


# Weave another Basket of Knowledge? A remote collaborative research on the covid-19 pandemic


Tecer outro Cesto de Conhecimentos? Pesquisa colaborativa  
e remota na pandemia de covid-19

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## Abstract

From the experience of the project *Indigenous Responses to COVID-19 in Brazil: social arrangements and global health* (PARI-c), in the region of Alto Rio Negro (AM), we seek to reflect in this article on the possibilities and implications of collaborative knowledge production with indigenous researchers, taking into account the health emergency, territorial immobilities, social inequalities, and epistemological and ontological policy differences. From the idea of Baskets of knowledge, we think about the forms and possibilities of this collaboration, in the light of contemporary discussions on processes of “decolonization” of public health (global, planetary) and health knowledge. The empirical basis for this article is a description of the methodological experience of knowledge production, focused on two aspects: the field and writing. This material allows us to make some considerations around the relevance and meaning of ways of generating “hybrid knowledge”, to deal with contexts of global crises or syndemics. These ways, as we shall see, cross the realignment of alliances and find a special focal point on women’s writing.

**Keywords:** Indigenous peoples’ health; Amazon; Anthropology; Gender; Online ethnography.

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## Resumo

A partir da experiência do projeto *Respostas Indígenas à COVID-19 no Brasil: arranjos sociais e saúde global* (PARI-c), na região do Alto Rio Negro (AM), buscamos refletir neste artigo sobre as possibilidades e implicações da produção colaborativa de conhecimento com pesquisadoras indígenas, levando em consideração a emergência sanitária, as imobilidades territoriais, as desigualdades sociais e as diferenças epistemológicas e de políticas ontológicas. A partir da ideia de *Cestos de conhecimento*, pensamos as formas e possibilidades dessa colaboração, à luz de discussões contemporâneas sobre processos de “descolonização” da saúde pública (global, planetária) e do conhecimento em saúde. A base empírica para este artigo é uma descrição da experiência metodológica, de produção de conhecimento, focada em duas faces: o campo e a escrita. Esse material nos permite tecer algumas considerações em torno da relevância e do sentido de formas de geração de “saberes híbridos”, para lidar com contextos de crises globais ou sindemias. Estas formas, como veremos, atravessam o realinhamento das alianças e têm na escrita de mulheres um lugar especial de atenção. **Palavras-chave:** Saúde indígena; Amazônia; Antropologia; Gênero; Etnografia online.

## Introduction

From the experience of the project *Indigenous Responses to COVID-19 in Brazil: social arrangements and global health* (PARI-c), in the region of Alto Rio Negro (AM), we seek to reflect in this article on the possibilities and implications of collaborative knowledge production between non-indigenous and indigenous researchers, taking into account the health emergency, territorial distances and immobilities, social inequalities, and epistemological and ontological policy differences. We take as a conceptual image the idea of **Baskets of knowledge**, developed by Elizângela Costa (2021a), to think about the forms and possibilities of this collaboration.

This article is part of contemporary discussions on the need to effect processes of “decolonization” of public health (global, planetary) and health knowledge (Nunes; Louvison, 2020; Biehl, 2021; Dias, 2021; Baquero; Benavidez Fernández; Aguilar, 2021; Thambinathan; Kinsella, 2021). Building greater dialogues and ecologies of knowledge, pluri-epistemologies, collaborative epistemologies, opening space for marginalized knowledge and engaging in participatory, “emancipatory” knowledge, beyond the (meta)normativity of “normal science”, seems, in fact, an urgent need. (Giatti, 2022). But how to do it? If, during the covid-19 pandemic, indigenous women from Rio de Janeiro mobilized their **Baskets of Knowledge**<sup>1</sup>, how to “open spaces for transformative praxis” (Thambinathan; Kinsella, 2021) that allow them to participate in the manufacture of these other public, textual **baskets**, open to the participation of non-indigenous people, thanks to their generosity? Furthermore, what are the possibilities of collaboration and collective construction of new **baskets** in the midst of the crisis, through multiple distancing measures, in the almost exclusive mediation of remote communications?

