

“When a Tihik drinks kaxmuk he neither has a father, nor a mother, or a brother”: perceptions of Maxakali on the effects of sugarcane liquor consumption

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Abstract *This study explores one of the most interesting and least studied issues in Brazil: the consequences of complex and contradictory experiences by replacing the traditional drinks by cachaça, introduced through interethnic contact. Given the rarity of the study of Maxakali alcohol consumption in research, this study aims to understand, from the native’s point of view, the negative aftereffect of alcohol consumption. Although anthropological studies emphasize functions of traditional and contemporary drinking as social “lubricants”, social perceptions of the Maxakali highlight the problems of cachaça bought through interethnic contact. Symbols and meanings of these consequences were interpreted through their daily life histories, recorded by 21 leaders in focus group. Through the interethnic contact, some adaptations have occurred in the Maxakali alcohol use, with negative consequences for those who drink, their families, their villages and their community. In the world-of-life, these changes these changes can be seen through accidents, insults, marital disharmony, neglects, violent behavior, illness and death. This study’s findings highlight the importance of producing comprehensive and in-depth knowledge in search of to identify vulnerable groups and to develop participatory solutions.*

Key words *South-American Indians, Alcoholic beverages, Social problems, Qualitative research*

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Introduction

The impact of the consequences concerning the introduction of distilled alcoholic drinks into indigenous peoples culture, during Western expansion and now offered through inter-ethnic contact, is one of the most interesting and least studied issues in Brazil^{1,2}. Whether it may be through the ambiguity and superficiality with which all questions of deviant behavior are treated, or through the philosophical aspects and world views used to approach them, this issue needs to be further explored. Among the 305 Brazilian Indigenous peoples, the use of alcoholic beverages, fermented, distilled and / or mixed, is considered a social and public health problem, with negative consequences for their families, their villages and their communities¹⁻⁹.

With the introduction of this distilled drink, especially the use of cachaça (sugarcane liquor)^{1,2} which has 3.3 to 10-fold higher alcohol content than fermented fruit or hydromel drinks¹⁰, Brazilian researchers in this field¹⁻⁹ seek to understand the conceptions regarding these cultural practices. Those practices involve the apprehension of and the symbolic values towards the consumption of these strong distillates which result in diseases and the marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

In addition, on top of the well-known impacts of the introduction of the distillates, the stereotypes used by the surrounding population, that of “drunks” for the Bororo Indians^{1,2} and “alcoholics” for the Maxakali¹, are dated problems. For both of these communities, these stereotypes originate from the first contacts with colonist in their regions^{1,2,9}.

For the Bororo Indigenous people, in 1829, detailed descriptions and pictographic reports of scenes of drunkenness were made. They depict the consequences of the distribution of cachaça in the farms of the region of Cárceres / MT¹. For the Maxakali, their relation to distillates was first reported in 1918⁹. Anthropological Research highlighted that, Kaxmuk (cachaça) not only facilitates a change in euphoria, but this change is experienced quicker and is more intense than the effect of the consumption of fermented beverages. Its consumption also puts the Maxakali in contact with spirits during their rituals. Moreover, in their state of alcoholic trance, they resurrect historical animosities¹¹; they fight among themselves, “some breaking the heads of others”¹², and this trance may even lead to a change in their human condition which leads them to

possibly murdering their kinsmen and non-relatives¹³⁻¹⁵.

Although these ethnographic studies with other research questions recognize the consequences related to the use of Kaxmuk among the Maxakali, there is a lack of research in this area. This field in Brazil is under development and is being further investigated.

To address some of the negative consequences of distilled drinking, this article presents the question - How do Maxakali perceive the consequences of the use of Kaxmuk? This question seeks to understand, through the native's point of view, the social perceptions regarding the negative consequences of the use of cachaça.

Finally, we will present the context in which the ethnographic knowledge was presented in this research. The first author of this study, a sanitary dentist, previously delivered health care to the Maxakali Indigenous communities for 19 years. Since then, during the past nine years he has worked in a management position in Maxakali Primary Health Care (MPHC). As said by Minayo¹⁶, this experience is an important attribute for the insertion of a researcher in the field to collect data¹⁶. We believe that, with his multi-professional experience in the Subsystem of Indigenous Health Care, working with the four teams of health professionals from MPHC as well as with those in the Maxakali Mental Health, it contributed positively to the way in which data from this qualitative research was gathered.

Methodology

The Tikmũ'ũn are recognized by the Brazilian State through the Maxakali ethos^{9,11,13,14}. It includes the Makoni, Monoxó, Kapoxó, Malali, Maxakali, Cumanaxó, Panhame Indigenous peoples who all speak Maxakali. Although, they each have their own respective songs and rituals which are all celebrated in their respective Houses of Chants^{11,17}. They live on 6,543 hectares of land comprising of three Indigenous reserves¹⁵, distributed around four Mining municipalities (Figure 1), bordering the State of Bahia¹⁵.

