial data. This data will then serve as a basis for spatial analyses, which can then be developed into predictive models that will relate to potential ceramic traditions and their geographical distributions. Historical sources will also be used to better understand the context and location of potential findings. These include both primary and secondary texts, as well as historical maps that will be used to understand the various reconstruction processes of the fort.

### **Fort Santo Antonio**

The first settlement at Gurupá was a wooden fortification originally constructed by the Dutch as early as 1609. The Dutch named the fort *Mariocai*, supposedly after the local indigenous populations inhabiting the area (Kelly 1984:25; Lorimer 1989:78). This strategic outpost, located on a high bluff within the southern limits of the present day town of Gurupá, served not only as a vantage point from which Europeans could monitor the comings and goings of river traffic, but would also serve as a jumping off point for slave raids and missionary expeditions into the interior (Hemming 1978; Kelly 1985; Kiemen 1954).

The Dutch most likely constructed the fort using local hardwoods, using the Old Netherlands System of Fortification, which according to Oscar Hefting (2010:197) also “was an

export product taken by the Dutch on their overseas voyages in the first half of the seventeenth century” (see also Hulsman 2009:18). In the Amazonian environment, the Dutch would have had to take into consideration the rapid tropical decay of organic material. In these harsh environments, Hefting (2010:195) argues that “since there was no local natural stone available, a completely different building tradition grew up. Sand and clay were used to build dikes and forts, deep-rooting plants were planned as reinforcements and to prevent decay.” This particular environmental adaptation to fort construction may have aided the Dutch in their fort constructions in Amazonia.

The Dutch occupation of the fort was short lived, however, as the Portuguese captured it in 1623. According to several accounts the fort was razed, but by 1646, after the Portuguese had established full control of lower Amazonia, the fort underwent reconstruction, transforming it into the permanent settlement that can be seen today overlooking the Amazon River (Daniel 1976; Hemming 1978; Kelly 1984; Kiemen 1954; Wagley 2014).



Figure 2. Fort Santo Antonio, 2015 (Photo: OCA).

While the Portuguese are known to have utilized the Old Italian System of fortification

for much of the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it is probable that the Portuguese utilized the same foundations of the destroyed Dutch fort (Hefting 2010:192). As Orser (2002:229) argues, “one reason that great variation exists in fortification design stems from the simple fact that people in different cultures have dissimilar ideas about how to defend themselves within the natural and cultural environments in which they live.” In this sense, while the Portuguese may have had very different ideas concerning the construction of forts, they most likely incorporated the existing design, as well as environmental adaptations utilized by the Dutch, while making their own updates and modifications, namely, the use of stone.

Upon its completion, the Portuguese renamed the fort “Santo Antonio de Gurupá,” establishing it as one of their five key captaincies in the region (Kelly 1984:27-28). For most of its occupation, Fort Santo Antonio was used to house a military garrison and colonists (Kelly 1984:42). However, one of the most outspoken advocates for the establishment of Gurupá as a strategic holding, was the celebrated Jesuit priest António Vieira, whose “primary intent in coming to Pará had been to establish a base at Gurupá and proceed to the pacification of the Amazon River and its environs” (Kiemen 1954:89). Because it served as an important staging point for both slave raids and missionary pursuits, Fort Santo Antonio attracted both colonists and missionaries seeking human labor in order to support the local extractive and agricultural economies (Daniel 1976; Kelly 1984; Wagely 2014).

By the mid-1650s, the Jesuits established the mission of *Santo Pedro* near the fort, bringing larger numbers of distant Amerindian groups into the Gurupá area (Kelly 1984:42). As a trade-off for protection from the more brutal treatment by the Portuguese colonists, indigenous converts were expected to become productive members of the mission by contributing their labor to the Jesuits’ extractive based economy (Kelly 1984:38). In 1692 the Jesuits lost control of the

fort and mission to the colonists, and over the next few decades, control over Amerindian labor would shift back and forth between these two groups (Kelly 1984; Wagley 2014). These struggles would eventually come to an end, however, when in the late 1730s and early 1740s several outbreaks of disease decimated what was left of the indigenous labor pool. The Gurupá area in general, underwent further decline in the early nineteenth century with the rise of cacao production in the Santarém-Óbidos region (Cleary 2001; Kelly 1984). Today, while the fort remains intact, little is known about the Santo Pedro mission or its exact whereabouts. Local residents in Gurupá believe that the town's current Catholic church was built over or next to the remains of the mission. One of the primary objectives of future investigations of OCA will be to locate the remains of this mission.