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<sup>1</sup> In her first Research Note, Elizângela develops the conceptual image of Baskets of Knowledge. The idea “comes from my reflection on a collective ritual carried out with the accompaniment of shamans, close relatives and friends (women already married). This ritual is widely practiced on the Rio Negro with the aim of training children, in this case, girls who are becoming adults. (...) This ritual is known as *kariamã* in *Yegatu* – one of the co-official languages of São Gabriel da Cachoeira (...). *Kariamã* is a very complex and broad term, which does not have a translation into Portuguese, but which can be understood as the ritual of the new girl, which occurs when the girl has her first menstruation. The knowledge passed on to the girl during the ritual is multiple, and the Basket of Knowledge, put into practice with the emergence of the pandemic in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, is a small slice of what is learned in it. The *kariamã ritual* is a training process, as if it were a school” (Costa, 2021a)

On the other hand, considering all the efforts of Rionegrin women to place a notion of Care at the center of relations with the covid-19 pandemic and its associated policies<sup>2</sup>, considering the fundamental link of this notion with regional practices of “knowledge” and, taking into account the efforts of this research team to understand this Care in its **cosmopolitical centrality**<sup>3</sup>, how, then, does Care impact methodological and research efforts? In other words, what theoretical-methodological implications for the field of social research in health can a cosmopolitical practice of Care like that mobilized by Rionegrin women have? It should be noted that these and other questions deal with issues associated with the hybrid space, between ethics, politics, theory and research methodology, without it being possible to reduce them to guides or bureaucratic-administrative frameworks of “ethical” control of research “in human beings”<sup>4</sup>.

These and other questions guided the methodological practice of the Norte Amazônico team. Not all, not even most of them, were answered, and much less have we completed the construction of a model of “good practices”. The questions are guides for ethical reflection, doubts, delays in the urgency of resolution, following the logic of Isabelle Stengers (2018) in her “Cosmopolitical Proposition”. In light of these, we propose to analyze the methodological development of the research on the response of indigenous women to covid-19 in Alto Rio Negro. For this, we start by making a brief contextualization of the PARI-c research, strictly with regard to the study focused on the Alto Rio Negro. Next, we describe the methodological experience of knowledge production focused on two sides: the field and writing. Finally, we make some final considerations around the relevance and meaning of ways of generating “hybrid knowledge”

(Gatti et al., 2021) to deal with contexts of global crises or syndemics. These forms, as we shall see, cross the realignment of long-distance alliances and have in the writing of women (Anzaldúa, 2000; Evaristo, 2018) a special place of attention.

## The PARI-c survey in the North Amazon

The project *Indigenous Responses to COVID-19 in Brazil: social arrangements and global health* aimed to

produce knowledge that acts in this interstice, between scientific fields and between health agencies and indigenous organizations, not only as translators/agents, but as potential scientific consultants to help understand indigenous peoples’ modes of existence and the implications for prevention of illness, death and other forms of loss in this pandemic (PARI-c, 2021, p. 2)<sup>5</sup>

The research was entirely developed in remote communication. Its bases of possibility were “previously established networks between team researchers and indigenous people and collectives, as well as with non-indigenous interlocutors with experience in health and indigenous peoples” (PARI-c, 2021, p. 3). The work involved: 1) rapid situational analyses and policy briefings; 2) ethnographic case studies, selected to describe the diversity of indigenous and public health contexts in the four Brazilian regions; and 3) articulation and dissemination via internet portal (PARI-c platform) of public information (PARI-c, 2021, p. 3-4).

The North Amazonian Team was organized, based on the prior knowledge and networks of the two team coordinators, Bruno Marques and José Miguel Olivar, who, for more than ten years

2 The Department of Indigenous Women of Rio Negro (DMIRN) created, at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the campaign *Rio Negro, we take care!*. For more information about the campaign, visit: <https://noscuidamos.foirn.org.br/> Access on: Oct. 26, 2022

3 It is not appropriate here to expand the explanations about care and cosmopolitics, we suggest seeing Olivar et al. (2021), as well as the Case Study (Costa et al., 2022). Along these lines, the project “Cosmopolitics of care at the end of the world” was conceived, funded by FAPESP in the Young Researcher Phase 2 line and coordinated by Olivar.

4 This statement is related to the abundant Brazilian anthropological production on “Ethics Committees”, see, for example: Sarti and Duarte (2013), Schuch and Victora (2015), among many others.