The Maxakali is the second largest ethnic group in Minas Gerais¹¹; they originated from the Atlantic Forest areas¹² and are traditionally semi-nomadic, hunter, and gather people¹¹⁻¹⁴. These peoples maintain a group connection and a distinct ethnic-cultural identity because they kept their language and their ancestors passed down their rituals. These customs are not disfigured nor forgotten^{12-14,17}.

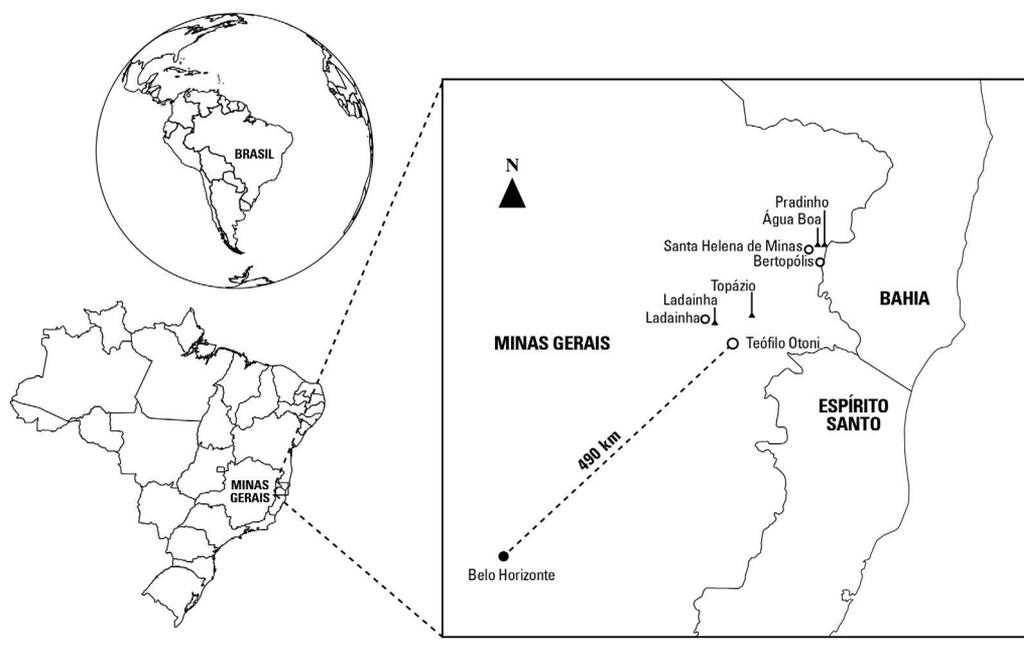


Figure 1. Maxakali Indigenous reserves, northeast region of Minas Gerais / Brazil, 2016.

Given the scarcity of qualitative and quantitative studies on the phenomenon currently under study in literature, we sought to broaden the spectrum of theorists that contributed to a theoretical framework on social action. We have identified concepts in Schutz¹⁸ that contribute to the understanding of the principles of a comprehensive approach regarding the social action¹⁸. The current relevance of these theoretical notions lies in its ability to understand and (re) interpret the reality based off the action and subjectivity of the social actor¹⁹. Schutz's exposure to the basic methods of Hursel's phenomenology and Weber's¹⁹ comprehensive sociology was crucial in defining the theoretical framework as the focus of the present study when collecting and analyzing interview records.

According to Schutz¹⁸, "action" is the previously planned human conduct whose meanings are produced mentally. It is also understood that only a small part of a person's world knowledge originates from his or her own experience, most of someone's world knowledge is transmitted to him or her by others through their socio-cultural life¹⁸.

Accordingly, we recognize that the social action of the interviewed Tikmũ'ün is a result of their interaction in different intra and interethnic contexts. Those involved in the interactions

mobilize most of the knowledge previously acquired by their ancestors and at the same time, the knowledge produces meanings for action in a reflective process^{18,19}. It is unique to understand the reality of the socio-cultural interaction of the Maxakali leaders interviewed. Through their experiences, we identified the pragmatic reasons that guide Tikmũ'ün in their daily life. We consider that "motive" means the state of things, the objective wished to be achieved through the action undertaken¹⁸; in this study, the use of Kaxmuk.

In order to understand this reality and to describe its characteristics from a native perspective, we added some cultural issues to the comprehensive phenomenology. The Maxakali cosmological aspects were included in the (ethno) biopsychosocial characteristics described by Schutz^{16,18,19}, assuming in this research that, culture is as a fluid system open to Geertz's reinterpretation^{20,21}.

Through this point of view, the consequences of the use of Kaxmuk are no longer perceived as a set of immutable physical and biological symptoms observed in the empirical world. They have now become better understood as a subjective process constructed through socio-cultural contexts³, which are experienced intersubjectively by contemporary Tikmũ'ün (Figure 2), who share a specific web of meanings¹⁸⁻²¹.