In the summer of 2015, surface excavations were conducted by OCA crew members on the north side of the fort where it meets with the banks of the Amazon River. Erosion at this part of the site has led to the exposure of stratigraphic layers underneath the fort, which at the time of writing is undergoing structural renovation in the form of concrete buttressing (see Shepard 2012). Material artifacts, such as blue glass beads, flint shards (possibly associated with flintlock firearms), ceramic shards from European wares, and both precolonial and historical indigenous ceramic shards were all recovered from the falling debris caused by this erosion.

While out of context, these artifacts point to the potential overlap of material culture, and possibly mutual entanglement, of the peoples that inhabited this site. Beyond the importation of European wares, little is known about this regions postcolonial ceramic traditions. As one of this project's long-term goals, a comprehensive understanding of postcontact ceramics is fundamental to understanding processes of cultural change and/or continuity. In order to locate

units for future excavation, the use oral histories, historical maps, and ground penetrating radar will be used to pinpoint potential locations of European households in the fort, as well as indigenous Amazonian and/or African slave housing outside of the fort.



Figure 3. Precontact (Bottom left and right) and postcontact (Top) ceramics found at Fort Santo Antonio (Photo: OCA).

On a local level, the significance of studying colonial era forts lies in their roles as microcosms for cultural and ethnic mixing. As a jumping off point for slave raids, it is highly probable that this site would have received Amerindians from various parts of Amazonia, and would have consisted of a multiethnic population. In many ways, forts are often perceived as places of exclusion. However, in the colonial encounter, isolation and environmental challenges most likely led to forts like Santo Antonio being not only “a place to keep the natives out and in their place,” but also one that “in fact let them in, opening up considerable possibilities for interchanges based around sex, food, artifacts, and violence” (Gosden 2014:478). In this sense, Fort Santo Antonio can be viewed as a place where individuals would have experienced new practices that they would have either disregarded, resisted, or adopted. Whether European,

African, or Amerindian, the simultaneous acts of resiliency and hybridization in regards to the incorporation of these new elements in individuals and groups' life ways, would have served as a precursor to the eventual ethnogenesis of ribeirinho culture.

On both a regional and global scale, forts like Santo Antonio were an integral part of the entangled “global hierarchies (European, capitalist, patriarchal, military, Christian, white, heterosexual, male) that were imposed on arrival” (Sarmiento 2011:4). Today, the vestiges of these structures can be viewed as dynamic, multifaceted legacies of the inequalities produced through processes like colonialism, the various forms of acceptance and resistance practiced by inhabitants of these sites, and the cultural and ethnic heritages that emerged from the interactions in these spaces.

### **Carrazedo**

While the excavation of the Santo Pedro mission is not currently feasible, another site within the municipality, *Carrazedo*, is currently under investigation by OCA. Located approximately 35km upriver from Gurupá, colonial Carrazedo was founded in 1655 as the Jesuit mission of *Arapijó* (Ribeiro et al., 2016 [in press]; Shepard 2012). Abandoned in the mid-twentieth century, current residents of the former historic village of Carrazedo, live nearby in a small village on stilts on the banks of the Amazon River. Today, village inhabitants, some of whom identify as quilombo, and some as ribeirinho, are known for their production of açaí, the manufacture of traps for freshwater shrimping, and the St. Joseph festival, which every year in March brings together thousands of Paráenses.