5 The project was included in the *Global Effort on COVID-19 (GECO)* call, of the *United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI)*, and had ethical approval from the *Maternal and Child Health Proportionate Review Committee* of City, University of London, home of the project. For more information, see: <http://www.pari-c.org/apresentacao/> Access on: Oct. 26, 2022

and in different ways, have carried out research and socio-political collaboration in the upper Rio Negro region. This experience was later added to by Prof. Flavia Melo (UFAM) who, for a few months, collaborated in coordinating the team, particularly focusing on another case study between Manaus and the upper Solimões River region (not the object of this article). In the case of Rio Negro, during 2020, the time of preparation for the project, the enormous role of Rionegrin women in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic became evident. At the same time, the research team was organizing and rehearsing the first forms of joint, collaborative and remote work, as well as the first attempts at analysis (Olivar et al., 2021)<sup>6</sup>. The base structure of the Rionegrin team and this Case Study was favored and shaped by the relationships built with indigenous women around issues of indigenous/indigenist policy with/about women, gender, violence and “care”<sup>7</sup>.

The research team included two former coordinators of the Department of Indigenous Women of the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Rio Negro (DMIRN/FOIRN). Francineia Fontes, of the Baniwa ethnicity, master and doctoral student in the Postgraduate Program in Social Anthropology at the National Museum, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), and Elizângela Costa, of the Baré ethnicity, the professor and sociologist who led the impressive FOIRN’s response to covid-19 in 2020. Dulce Morais, a social scientist and then a Master’s student in Public Health at the University of São Paulo (USP), worked along with them. In addition, Julia Kaori Tomimura, an undergraduate student in Public Health (USP) located in São Paulo, and Norma Orjuela (of Tuyuka ethnicity), a local leader, farmer and researcher in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, also participated in the research.

As described before, the products envisaged in the project were short and periodic Research Notes and a final Case Study (all this material can be

consulted on the PARI-c Platform). In our team, the entire process was guided by the Case Study. To this end, we proposed to follow the hypotheses that had been raised in a preliminary exercise (Olivar et al., 2021) around the **cosmopolitical character** of this characteristically female response, and the relationship with the struggles and sociopolitical tensions of the Rionegrino indigenous movement and the women present there.

## Development

We present our empirical material for this article (that is, the methodological development that we carried out) in two faces: the first, intended for “field”, the second, for “writing”. “Field” and “writing”, in this study, obey less to a sequentiality, in fact partially existing, than to modes of relationship with people and knowledge production<sup>8</sup>.

### Field

In February 2020, Dulce Morais went to São Gabriel da Cachoeira for the first time to carry out ethnographic fieldwork, for her Master’s thesis on State relations, violence and indigenous women in the city, focusing on femicide (Morais, 2022). This work was associated with a partnership between the Faculty of Public Health of USP, the Socioambiental Institute (ISA), the DMIRN and the Observatory of Gender Violence in the Amazon - linked to the Federal University of Amazonas (OVGAM/UFAM) -, and was prepared around issues of gender, violence and women in the region. At the time, Elizângela, together with Janete Alves (from the Dessana ethnic group), was starting her last year as DMIRN coordinator; and Francineia was in Rio de Janeiro, developing her doctoral studies, then aimed at thinking about Baniwa history from the perspective of women. Between the end of February and the beginning of March,

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6 This work was made possible by Fapesp funding of regular assistance under the responsibility of Olivar; process 2019/01714-3.

7 It is important to note that there is a collaborative work partnership between FSP/USP and Instituto Socioambiental (ISA), with DMIRN/FOIRN and, more recently, with the Observatory of Gender Violence in Amazonas (OVGAM) of the Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM), around issues of violence and gender with indigenous women.

8 This division is not fully satisfactory for regular ethnographic research (Strathern, 2014; Fonseca, 2017), much less for social research in the pandemic framework (Deslandes; Coutinho, 2020) and even less for the one analyzed here; however, it helps us in intelligibility.

José Miguel, along with Dulce, another FSP/USP student (Danielle Ichikura) and the coordinator of OVGAM (Prof. Flávia Melo) were in São Gabriel da Cachoeira, working with the DMIRN in the collection and analysis of information on violence against indigenous women in the city. Sarscov-2 appeared on the distant horizon and there were still doubts about its ability to get “here”. Finally, Bruno Marques, who since 2007 has studied and worked with the Hupd`ah people, having collaborated with the indigenous movement, FUNAI (Fundação Nacional do Índio) and ISA in the preparation of the PGTA (Territorial and Environmental Management Plan) of the Alto Rio Negro Indigenous Land, was living in Goiânia, ready to start post-doctoral studies linked to the Graduate Program in Social Anthropology at the Federal University of São Carlos.