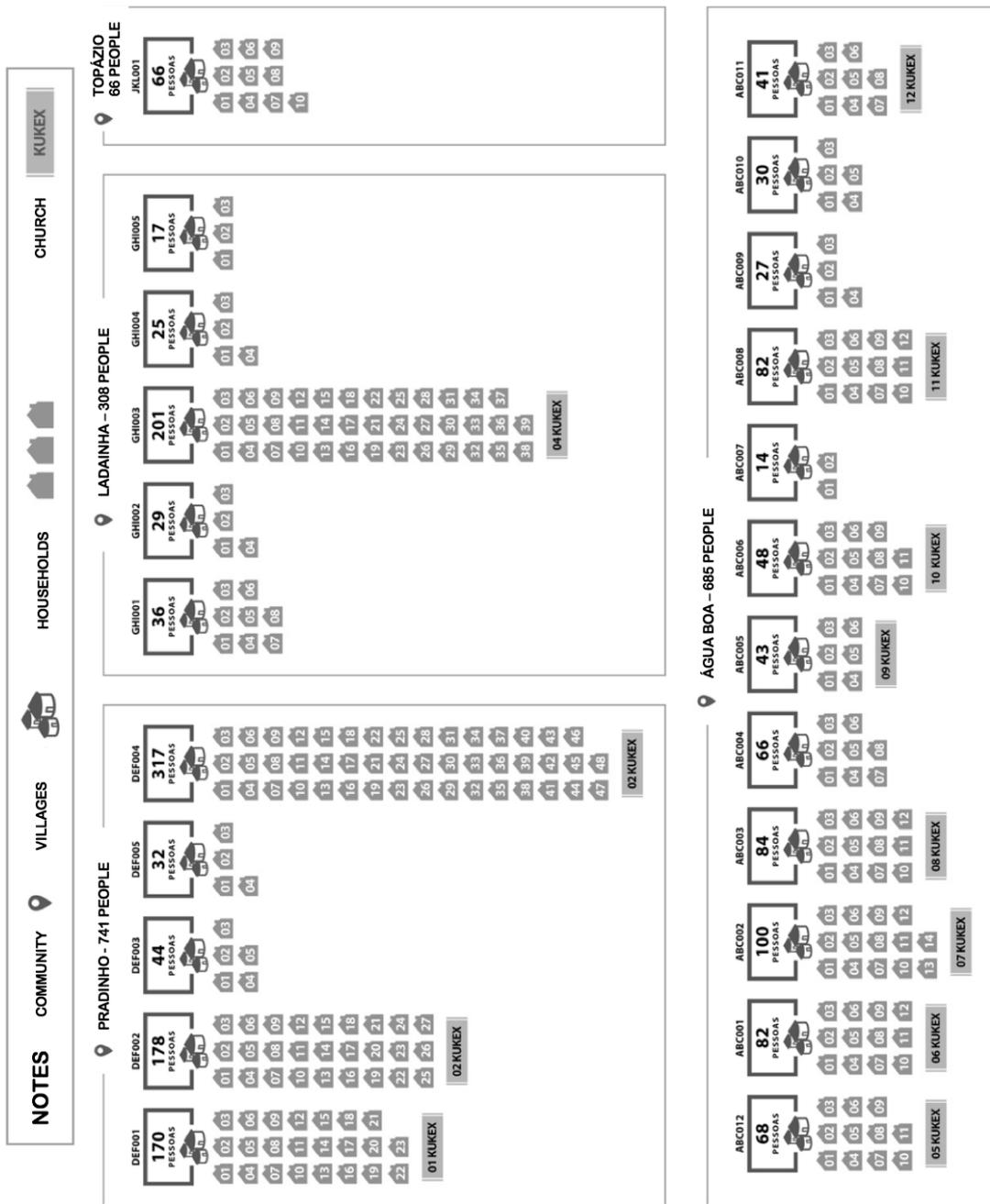


Figure 2. Maxakali social organization: communities, villages, residences and houses of religion (Kukex). Brazil, 2014.

In addition to Schutz^{18,19} and Geertz^{20,21}, the contributions of Latin American researchers^{1-9,22-25} and the ethnographic literature on the Maxakali^{9-15,17} have also guided the data collection and analysis strategies of this research.

What was done: we started with understanding the Maxakali lived realities. This data was collected in focus groups through the use of a here-in called Stories Wheels regarding Alcohol use

in my village (SWA). Through SWA we gathered the significant descriptions of Maxakali leaders in regard to their experiences with Kaxmuk, which could be understood and unveiled in its essence.

SWA can be understood and conducted as a model for discourses and conversations about everyday life²⁶. It generates discussion by revealing the meanings assumed by the interviewee

during the discussion phase, by showing the way in which people negotiate those meanings. SWA also generates diversity and difference, both within and between groups, thus allowing researchers to describe the lived experiences of respondents based on their actions and subjectivity^{26,27}.

Purposeful selection of participants was used to obtain a community representation²⁸. The first author and a research assistant conducted on-site visits in villages of the two Maxakali communities, from where the leaders come from. The defined inclusion criteria: she / he has to: represent both communities, be an adult of either gender, be or hold a leadership position; also, she / he should still be implicated and approved by her / his community. Using these stakeholder criteria, it provided SWA a relevant heterogeneity among the participants characteristics²⁷.

