

## DISCUSSION OF KAYAPO CASE

Q. How has the rubber trade affected the Kayapo? How does it differ from the North American fur trade? other extractive economies? What other extractive economies have affected the Kayapo?

Rubber, gold, timber: none of them were things the Kayapo thought were valuable in themselves, not goods in own economic system. Also, extractors not interested in staying permanently. But ranching means clearing and permanent alienation of land. Gold has tremendously negative environmental impact.

Brazil nuts come later. Organized through official Indian trading posts.

Q. What was the system of rubber production? Did not involve ownership of land.

Rubber was a wild product, a free good. What bosses controlled was a rubber territory, with labor, organized in a hierarchy, a chain of command, from big boss down to individual tappers. The work was very isolating: individual men made circuit on trail of their trees to collect latex, then boiled down at base. But not isolated in sense that they were on own, rather part of hierarchy.

Bosses needed to control labor, and to control territory against rivals. They had gunslingers. We romanticize gunmen but they were essentially nasty enforcers. In some parts of Amazon, where workers were less easy to coerce, bosses inflicted horrible atrocities to keep workers in line. In some places Indians in labor force, other places non-Indian caboclos.

Q. How did Indians like Kayapo fit in? They were guides to trails and trees. Also enforcers at service of bosses. Given free rein to raid all "whites" except their own boss. Indians could be allies to bosses because they blocked and discouraged competitors.

But Kayapo also had an economy partly based on spoils of raiding, getting goods by attacking/robbing. Like Mohawk in fur trade, Apache in N. American Southwest.

Does not fit ideas of Indians maintaining purity, total opposition to outside.

Q. Why did conflict increase as rubber trade declined? Bosses could no longer keep small armies of gunslingers. Indians could attack more freely.

With conflict among Indians and with whites, some Kayapo and other Indians cut selves off from whites, suffered loss of goods and contact for sake of refuge far away.

Q. How does the situation of the Kayapo today resemble or differ from that of the Kuna earlier in the 20<sup>th</sup> century? in terms of the frontier and the extractive economy? large-scale projects? the invasion of poor non-Indians? new kinds of organizations? the role of the national government?

-Same extractive economy, though perhaps faster-developing and more relentless than with Kuna.

-Same invasion of poor peasants. In case of Brazil, facilitated by building highways across Amazon. In 1920s with Kuna, non-Indians came by sea. Today very similar to Kayapo, by new road: clear forest, herd cattle. Often followed by rich ranchers, buy them out, they move on.

Struggle in all directions. Landless non-Indians desperate, often in conflict with ranchers and landed interest. Violent clashes. Ranchers have gunslingers. Indians in conflict with both.

-Kuna suffered from large-scale projects (mines, banana plantations) sponsored or facilitated by government. But now pace is faster, projects huge. E.g. the dam in movie. National government important with Kuna, plays central role in Brazil.

Q. What are the challenges of organizing resistance? How does it differ from what we have seen in North American and with the Kuna? in terms of generational splits? education and literacy? How do external oppositions become internalized?

Hard to get unity in face of threats. Turner shows took extraordinary effort. Many temptations to sell out. Outsiders impose ideas and values.

Q. What about tensions between young and old? Very similar. Young men impatient, connection with outside etc. resource to advance selves at expense of senior men. Kayapo more formal age divisions: age grades. Movie presents age grades as resource for organizing, true, but underestimates oppositions between young men and old.

What is the effect of writing and literacy? Necessary for struggle: can understand documents, interact with outsiders, etc. But like Pandora's box, causes many problems. First generation of literate men uses as route to power. Very similar to Kuna.

In another Kayapo village further out, book by Fisher shows that chiefs recognized danger, blocks schools.

Doesn't mean that sell-out or divisions inevitable. Turner shows how first generation of literate men, sell-outs, opposed by others. Men who had worked in gold mines saw dangers, radicalized. Often leaders of resistance, rebellions men with some experience of outside.