With the arrival of the covid-19 pandemic in Manaus, capital of the state of Amazonas, on March 13, 2020, the lives of women in the city, such as Elizângela, were taken by fear, misinformation and the need to prepare for the new threat. The fears and dreads that indigenous women had been reporting and, later, their mobilizations to fight the pandemic, gained centrality. The ideas of isolation - domestic and territorial - and the intensified fear of the city intersected with the evidence often raised and experienced of the absolute inequity and insufficiency of the local hospital (Hospital da Guarnição, basically administered by the Brazilian Army). In the case of Francineia, her trajectory placed her in the particularly painful position of being isolated, far from her land and her family, in a strange, difficult and distant city, which is, paradoxically, associated with the mythical place of Rio Negro origin: Rio de Janeiro<sup>9</sup>.

For Elizângela and Francineia, connected with many other women of different ethnicities who lived - in very different ways - in the region, an intensive exercise of study, of “research-action” (Tripp, 2005) and experimentation began, to try to understand what was happening and mobilize the best ways to “Care” for their land and relatives. In this process, as we have amply shown

in a previous article and in the Research Notes (Olivar et al., 2021; Costa, 2021a, 2021b; Fontes, 2021a, 2021b; Costa et al., 2022), the investigation carried out by them and between them and their men was strictly collaborative, pluriepistemic and not guided by academic grammars: a huge network of women and men investigating and experimenting with new and well-known traditional remedies, blessings, ways of guarding and enclosing land and bodies, mythical explanations, allopathic medications, scientific explanations, religious explanations, “sanitary recommendations”, as well as ways of managing information, collecting money, fabrics, masks, alcohol, food, gasoline and oxygen, through all possible partnerships.

*Every knowledge is a community process*, as indicated by Elizângela in the last paragraph of this article, it is the process of making common, as suggested by Stengers (2015). In this emergency “action-research”, the “participatory”, “collaborative” character is a **community** one. Note, it is not a posterior way of qualifying knowledge production, it is the very nature of knowledge and the relationship in which it is constituted. It is the simultaneous mytho-historical, biographical and everyday participation and collaboration in the production of ways of living and resisting, which defines emergency investigation and knowledge production. In the same way, much of the “fieldwork” is articulated with the very experience of surviving and responding to the pandemic framework.

In April 2020, DMIRN, with the support of ISA, created the campaign *Rio Negro, we take care of it!*. Under the command of Elizângela and Janete, the campaign would become the flagship of the Rio Negro indigenous response to the pandemic, as well as an international example. Meanwhile, departing from Rio de Janeiro, Francineia mobilized all her efforts to facilitate aid, participate in regional discussions and decision-making, circulate information, emotionally and affectively accompany her relatives and record the experience of this historic moment. Through “social networks” and cell phones, we started to maintain more frequent communication

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<sup>9</sup> The *Lago de Leite*, mytho-historically associated with the Guanabara Bay and Rio de Janeiro, is the place of origin of the Cobra-Canoa, origin of Rio Negro humanities. See, among others, Lasmar (2005).

between us and each one with their closest networks, and, having Dulce as a particularly well-positioned pivot (due to being fully in the “field” of a Master’s scholarship), we managed to advance in a process of more ethnographic systematization of time and the ongoing catastrophe. At the same time, those who did not live in Rio Negro put themselves in a position of “collaboration”, joining the network of “research-action” in a two-way relationship: collaborating in indigenous processes of learning, acquiring information, producing documents, etc., in addition to advancing the ethnographic systematization of events. In turn, Bruno and José Miguel were engaged in the early formulation of the project led by their friend and anthropologist Maria Paula Prates, who would receive funding from PARI-c during her studies at the City, University of London.

From the beginning of 2021, with the funding approved and the aggravation of the pandemic, particularly in the state of Amazonas, the “fieldwork” of this research formally began. Between February and October 2021, Elizângela and Francineia developed the most intense and main part of the field research. Elizângela stayed between the city of São Gabriel and her family’s “smallholding”, located at the Rio Negro, a few kilometers upstream of the city, and Francineia managed to move to the city of São Gabriel and her community, Assunção, on the Içana River (TI Alto Rio Negro), to immerse herself in socializing and studying with her relatives and family members.