Seven leaders did not attend SWA on account of their other social agendas. We worked with 21 stakeholders, five women (26 to 40 years) and 16 men (24 to 51), all of whom live on the reservations. Some held one or more positions such as: teacher (07), village leader (04), indigenous health provider or (04), sanitation officer (03), two shamans and a councilwoman. They were divided into three SWA; together, they represented two communities and 11 of the 19 villages.

Data collection began after all participants provided written informed consent. The SWA were conducted and coordinated by the first and last authors of this study assisted by an observer, using an interview guide.

Following the SWA phases, we read the story “A Kaxmuk in my village” (Chart 1), it was created from the theoretical framework^{1-9,22-25,29-31} and through the nine-years of experience of the first author with MPHIC. After that, we asked the following questions: “What did you feel when you heard the story? How was it for you to listen to this story? I want to hear the story of Kaxmuk from your village.” After that, the leaders told their stories.

The reports were produced in Portuguese and / or in the Maxakali language. Some leaders spoke in Maxakali language. When the group signaled the exhaustion of the discussion about their stories, the second session of questions began aiming to deepen or clarify any doubts about the aspects discussed²⁷. The narratives were recorded in both audio and video format, which were then listened to and transcribed giving rise to a report. The report also included the notes from the conductors and the observer of the SWA.

Following the assumptions of the thematic analysis of Boyatzis³², two researchers began the analysis of narratives through floating reading. With the fragmentation of the contents of the stories and debates, they developed a coding system. After individual analysis, the researchers discussed and refined the findings in consensus. This method served as a basis for the following analyses where the codes were reformulated throughout when new themes arose. The coding and grouping of the data, including the identification of categories, which developed into themes,

Chart 1. “The *Kaxmuk* in my village”.

“In my village, I saw from an early age, a *Tihik* (Indian) drinking *kaxmuk*. Many start to drink very early on in their life. They drink at village parties to lose their shame, to dance and for dating; they drink with village friends to celebrate events such as after hunting, after harvesting, or just to have fun after a soccer game. A *Tihik* also go to other villages to drink with other relatives who have *kaxmuk*. The others sometimes drink in the city at *Andihik* (non-Indian) parties, or when they travel. A *Tihik* buys *kaxmuk* in the city. If a *Tihik* does not have money, he drinks along with those who have some *kaxmuk*. There are some *Tihik*'s who do not even want to drink, but if another *Tihik* who has *cachaça* invites him, then he has to join him and they drink together. After a *Tihik* learns to drink it is very difficult to stop, because the others keep on inviting him. I have already seen a *Tihik* inviting *ugtok* (child) and *Nhanhã* (elderly) to get together to drink *Kaxmuk*. Another point is that a *Tihik* does not drink like *Andihik* drinks. *Andihik*'s drink from a glass, a *Tihik* drinks straight from the bottle spout (disposable pet bottle) and passes it to the others, until it is finished. There is a *Tihik* who drinks casually, he or she drinks at most three days a month; some drink moderately from seven to 10 days per month and others drink heavily, approximately 15 to 20 or more days during the month. A *Tihik* always drinks until the bottle is empty. A *Tihik* does not save *kaxmuk* at home like an *Andihik* does, the *Tihik* buys and drinks the bottle until it is devoid of alcohol. A *Tihik* does not drink small amount of *Kaxmuk*, he drinks *kaxmuk* until he becomes *Papitui* (drunk) and agitated. There is also a *Tihik* who drinks just to get courage. Sometimes, a *Tihik* drinks and even loses consciousness causing quarrels, he talks without meaning, he lacks respect for other people, and he causes sadness in his family”.

evolved until reaching the theoretical saturation of the data. The final themes with their respective units of meanings are shown in Figure 3.

This research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Minas Gerais and by the National Commission of Ethics in Research.

Results and discussion

The leaders, through telling their stories, acknowledged the negative consequences of Kaxmuk use. Their perceptions stemmed from different points of view, sometimes as authors, sometimes as spectators. They saw and experienced the consequences in their relatives or non-relatives, at home, in the village or in the city. Figure 4 presents the set of dimensions and analytical categories of the experiences lived subjectively and intersubjectively in the Maxakali-world-of-life. According to Schutz^{18,19}, these realities are expressed in a biopsychosocial synthesis. Using this theoretical methodological stance, we grouped the experiences of each interviewee under the contexts of the family and of the community spaces of action which represents this biopsychosocial being. Although some consequences can be experienced in more than one dimension, as Edwards et al.³⁰ noted, we believe that those dimensions provide relevant information to think, using the Maxakali's point of view,

about possible prevention of the consequences rooted in drinking.

Individual dimension

Regarding the abusive drinking and the dangers associated with drinking alone, drinking until falling, amnesia and death by accident among the Maxakali who consume alcohol, the Maxakali consider the amount consumed dangerous to their health. As reported: *When [a] tihik goes to the city to buy cachaça and drink, I think it is dangerous, he will fall (drink until falling) and die. If he goes to lie down, he will sleep ... all day long, so he will die because of the hot sun and no one will see [him] at the time.* These perceptions corroborate with the findings of other studies^{3-4,8,22-23}, who all demonstrated that the alcohol consumption is different in the Maxakali from the national population's patterns.