Current residents of the Carrazedo area, have described discovering an abundance of objects from the colonial era that they have dug up in their gardens, or that they have found in the burrows of armadillos. These objects range from such items as coins, jugs and bottles, porcelain, and even colonial firearms. In many ways, these discoveries by local residents are a possible testament to the important role that this modest village once played in the economic history of the Lower Amazon Basin (Kelly 1984; Ribeiro et al., 2016 [in press]; Shepard 2012).



Figure 4. The Jesuit mission of Arapijô, Carrazedo (1756). Engraving by João André Schwebel.

Since the incorporation of its mission in the mid-seventeenth century, numerous *decimientos* were staged from Carrazedo bringing in countless indigenous Amazonians to be converted and to form part of the Jesuits' labor force. As part of this labor force, indigenous converts provided sustenance for both themselves and the Jesuit fathers, and were assigned to the extraction of various *drogas do sertão* for trade in the colonial economy (Kelly 1984:101). After the expulsion of the Jesuits, this site continued to be occupied exclusively by a population of indigenous converts up until the late eighteenth century (Kelly 1984:142).

Carrazedo was selected by OCA investigators as their principal test site because of its



continuous history of habitation and its favorable preservation conditions. Oral traditions collected by OCA investigators, along with eighteenth-century census sources (Kelly 1984), suggest Carrazedo's history is highly representative of the Gurupá region as a whole in terms of population density, economic activity, and political prominence (Ribeiro et al., 2016 [in press]). There is a high probability, that due to its distance from Gurupá, the indigenous populations of Carrazedo may have avoided colonists' attempts at enslavement. If this is true, then processes of change/continuity may be significantly different from that of Fort Santo Antonio.

When conducting preliminary investigations at this site, OCA investigators determined that historic Carrazedo was significantly smaller than its precolonial predecessor. Evidence of Amazonian Dark Earth (ADE) distribution suggests occupation by a fairly large and complex polity (Ribeiro et al., 2016 [in press]; Shepard 2012). Several areas examined in the preliminary investigation also display temporal and spatial overlap of habitation areas, which suggests either degrees of indigenous cultural resiliency, and/or European or mestizo appropriation of these enhanced landscapes once the mission was abandoned.

Other analyses of the spatial organization of this site have also revealed that both the precolonial and historic settlement (Jesuit mission) have similar internal layouts and orientations toward natural resources and landscape features (Ribeiro et al., 2016 [in press]). While the prospect of ceramic artifacts within the archaeological record of this site is still unknown, its potential to reveal mutual entanglement through landscape features is promising. Ultimately, more archival research will be needed to determine the historic occupation of this site after the expulsion of the Jesuits.

### **Potential Avenues for Future Research**

Unfortunately, the Amazonian environment presents considerable methodological difficulties limiting many of the archaeological signatures that are common in sites situated in drier and more temperate climates. As a result, the primary archaeological correlates most accessible within these settlements are ceramics, some non-corrosive European goods, and landscape features. Based on OCA's preliminary investigations, both ceramic artifacts and landscape features point to a high degree of variability between the Fort Santo Antonio and Carrazedo sites.

### **Ceramics and Culinary Practices**

Through the collection, categorization, and analysis of pre and postcolonial ceramics, I believe inferences can be made to determine the degree of mutual entanglement occurring at Fort Santo Antonio and Carrazedo, and possibly the potential outcomes these entanglements may have had on changes in cultural identity and/or ethnicity. Within colonial settlements, it is fairly reasonable to assume that totemic indigenous traits underwent complex degrees of persistence, transformation and/or loss through indigenous Amazonians' interactions with colonists, missionaries, and enslaved sub-Saharan Africans (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2013). In many ways, the same may be said for the Portuguese, who may have been incorporating native Amazonian ceramic production and culinary practices into their daily practices (Symanski and Gomes 2015). Based on this supposition, as well as the historical record concerning the emergence of non-tribal traditional cultures at the end of the seventeenth century, I suggest that within both the Fort Santo Antonio and Carrazedo sites, many totemic traits in ceramic traditions persisted over several generations until they eventually became transformed

and/or lost through the “asymmetrical incorporation of structurally dissimilar groupings into a single political economy” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:54). This leads to a question, which the analysis of ceramic artifacts may eventually help to uncover, namely, how were these changes occurring between sites?