The two researchers engaged in the exercise of translating their constant exercise of “action-research” into “collaborative research” (Tripp, 2005). That is, to bring their knowledge production practice closer to a practice of textual recording of the collective investigative process itself, targeted to (1) readers (2) “whites”; (3) institutional or academic agents; (4) people from other ethnicities and regions; and (5) another time, that is, if the knowledge experienced by them was “for now”, that of the texts gained relevance in relation to a future time, in which these historical records will come to be read. This engagement implied the researchers putting themselves in the place of others (friends, relatives, colleagues), positioning themselves as textual mediators of knowledge and worlds, in addition

to their own role as distinguished connoisseurs and social leaders. It is possible to notice some of the complexity brought by the idea of “indigenous researchers”, in addition to the “collaborative” and “participatory” complements, as it deals with knowledge production through a tangle of fractal (rhizomatic) and remote relationships, situated in the urgency of the response to the pandemic, spread on a daily basis and over the course of the months, in addition to the circulation of information in various directions. There is an important difference from the more traditional relationships of participatory, collective or emancipatory research, for example, in carrying out community activities - offline -, group reflection processes, meeting events located in time and space.

The process of producing and gathering information conducted by Elizângela and Francineia unfolded and continued in the monitoring that Bruno, José Miguel and, especially, Dulce, carried out.

The use of “social networks” has become fundamental and much more intense for all of us. Even for the research-experimentation carried out by women in the Rio Negro. WhatsApp and Facebook have joined the traditional radiophony between communities. An extensive network of information search and circulation spanned face-to-face conversations, physical displacements, exchanges and online research, as well as radio communications in several languages. All of the authors, with the exception of Elizângela, followed and participated “closely” and very far from the life that took place in São Gabriel through these digital “social networks”. In São Paulo, Dulce, after her emergency departure from São Gabriel, started to carry out online-only fieldwork. Interactions, “field”, follow-up and tracking of networks and information took place from the constant monitoring of Facebook posts, and the daily intensity of relationships through WhatsApp. The pace of these follow-ups and interactions was variable and dependent on the behavior of the pandemic, local demands, conditions and possibilities of the research team; since 2020, many phases of these relationships have involved daily work for months, at other times they have involved important leaves. Since before the beginning of the pandemic, we were in frequent

contact through this application, both individually and collectively, with José Miguel, Dulce and Bruno already participating in several online groups with people from the region and Francineia maintained the most intense remote communication with her relatives and friends. Thus, there was a dispersed daily participation in digital community or political spaces, as well as more intense and focused participation in groups or spaces created specifically for understanding and coping with the pandemic.

In this process, the centrality of the field notebook was losing ground, because the information came from different tools and at a very different speed from what we have in face-to-face fieldwork<sup>10</sup>. Dulce produced a database with prints informing the date, time and source, in addition to recording telephone conversations in the field notebook and transcribing audios sent by WhatsApp, both in individual conversations and in several groups.

Between April and July 2021, Dulce conducted semi-structured interviews with five indigenous women and one non-indigenous woman about women's lives in the region, the pandemic process in the city and the actions to combat it through the campaign *Rio Negro, we take care of it!* The interviews were carried out remotely, via Google Meet, lasting about one hour. Broken calls, conversations interrupted by signal drops, incomprehensible audio snippets, in addition to the difficulty of some of the interviewees to get a computer, an acceptable internet signal and the time required for the interview were some of the challenges encountered. The script of these interviews was tested and refined with Elizângela. This process was added to all the fieldwork of Dulce's thesis and the daily monitoring via "social networks".

Finally, in a face-to-face visit in October 2021, José Miguel conducted three face-to-face interviews and several informal conversations, held by him and Dulce, with friends and interlocutors, in addition to the physical reunion with Elizângela, which, in addition to the immense joy, brought valuable information and perspectives. The "fieldwork" formally ended in October 2021 and the general survey in February 2022.