The Maxakali are aware of the consequences of drinking, as they know the potential risks of "drinking and falling". It is also evident in Maxakali's speech the predictability of outcomes after drinking, when individuals put themselves in situations that could have fatal risks, as reported: *My father died at the age of 25. He went to the city and drank lots of cachaça. There was a lot of Kaxmuk inside his belly. He drank and lay, [in the city] ... and it was a very hot sun day, so, the cachaça burned his heart; he died. Cachaça is dangerous.* This extreme intoxication can be a cause

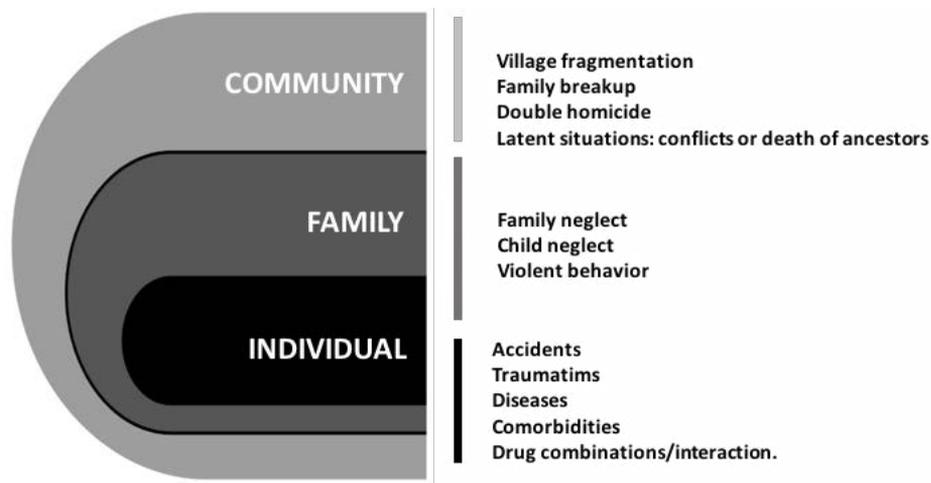


Figure 3. Schematic overview of the dimensions and analytical categories of the negative consequences of Maxakali Kaxmuk consumption.

of death, induce an alcoholic coma and other illnesses. However, amongst the Maxakali people, this intoxication does not simply destroy their health through the effects seen above, the Indians can die of sunstroke by being under those conditions for hours on end¹.

The Maxakali recognize the links between other diseases (hypertension, diabetes) caused by the use of cachaça, a beverage that they never manufactured³³. This data was confirmed in this study as reported: *In the past, [a] tihik Maxakali had no high blood pressure, today there are many tihik[s] who are taking medicine for high pressure. Even [when] taking medicine for high blood pressure he continues to drink Kaxmuk.*

In addition to the noninfectious diseases, leaders also pointed out signs of illness caused by cachaça use, one informant said: *And also cachaça will ruin the belly. Then the belly looks like this (puts his hands increasing the size of the belly) and turns yellow (passing his hands on the face).*

They also realize the danger of drug interaction between the consumption of Kaxmuk and prescribed medication continuously used, as reported: *The doctor passes a controlled medicine, [if] that patient takes that medicine and drinks the cachaça, he can die.* Another participant added: *it can bring death too, because he lies on the bed quietly, without anyone, and so, the death comes.*

Through the interactional processes, they reported emotional and health consequences with relatives of those who drink: *Because the drink brings a lot of illness, it is not only the cachaça that will bring the disease. People who are [mothers] think, sometimes [their] son, who does not have the problem, thinks about his relative, about his brother... and thinks about his aunt, [who are all drinking]. As the relative is talking, her people drink, but she does not know what happens because she leaves. Because she has a problem, she became very ill, she has high blood pressure.* These consequences are in line with those described by Edwards et al.³⁰ in his work on the treatment of alcoholism.

Regarding the dangers concerning accidents and traumas, Rubinger¹² reports that a shaman's wife had part of her foot amputated from a fire, because the Indian became so intoxicated by cachaça that she did not feel her foot on fire. Although Kaxmuk's greatest consumption is by men, accidents and injuries also occur among women: *I have a sister, which I do not hide. Saturday [their was] a party [at my house], she drank so much [she] hit [her] foot and fell and broke it here (clavicle); even [if] she's hurt, she still drinks!*

Family dimension

Eittle et al.³⁴ says that, the family, as a dynamic and unique context for children's development, is a neglected topic in studies of alcohol use among indigenous peoples. In order to understand the roles and responsibilities of the members of a family, Dessen and Silva Neto³⁵ emphasize that it is necessary to study the interactions and relationships between different family groups and to situate families in relation to the historical, social, cultural and economic contexts that they cross.