It is my assumption that these changes occurred at a much different rate between sites, owing to two probable factors: (1) a higher mortality rate of indigenous slaves at sites governed by colonists than those at Jesuit missions, and, (2) the potentially different forms of interaction and creational power relations between the colonists and missionaries with the indigenous population. Within the historical record, frequent mention is made concerning the need to continually resupply areas like Gurupá with fresh slaves due to disease, violence, and the rigors of forced labor (Hemming 1978; Kelly 1984; Kiemen 1954; Sommer 2005; Whitehead 2014). Based off of this information, one would expect the populations of missionary sites like Carrazedo to have had a more stable indigenous population, and therefore greater resiliency in indigenous ceramic traditions. This assumption leads to another vital question: how might have different forms of interaction and power affected changes in ceramic use and production?

To hypothesize, at Fort Santo Antonio and outlying areas, where Portuguese colonists, African slaves, and enslaved indigenous Amazonians lived in relatively close proximity to one another (Kelly 1984:42), both the emergence of a macro Amazonian ceramic tradition and the use of European wares would most likely have appeared here, in abundance, well before Carrazedo. Again, as Gosden (2014:481) points out, “what might look like the most exclusionary of all sites, military forts, actually demonstrate intense interaction within and around their boundaries.” Analysis of changing ceramic production and uses at Fort Santo Antonio may show

this to be true, and in doing so may reveal an accelerated rate of transformation and loss of indigenous totemic traits in ceramic use and production.

The degree to which these processes were occurring may also be directly related to the power being used to control and/or influence the indigenous populations within these different colonial settlements. Within their own study of the emerging criolo population of the middle Orinoco region, Scaramelli and Scaramelli (2013:107) point out that “ceramic remains associated with Early Colonial sites... include a variety of local ceramic production styles that overwhelmingly outnumber the imported wares. However, they go on to point out that this eventually changes after the expulsion of the Jesuits in the mid-eighteenth century, when a more creolized, utilitarian style emerges as the dominant ceramic type, which can be associated with an ethnically distinct criolo population (Scaramelli and Scaramelli 2013:113). Voss (2008:290) also relates how when ceramics become centralized in colonial settings, a material homogeneity emerges where there is “little technical or stylistic variation.” With many of the ceramic shards found in the surface excavation of Fort Santo Antonio, a clear distinction of precolonial and postcolonial ceramics could be made based on this criterion.

In a very recent study, Symanski and Gomes (2015) examined the social segmentation between the Portuguese, mestizo, and indigenous peoples in the Santarém area during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Essentially, two opposite domains are simultaneously expressed in Santarém’s archaeological record, pointing towards conflict and difference, and ambiguity and mixtures (Symanski and Gomes 2015:214). According to Symanski and Gomes (2015:207), in colonial Amazonia, “mixed households, were composed by Portuguese men and indigenous or mestizo women.” In the households they studied, both gender and ethnic differences can be seen through analyses of ceramics, culinary practices, and spatial production.

In their study, they found that the use of expensive porcelain and European transfer printed teawares displayed a clear segregation from the white male domain and the less visible domain of female domestic labor, where ceramic cooking vessels retained many indigenous stylistic and manufacturing elements. This in turn could represent what Symanski and Gomes (2015:214) argue as a “reinforcing [of] values that were very distinct from those ones expressed by colonizers’ worldview.” However, in other households, convergence of foodways point to an ambiguity in domestic power relations. According to the authors, the absence or lack of expensive porcelain or transfer printed ceramics can point just as much to white house owners and indigenous wives possibly making an effort to “build social relations based on equality, intimacy, and solidarity, as to sustain relationships characterized by hierarchy, distance, and segmentation” (Symanski and Gomes 2015:211).