## Writing

The production of written texts, mainly Research Notes and the Case Study, was a method and a requirement. However, the act of writing was not given. Indigenous peoples and groups are defined, and often define themselves, as oral societies. This question was often raised in the course of PARI-c research, and this is one of the enormous challenges involved in the access of indigenous people to graduate programs (Ponso, 2018). The research exercise analyzed here implied an effort to move (back and forth) from intensive orality to writing - as well as to other media.

On the other hand, from the perspective of the academic field, the written and standardized textualization of knowledge, the world and experience, associated with particular (and overestimated) authorship policies, are central and constituents of the field. These policies differ across disciplinary fields and, in them, collaboration occupies different places. For example, in anthropology it was common to think of the relationship between researchers and "informants" in the field as collaboration for knowledge production, without this resulting, on the one hand, in the interest of the "interlocutors" in writing and publicly sharing authorship (or in the recognition of some possible interest on the part of anthropologists), and on the other, in consistent policies of authorship distribution. In the field of health, on the other hand, it is common for "collaboration" to be between institutionalized agents, individuals or groups and even with industrial sectors (see recent mini collection of the journal *Nature* (2021) on "collaboration"). In the case of research in the health areas, the notion of "participatory" has occupied a more alternative, "politicized" and emerging place (Giatti et al., 2021; Giatti, 2022; Thambinathan; Kinsella, 2021).

To understand the paths followed in the production of Research Notes, we took as object the process of/with Elizângela. She has an undergraduate degree, is a professor, is a leader of the movement, is interested in graduate studies

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<sup>10</sup> On online anthropological research, see Parreiras (2015); and on these researches during the covid-19 pandemic, see the dossier organized by Lins; Parreiras and Freitas (2020). See also the PARI-c Platform itself, available from: <http://www.pari-c.org/>. Access on: Oct. 26, 2022

and, for four years, worked as DMIRN coordinator. So neither the technological tools nor the act of writing and putting her ideas and observations on paper was strange. However, this type of more academic writing, more aimed at non-indigenous readers, object of editorial scrutiny and of several translations, organized in logics of categories and syntheses, was new. In this process, as we will resume at the end, it is necessary to highlight the fact that Elizângela found for herself the importance of writing and the pleasure it could offer her, thus recalling the observations of authors such as Glória Anzaldúa (2000) and, more closely, Conceição Evaristo (2018)<sup>11</sup>.

Note taking worked like this: we held some first meetings between Elizângela, Dulce and José Miguel, which connected with the ongoing work of guidance of the last two, with Dulce's conversations with Elizângela and with the coordination meetings between José Miguel and Bruno which, in turn, connected with the general research coordination meetings. In these meetings, Elizângela's voice and knowledge allowed focuses, cutouts, specificities and priorities to be built. No one knew better than she did where the research should go. After these first meetings, and having already published some Notes from other regions on the PARI-c Platform, Elizângela began to venture into writing.

In the first "delivery" of material, she presented a handful of pages that practically contained a research and personal-collective reflection-theorization program on covid-19, the impacts on indigenous women, the relationship with the colonial process and indigenous responses. Almost an analytical, written synthesis (*escrevivenciada*, Evaristo, 2018), of what could be done and what she was doing. With this material in hand, it was necessary to decide what to do and how to do it. We return to positions and relationships: Elizângela, since the beginning of her relationship with José Miguel, in 2016 - when he was elected as coordinator of the DMIRN, calls him "teacher". "Teacher" is what Elizângela is also called in many of the community and institutional contexts in which

she circulates. The relatively shared writing and experience relationship between Elizângela, Dulce and José Miguel was mediated by this idea: learning, mutual respect, composition from different places, and a relative and evident hierarchy of relationships. Elizângela wanted to optimize her writing resources and gain communicability, at the same time she wanted to expose her findings and argue her research ideas and thoughts without any restrictions (non-indigenous and male, mainly).