Popovich¹³, studying the marriage and kinship relationships, noted that any level of Maxakali kinship carries a set of definitions, roles, and responsibilities for behavior. Each level has an information store of principles as well as an instrument that leads to action, bringing with it many expectations regarding behavior.

According to the author¹³, the "father" is expected to provide the necessary food: the meat, through hunting, in former times; manioc, potato, corn and currently through plantations. The father should teach his son how to make bows and arrows and how to hunt, as well as the Maxakali's myths, legends, and rituals.

The woman who is called "mother" should cook the staple foods for her family. She also weaves the handicrafts and washes the clothes; her daughter learns to be a true Maxakali woman by observing and imitating her. The mother-daughter dyad is probably the most intimate of relationships in this society¹³.

A study regarding the consequences of alcohol use among Venezuelan Indians³⁶ showed that the most frequently reported problems were the lack of money for essential family needs such as food, medicines and payments, as well as neglect of the family unit. Wives reported that their husbands spend all their money in one night or on drunken days in the city, returning home with little or none of the money they received³⁶. A similar situation is reported by the Maxakali: *I go in the city to make fair. My family is hungry. [He] stays there straight and child stays waiting all night; (the child) sleeps and his / her father does not appear. What happened: the father drank and fell on the sidewalk, fell asleep. [He] Just arrived the other day and brought nothing.*

Two other Maxakali described this phenomenon in more detail: *And there is something else, when [a] tihik does not have money, he goes to the street, exchanges his son's food", completes the other: oh this is not good, you went out to do groceries [the son] bought beans, oil, sugar, rice, but he was*

[ex]changing. He gave [the groceries] to the white in exchange for cachaça. That is why today the card [is called] *Bolsa Cachaça*.

The exchanges carried out by the Indians in the commercial centers of the region are frequent¹¹⁻¹⁴ and constitute one of the most interesting and least studied aspects of so-called inter-ethnic contact¹. The towns, around the villages, economy and commercial activities depend directly on the Maxakali when they seek to acquire goods indispensable to life^{11,13}, among them, the cachaça⁹⁻¹³: *When you drink cachaça you spend a lot of money. When it's over, you [take] the most expensive thing [you own] (like a TV, DVD, Sound), you pick it up and negotiate with the others; [you end] up selling [it for] cheaper and losing the good things. This is not right, you are hurting yourself and your family.*

Regarding the expenditure of money on beverages, the results of this study corroborates with the findings of a survey conducted with the Tenharim⁸ Indians from Brazil. Due to the cachaça, some Tenharim fail to provide their family with life's basic necessities for sustenance. However, for the Tenharim, this does not mean that the Indian cannot drink. For some interviewees, if the Tenharim consumes alcohol, but does not neglect his family, his relatives do not interfere with his drinking habits⁸. A contrary situation was reported in the study conducted with the Venezuelan Indians³⁶. Some of them, when they go to the city to receive the money, they drink, and they do not bring anything home or to their children, so the children get hungry³⁶. One interviewee reported the same situation: *Malnutrition starts from the question of alcoholic drinks because [when] the father drinks, sometimes [he] does not remember [his] children.*

Now, if both parents are alcoholics, the family may have reached a point where social complications make life even less predictable³¹. *He has a brother who drinks a lot, along with his wife. They go straight to town and take [their] son. It is not very good when they both drink, because when they bring their child, they fall with the child in the garden. When the staff of SESAI (indigenous health care providers) passes through, they pick up the child and take the child to the village and hand it over to him (who is the uncle).*

Despite the social complications of parental alcohol consumption, studies regarding alcohol use in some indigenous peoples from Brazil emphasize that protein-calorie malnutrition in children is partly linked to their parent's alco-

hol consumption⁶. Although, we must recognize that there are several types of families and that the maternal and paternal roles are multidimensional and complex. Above all, those fathers and mothers have different roles in different cultural contexts³⁷. This demonstrates the need for more in-depth studies on alcohol use with an emphasis on the family context and its impact on the child's individual development. Such studies would help to understand how different ways of parenting affects the development of the Maxakali child.

In regard to the violent behavior and the loss of the family bond, it was observed that, like the jaguar character in "My uncle the Iauaretê,"³⁸ the Maxakali, when they drink, may be subject to a similar kind of trance¹⁵. They feel transmuted into a jaguar and can kill people or animals. When they return to normal, they cannot clearly remember what happened to then or what they did^{11,15}.