Symanski and Gomes (2015:211) also focus on the domestic spaces of kitchen as a locus of cultural transformation, viewing this arena as a “mediatory space,” where women from various ethnic and cultural background came together and acted as “intermediary agents in this cultural exchange process that resulted in the rich northern Brazilian culture.” An examination of gender roles at this domestic level, reveals the choices that were made by women to incorporate either European or indigenous knowledge and/or practice into their daily routines (Symanski and Gomes 2015:208).

Other avenues explored include a mixing of foodways and consumption. Symanski and Gomes (2015:210-11) reveal that at their sites in Santarém, the archaeological record points to a very clear blending of Portuguese and indigenous culinary practices. Essentially, these practices serve as a “basic component of individual and group identity,” and have the potential to reveal agency through processes of conformity and resistance (Symanski and Gomes 2015:210).

Ultimately, the recent research done by Symanski and Gomes in Santarém highlights both the potential avenues for research for sites like those found in the Gurupá area, as well as some of the results that may be expected.

### **Interactions with Landscape**

In the preliminary excavations at Carrazedo, the remains of the top layer of a Jesuit Mission (*Arapijó*) were uncovered. As mentioned before, the Jesuits maintained a rigid homogeneity within their mission system, a model which was replicated throughout Latin America (Hemming 1978; Schwartz 1978). Based on this landscape feature, more specific questions emerge concerning the creational power and spatial production of this site: How was the rigid homogeneity and hegemony of the mission landscape negotiated by its indigenous inhabitants? In what ways did the Jesuits conform to indigenous uses of space?

Preliminary investigations revealed the possibility for overlap of spatial organization at Carrazedo (Ribeiro et al. 2016 [in press]). If this is true, then it may challenge the notion that Jesuits always kept a strict homogeneity across their missions. Additionally, this overlap may point towards a cultural resiliency on the part of its indigenous inhabitants. The basis for these assumptions, I hypothesize are due to the probability that the Jesuits were highly dependent upon their indigenous converts for both labor and survival. Having an intimate knowledge of the Amazonian environment (i.e., how to extract resources and how to use and replicate modified ADE soils), indigenous converts would have had a unique advantage in their relationship with the Jesuits.

In contrast to the Jesuit mission at Carrazedo, Fort Santo Antonio and its surrounding village most likely displayed a markedly different sociopolitical landscape. Unfortunately, there

is little historical evidence relating to the spatial organization of settler households and villages during this period. Excavations and spatial analyses of this site, however, may point towards the various ways in which Europeans were appropriating indigenous landscapes, such as the continued use of both precontact indigenous sites and ADE.

When considering Fort Santo Antonio within a landscape perspective, several questions emerge. One of the most important being: Why did the Portuguese build their settlements the way they did? Asking this question opens up a number of other questions that relate not only to European forts and missions, but also to European perceptions of both their new environments and the indigenous peoples inhabiting those spaces. Additionally, one has to address the indigenous responses to European spatial production and/or appropriation.

Based on Portuguese dependency on the indigenous population (Hemming 1978; Sommer 2005), questions concerning this specific site's spatial production, center on the proximity in which these individuals and groups lived. How did this site's spatial organization differ from Carracedo? Was there a lesser degree of spatial organization and structure? What were the consequences of spatial production at this site for relations between the Portuguese and Indigenous slaves? Answering these questions through archaeological analysis allows us to understand the production and nature of the colonial landscape at many different levels. In utilizing a landscape analysis, the spatial production of both Fort Santo Antonio and Carracedo have the potential to reveal markedly different power relations, that would have had profoundly different cultural consequences for its inhabitants.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

One of the greatest fears of subaltern groups is that false representations will become part of the official public memory. It is surprising, that even today these divisive battles and fears over the representation of history continue to be waged. However, as these battles continue, an increasing awareness among the public over both the subjective and contestable nature of history is being established. The past, according to Paul Shackel, “is always in flux,” and therefore is open to any who have the power to shape and control history (2001:399). Essentially, public memory is often the product of current sociopolitical relations, as opposed to accurate representations of the past (Shackel 2001). As a result, the histories of subaltern groups are often marginalized in relation to dominate reflections found in generalized historical accounts.