From the first "delivery" made by Elizângela to the "Teacher" and to "Ducinete" (as he affectionately referred to Dulce on WhatsApp), José Miguel proposed that this material function as an index for the note taking. At least three Research Notes appeared there clearly drawn. José Miguel knew that in order to collaborate in the possible Baskets of Knowledge, he could not simply "correct" the text or assume a regular position of supervisor or coordinator, much less of "reviewer" or "peer reviewer". At the same time, he knew he could not help but interact more actively with her process; for somehow she hoped that he would also assume his place as "teacher". After all, she was the possessor of the core knowledge for this research (and for the care of Rio Negro lives and territories), and her relationship was one of research peers (even asymmetrical ones), of teachers with very high mutual respect; a relationship in which the interest in sharing and learning was great. José Miguel proposed, first, that he would read the text and make all possible, non-evaluative comments, as carefully as possible, seeking to enhance the contents of Elizângela's information and analyses, and then they would deal with the more formal layer, facilitating communication and reading by the target audience. José Miguel and Dulce would be a kind of facilitators of the mediation of Elizângela's written thought for the possible audience of the PARI-c platform.

From that moment on, it was an intense process of going back and forth between texts in Word, with colors, underlining, annotations, development proposals, questions, doubts and provocations. In addition, given a cultural principle of orality of the researchers, a dynamic of collaboration and

<sup>11</sup> As we will see later, the relationship between experience, writing and the production of knowledge for the struggle is fundamental for Elizângela. *Writing*, a term coined by Evaristo (2018), allows the author, through her own narratives, to evoke a shared history.



re-elaboration of texts orally took place, via abundant WhatsApp audio messages and meetings through Google Meet. The excerpts were read, as well as the questions, and, in this way, textual reformulations were also “dictated” and then “downloaded” to Word. Each modification of the text up to the time of publication, or that implied going through a more formal and normative editorial scrutiny of the Platform, was consulted, discussed with Elizângela and approved by her. This was also the case of the Notes written by Francineia and Dulce.

Finally, the face of writing had a particular moment in the creation of the Case Study “Indigenous women and cosmopolitics of care in Alto Rio Negro”. The empirical basis for its construction was: field materials by José Miguel and Dulce, interviews carried out by them in 2021, the Research Notes written by Dulce, Elizângela, Francineia and Norma Orjuela (2021) (resident of the city, of the Tuyuka ethnicity), and the video “We made it!”, made in partnership with ISA and the Wayuri Indigenous Communication Network, published on the PARI-c platform<sup>12</sup>. José Miguel was responsible for producing the case, with the support of Dulce and student Julia Kaori Tomimura. Understanding that the Case Study did not need to be imprisoned in the form and aesthetics of a Research Note or an academic article, the proposal was to carry out a pluritextual assembly from the written and oral contributions of the great diversity of women who inhabited and made sense of empirical materials. In agreement with the two reviewers/evaluators of the Case Study (Aline Iubel and Maria Paula Prates), there was an understanding that analytical overreduction of the material at that moment and for the foreseen objective (the document Case Study to be published exclusively on the Pari-c Platform in Portuguese and English) would not be worth.

The editing work involved reading the materials, sewing argumentative and narrative responses in response to the research questions and, finally, organizing, curating and editing the final text. We sought to conceive a document that would keep traces of the beauty and sophistication

of the thinking of the participating women, that would preserve remnants of the multiple perspectives through which the covid-19 pandemic was experienced, that would show the complexity and abundance of lines and flanks of intervention through which women and their networks responded to the pandemic, government proposals and the distance of “health recommendations”. We renounced the centrality of academic authorship and the principle of being a synthetic and informative text, of quick reading in the non-indigenous world, and we chose to conceive a document, shall we say, slow, which takes time and can be consulted on several occasions and readings, by layers.

Finally, it was about following two notions that had been very important in the process and in the understanding of the Rio Negro experience: the emic notions of “care” and the analytical resource of *cosmopolitics*. The fact that the Case Study text is not reduced to an author and authoritative analytical synthesis, but has been allowed to open up and expand to twice the predicted size (from 12,000 predicted words to more than 20,000 in the published version), somehow connects with the ideas of “intervention”, of “Slow Science”, of technical-community responsibility and ontoepistemological plurality that are part of Stengers’ *Cosmopolitical Proposition* (1015, 2018) (see also De La Cadena and Blaser, 2018). On the other hand, the fact that the Case Study text escapes from the linguistic and cognitive singleness of academic and scientific (male) authority, and allows itself to grow from the flowering of writing, of *escrivivência* (Evaristo, 2018), of the thought and poetic force of indigenous women, can be related to the ideas, also associated with care, of blacklight and black feminist poetics, mobilized by Denise Ferreira da Silva (2017, 2019)<sup>13</sup>. While powered by the *black light*, as opposed to the white light of the Enlightenment, the Case Study text gains possibilities of being, in itself, *an experimentation of care* in the collaborative relationship of knowledge production.