In an ethnographic essay, Vieira¹⁵ performed an integrated analysis of cosmology and Maxakali kinship. Vieira observed that Kaxmuk consumption is one of the vectors of bodily transformation that implies the loss of the human condition. According to the author, a drunken Maxakali becomes capable of assault, to the point of killing a relative¹⁵. This kind of transformation was reported by one interviewee: *Oh my God, that person does that (fight, beat, strike to the point of being able to kill a relative), but it is not that person who is doing this, is the demon who is doing [it]. Then you stay there, take it all, you have to take it all! Until he gets better, reinforced by another leader: Cachaça does not respect another person, it kills, either a father, or brother, or woman. There is a Maxakali who's killing even a woman because of drinking.*

People with drinking problems sometimes seem to have lost all links with their family. Yet they can nurture strong emotions about relationships which are harmed by death, disharmony, or neglect, and their relatives are likely to have similar feelings³¹: *Today, when he drinks, he sits quietly, he does not mess with me; because if the woman goes down to man, he does it! Now if the woman does not go down he does not do that! Because the man, he wants to show himself, he is very male chauvinist, he wants to hit you, you know? In the contexts of MPHIC, to understand this wife's ability to deal with the stress and the feelings brought about by her intimate relationship with an alcoholic enables the process of helping and the treatment of the entire family^{30,31}.*

Community dimension

Kaxmuk intake was historically encouraged and highly exploited by local traders. This consumption has a direct impact on the social organization of the Maxakali villages, causing fragmentation among their families¹¹⁻¹³. The narrated stories portray this fragmentation: *I left the village where I lived. Now I am living only with my family and my brother because of a problem with cachaça. [A] Tihik from the village was drinking, [he was] going crazy, I was scared. I left there to take care of my family, the children.*

Another report confirms the above quote when an interviewee demonstrates his drinking behavior in his village or does not reach other villages when he is drunken: *When I drink a sip, I do not go out to visit another village, I keep quiet down. If I drink too much it is dangerous to go to visit another village because there you can die.* Participants also described that some members preferred to consume alcohol alone and concealed their consumption from others to avoid social complications: *When I buy Kaxmuk, I drink alone.*

Sometimes, drinking alcohol at home does not mean that the individuals were drinking alone. Participants described drinking, where adults drank and went from house to house, usually ending in a fight: *The person is single, he has no wife, the other has [one]. The single [one] drinks cachaça, and wants to flirt with the married woman. So, he goes to her house, but her husband is jealous and tells him to leave. The drunkard curses both of them and starts a confusion. The couple gets angry. That's why it's very dangerous to have a sip and go out to another village.*

Despite the lively and pulsating multiplicity of the Maxakali socialization being historically governed by the search for the alliance¹¹, the warlike confrontation has always prevailed. This dominance of confrontation is seen in the contact relations of the peoples that constitute the present Maxakali with their territories, their villages and their residences^{11,13}. Under the effects of alcohol, they manifest latent situations of revolt originating from the past conflicts and deaths of their ancestors, before and after the formation of the Tikmũ'un¹¹⁻¹³.

From this multiplicity, Ribeiro¹¹ and Popovich¹³ consider that the formation of the present Maxakali that this only explains a possible source of internal imbalance to its social structure. Thus, generating fragmentations in the social structure is often accompanied by violence with connections peculiar to Kaxmuk consumption.

This internal imbalance in relation to social structure linked to the Kaxmuk intake causes a great mobility of both family(ies). A villager's displacements may cause many changes among several villages in its three territories. As well, it may imply the configuration of a new village¹³. The reports of the leaders meet the findings of anthropological studies^{11,13}. According to these findings, when it comes to allies, revenge ceases to be the motto of or the reasons behind the displacements and the conflict becomes the direct element that leads to mobility. In turn, this leads to the remoteness of every party involved.

Regarding the violent deaths and the right to reparation, there are conflicts that strike even harder at the tribal organization creating serious social problems. Studies^{12,13} conducted in the 1960s, 70s and 80s recorded the occurrence of homicides committed by people under the effect of Kaxmuk consumption against their own relatives. As reported: *You fight with your wife, then you hurt your children and your wife, and if you do not have no one to help (the family), that person can kill the woman in the house.*

Throughout the Maxakali, all of the families that had one of its members affected by a violent death have the right and the duty of reparation. The consequence for the revenge of their loved one is the death of the murderer, by the hands of the deceased's relatives^{11,13}. That's situation regard of Kaxmuk consumption; in the case of the woman above, alcohol becomes the predictor of two outcomes, a double homicide. According to Álvares¹⁴, "conflicts generate a chain of revenge among the members of the groups involved that last for several years, until they move away in a radical way¹⁴: *The drink goes to your head in such way that you do not even know what is happening. You wake up like this, "Oh, my father in heaven, look [at] what I did! I killed my wife, and now? [How will] my children eat, I am now like that.*

Another similarity of the findings to other ethnographic studies¹¹⁻¹⁵ is that reports on the repair of violent deaths among the Maxakali collaborates with the findings of this study by claiming that there was no long-standing fighting. If a person were to kill someone, their relatives would give him/her to their dead relatives and the "blood would have returned", terminating the problem¹¹. Such a situation is still experienced today in the Maxakali's imagination: *Once a problem happened in my village; I lost my son-in-law and my nephew in the same day. My other son-in-law killed my nephew. When I look at that, it pains me and I'm thinking about what happened.*

When my children drink, I say: have you not seen the example? Do you want more trouble? I say this because two coffins have already arrived in my village. It's not easy!

At the same time, the Maxakali started apprehending the use of Kaxmuk to fight for resistance. This fight for resistance results in the permanence of changes in symbolic and material aspects of their autochthonous forms of becoming¹¹. In the sociohistorical and cultural scenarios of the interethnic contact studied, Maxakali social perceptions point to the total exclusion of the traditional fermented drink.