Q. What do Brazilian bosses want of Kayapo leaders? Want them to be like selves. Role of coronel, backwoods boss, like movie godfather. Institution called coronelismo. Dispense favors to followers, build faction. Coronel Pombo does, then younger men who move into town, live high life, distribute just enough favors to keep faction happy.

Q. Why do the Kayapo keep cooperating with dangerous exploitative outsiders? Why tolerate logging companies etc.?

Have developed need for western goods, esp. fishhooks, machetes, ammunition. Hooked. Saw with N. American Indians as well. Not that different in that respect from white settlers, who often have ethos of self-sufficiency, subsistence economy, but must connect with wider economy to get things like ammunition. Cf. Cronon's take on Puritan economy.

Also internal politics often based on chief as node of redistribution. Saw with "Middle Ground" in North America, chiefs depended for position on gifts from traders, which then passed on to followers. True here. Fisher's complicated analysis in more isolated Kayapo village.

As elsewhere, strongly affected by boom and bust cycles in international economy. Here also dependence on government agency FUNAI. When FUNAI fails, Kayapo thrown back on cooperating with loggers etc.

Q. What distinctively different about international situation as affects Indians? First, very rapid communications. So less isolated, can appeal for help, make case known. Mass media. But also danger. Many Brazilian newspapers very anti-Indian. Kayapo have a general international constituency---environmental activists etc.---that unknown before. Kuna had smaller one, with Canal Zone, foreign visitors.

Equally important, new organizational form, the Non-governmental Organization (NGO). Here can distinguish huge players like World Bank, which lend to governments, affect their policies, and smaller activist organizations which run local or regional projects, sometimes in collaboration with Indians.

Q. What are the pluses and minuses of working with foreign NGOs?

Arouses suspicion, nationalist reaction. Brazilian government exploited. Similar to Kuna and American influence, Panamanian government very suspicious,

blamed for unrest.

Huge NGOs, if won over, can set conditions for grants and loans. Smaller ones can provide resources and knowledge needed for success.

But dependent on their support. Their expectations about nobility, environmentalism. Kayapo learned hard way could disappoint.

Dependent even on reputation of go-between or leader, here Payakan. Major scandal concerning him and accusations of rape, reviewed by Turner. (Discuss details.) Payakan's loss of credibility hurt Kayapo cause.

NGOs, especially those dominated by family or individual can be fickle, change interests, policies, favored recipients. As much up and down as world economy.

Body Shop, commercial operation but makes much of moral stance, idealism. Made it sound as if Brazil nuts going into products came from Kayapo. Turner argues that they got just enough from Kayapo to claim connection, bulk of nuts came from other sources, commercial distributors.

Q. What role of government, national society today? Brazilian doctrine that Indians jural minors, legal status dependent children. Double-bind that if show too much initiative or responsibility, lose protections of that status.

Government agencies for managing Indians. Very corrupt, inefficient, underfunded. Sell-out to private interests. Have helped on a few occasions. Also create dependence by Indians.

Government plans for opening up region. Directly benefited many members of military.

Q. How did Kayapo manage the media campaign? Saw effectiveness of Altimira conference, some taste of complex organizing. Also how staged theater, demonstrations of Indianness. (Resemblance to way Markham orchestrated Kuna testimony at inquest.) Film did not give idea of how much they depended on NGO funds, expertise, and organization. Also long series of events leading up to Altimira, which culmination in long media and agitation campaign. Or how government had promised not to build dam. (Review details.)

Q. How are the impact and social dynamics of video the same or different from Kuna use of writing? Similar in that use to pin outsiders down, stabilize commitments, deter deception. Also Kuna learned to complain, make case to bureaucrats, newspapers. Also, in both access to skills and equipment was a political resource internally.

How did indigenous models and perceptions shape the use of video? Turner good on this. How did it affect Kayapo self-consciousness about their own culture?

Should note that struggle continues. Proposed reviving Xingu dam. Great development of region. One of biggest crops is soybean, one of world's great producers. So even when eating tofu, part of the demand that puts pressure on peoples like Kayapo.