The control of public memory is often a question of power, and can be viewed as a struggle over representation between two or several groups. According to Shackel (2001:387), there exists three categories in which power and the construction of public memory come together: “(1) forgetting about or excluding an alternative past, (2) creating and reinforcing patriotism, and/or (3) developing a sense of nostalgia to legitimize a particular heritage.” As a result of this process, a collective memory of history becomes “linear and straightforward,” excluding many of the alternate histories that would create a more pluralistic past (Shackel 2001:388).



Sites like Fort Santo Antonio, and others in the greater Gurupá region, “present unique opportunities to investigate, with a firm view toward the performance of the colonial present, the intersection of colonialism, memory, power and space in the postcolonial Lusophone world and beyond” (Sarmiento 2011:11). Currently, there are no UNESCO sites in Brazil dedicated to fortifications or the enslavement of indigenous peoples. While Fort Santo Antonio may not be a probable UNESCO candidate, public memory in this region has the potential become symbolized in a myriad of forms, ranging from memorials and museum displays, to commemorations and remembrance celebrations. Within many of these forms of remembrance the social inequalities of the past are recognized and carried into the present as stark reminders of the subjugation and resiliency of colonial peoples. These sites, after undergoing archaeological research and then being converted into recognized cultural heritage sites, have the potential to not only aid in undermining the continuation of colonial discourses, but also may produce economic opportunities for local communities (Sarmiento 2011; Shepard 2012).

Additionally important are the roles that local communities play in the actual archaeology that is being done. As both the site and research objective in question are intimately tied to the Gurupá community, a research design which incorporates elements of community archaeology is vital to this projects long-term success. Using this framework will allow for a close cooperation with community members by inviting them to become directly involved in the archaeology taking place, from the level of research design, to participation in excavations and ultimately in analysis and interpretation. During my preliminary visit to the site, many Gurupá community members expressed great interest in OCA’s project, as potential findings may reveal aspects of their cultural beginnings as ribeirinhos and quilombos. Many of the lingering products of colonialism, namely the structural inequalities that are not visible to the public or

to descendant communities, are also made visible through community members' interaction and interpretation of the archaeological record. Through civic engagement and the idea of presentism through public archaeology, the process of archaeology can reveal these inequalities and their links to the present, which would help empower communities suffering from their continued effects (Funari 2000; Leone 1983; Mullins 2007).

As archaeologists, we must understand local communities as multi-vocal and dynamic constructs and must take this into consideration when designing our research. Often our expectations of community position community members as all having shared interests. This may not always be the case. The true reality of a community is not "natural or essential, but rather processual or generative" (Agbe-Davies 2010:383). This progressive, non-essentialist outlook allows "us as social scientists to see where we fit into existing networks and to determine how we, as archaeologists, can participate in them" (Agbe-Davies 2010:385). Essentially, "It is when we – particularly by virtue of our shared interests, locale, and social interactions – participate in the making of 'communities' that our discipline's work most effectively 'serves' them" (Agbe-Davies 2010:385).

Within colonial settlements, such as forts, missions, and villages, unequal sociopolitical relations and mutual entanglement led to outcomes that defy overarching categorizations of cultural change and continuity. It is my supposition, that processes like creolization, resiliency and ethnogenesis, were occurring simultaneously within and across these sites. Until further archival research and archaeological surveys are conducted, however, assumptions regarding the formation of these processes and the effects they had on the inhabitants of these settlements will remain uncertain.

Ultimately, the significance of understanding the complexities of colonial encounters can

be tied back to present day issues of inequality. By uncovering the unwritten history of colonial Amazonia, it is my hope that both descendant indigenous, quilombo, ribeirinho, beiradeiro, and numerous other non-tribal traditional communities may come to realize a subaltern past and materiality that alludes not only to aspects of identity and ethnicity, but also to processes of inequality that have been at play throughout this region since the arrival of Europeans.

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