The consumption of the traditional drink is part of a mythical past. Álvares¹⁴ and Ribeiro¹¹ report that spirits have their life in the hereafter, very close to that of humans. There, they hunt, fish, gather, collect and plant their small farms and make their handicrafts.

When they gather for the Parrot ritual to sing in Kukex (House of Chants), women make clay pots where they cook their food and make their fermented drinks. Before the ritual, the parrot spirits bring the corn to the women, who chew it and throw it into a large pot of clay. The other day, the spirits of the Parrot took the corn clay pots to Kukex¹¹.

As for the indigenous populations of Rione-grinas/AM³, Bororos/MT^{1,2}, Mbyá Guarani/RS⁵, Kaingang/PR^{6,7}, Tenharim/AM⁸ the network of symbols and meanings expressing the negative consequences related to the use of Kaxmuk in the Maxakali culture is interlaced within this population. As Geertz^{20,21} suggests, the culture is entangled in a web of meanings that has been woven from generation to generation. This web fits rightly the perverse adjective, since the delivery of a comprehensive and integrated health care with a culturally humanized approach to individuals, families and Maxakali communities was historically denied and is silenced as well as naturalized. Their morbidity and mortality profile is represented by high mortality coefficients and incidents of childhood malnutrition, in addition to intestinal parasites, acute diarrheal, respiratory and scabies diseases³⁹, highlight that adjective.

Final considerations

In order to understand the reason for the complete replacement of the fermented beverage by cachaça, it is necessary to understand not only why the Maxakali abandoned the fermented traditional drink, but why do the Maxakali want to

continue using Kaxmuk? As reported by a leader; "It is a potato drink, a corn drink. These drinks were always made for religious [purposes] and I have seen it. It also contained coconut water [which was made the day before the religious purpose]. I say this because I have already seen it and consumed it. My father made garapa and put it [the coconut water] with the garapa, and then we consumed it too, this kind of drink was the one that we used. We used to make such a pot from that height".

In the spatial and temporal perspective of Schütz¹⁸, it is important to consider the reasons why the contemporary representatives of the Makoni, Monoxó, Kapoxó, Malali, Maxakali, Cumanaxó and Panhame kept the sugarcane liquor use instead of traditional drink. This consideration is mainly to understand Kaxmuk's positive and functional usages that integrate the social factory of the indigenous peoples. These functions are also part of the manifestations of inter and intragroup sociability (facilitator of shamanic transitions, social "lubricant" and regulator of expressions of violence and enmity) as described by Brazilian researchers in this field^{1-8,23}. Furthermore, these are the dimensions that received little attention and demand anthropological research. However, they have already been studied in relation to other indigenous peoples.

Continuing from the phenomenological perspective¹⁸, the use of alcoholic beverages has historically contributed as a social lubricant for indigenous peoples²². Today, for many of the Maxakali, the contexts and patterns of consumption have changed corroborating with the dynamics of culture^{3,20,21}. The consequences of this use are largely unexplained by cultural specificities, since control and sociocultural limits cease to exist^{3,4,8,29,36}.

The Maxakali drink other substances and often do so in new social contexts with negative consequences for the individual who drinks, their families, villages and communities. The aftermath takes the form of accidents, trauma, illness and death. As well, neglect of parents' roles and responsibilities to the family, violent behavior, conjugal disharmony, and fragmentation of villages are other repercussions of the consumption of alcohol.

Another important question is whether the Maxakali recognize the difference between the negative consequences of Kaxmuk's exclusive consumption and those associated with the traditional fermented drinks. This awareness can be seen by comparing the problems related to Kax-

muk use with the problems possibly associated with the exclusive or mixed use of their traditional fermented drinks consumed by their ancestors. For the time being, the lack of this knowledge has had negative and often devastating consequences for Maxakali, their families, their villages and their communities. We believe that, the joint construction of this knowledge may in future be part of a community agenda. As well, this knowledge will help the institutions working with and for the Maxakali by strengthening the culture and rescuing the traditional Maxakali beverage.

The SWA and generous dialogue with the Tikmũ'ün produced native and innate questions^{22,24} on how to organize interventions for and with this population with a less prescriptive character^{5,38}. It has the power to think about oth-

er sensitivities, with possibilities of existence outside the record of alcohol use^{3,23}.

If, as Rancière maintains⁴⁰, there is a relationship between politics and visibility, in the sense that politics would deal with what one sees and what can be said about what one sees, then it designates who has the competence to “see and quality to say”. The findings of the present study also have the power, in the strong sense of the term, to raise a voice and speak about the misfortunes and needs of the Tikmũ'ün. This power is meant to describe the capability of provoking noise from government agencies and academies to recognize the need to develop interdisciplinary projects aimed at expanding research on the consumption of Kaxmuk.

Collaborations

RC Oliveira, BF Nicolau, A Levine, AVM Mendonça, V Videira, AMD Vargas and EF Ferreira made a significant contribution to the study and manuscript.

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