<sup>12</sup> To access the Research Notes and the video mentioned, visit: <http://www.pari-c.org/>. Access on: Oct. 26, 2022

<sup>13</sup> For a critical reflection on the field of public health from a *black light* perspective, see Dias (2021).

## Final Considerations

In this article we analyzed the methodological experience of the Norte Amazônico team to carry out the PARI-c research in the Alto Rio Negro region. Indigenous and non-indigenous people, men and women, participated in this process, which we observed in the city of São Gabriel and in the Alto Rio Negro region, as well as distant cities - in addition to some nearby communities. Indigenous researchers, whose status as researchers is variable and becomes a construction within the research's framework, were the basis not for "data collection", but for configuring and textually reconfiguring what can be another *Basket of Knowledge*.

This research was only possible from its insertion in previous relationships of work, affections and political alliance built from long-term ethnographic enterprises, managed as part of polymorphic networks of collaboration with different objectives, and which already dealt with multiple physical and social distancing, as well as with technological mediations for communication, learning and affections. Thus, this article can offer a contribution to the so-called "qualitative research in health", based on a concrete experience of multidimensional engagement that even goes beyond the limits of anthropology and attentively observes the discussions on collaborative and participatory research.

According to Tripp (2005), "action research" is part of a larger and broader process called "action inquiry". In the case analyzed here, there is an emergency and urgent "action inquiry" to "take care" of Rio Negro in the covid-19 pandemic, carried out by Elizângela, Francineia and many other indigenous women leaders in Rio Negro. This inquiry sought, in real time, to understand what was happening in order to act. As leaders and "researchers", they become "indigenous researchers" of PARI-c, in a collaborative and co-creative relationship with the academic world. The research, then, feeds back on the investigation, serving to look "beyond" what was already known in practice, as described by Elizângela. And in the case of Bruno, José Miguel and Dulce, it was about finding ways and devices to be able to collaborate with them.

"Collaborating", here, is not just co-authorship or multi-authorship, nor the very particular form of classically anthropological "interlocution", nor even the "participation" of non-academic people in academic production. It is a process of weaving and caring for communities, of what may become common: a *basket of knowledge*. Looking carefully at the whole process, the tangle of trajectories and relationships, this "participation" and "collaboration" acquire other nuances. On the one hand, it is a collaboration between researchers in different positions, being crossed by a pandemic and by intersectional boundaries of identification. On the other hand, it is a collaboration or a collective production of knowledge, in which the fact of being collective takes the form, not of a methodological device correcting modern disciplinary pillars, but of nature itself, of the relationships established by women and men as protagonists of knowledge. In this "inquiry", non-indigenous people, positioned in places of academic affirmation and with evident greater ontological and political distance from the region, are willing to "collaborate" in the best possible way with the health emergency and the response process.

For the health field, this collaboration has the potential to produce "hybrid knowledge" (Giatti et al., 2021) and to advance urgent attempts to "decolonize" the field. As analyzed by Gatti et al. (2021), following inspirations from such authors as Paulo Freire and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, it is from these "trans-scalar dialogues" that it is possible to build better responses to the global syndemic crisis. "(...) the more diversity there is in a system, the greater is its range of possible response algorithms (...). Cooperation and mutual help between communities and species, or between human beings, can result in evolution and adaptability much more than, at times, the relentless and competitive individual struggle" (Gatti et al., 2021, p. 238-239). It is in this sense that Elizângela insistently calls our attention to the idea of *intercultural* thought and practice, mobilized by indigenous people in Rio Negro, particularly by women (Costa, 2021c).

What this *interculturality* teaches us in this pandemic is that these "hybrid knowledge" is far from any fantasy of symmetry, composition of unity or

equality between “diverse” forms of knowledge. It is a composition of conflictive and partial epistemic care (De La Bellacasa, 2012), because, within the framework of a continuous colonial process, the greatest ethical and epistemic weight in the composition, the greatest complexity, is the knowledge produced by indigenous women in their nets and *baskets*. After all, it was they, and not any institutional action of the State or Science (traditional agents of the colonial process), that, by composing diverse knowledge and relationships, built an effective regional “care” response (Olivar et al., 2021; Costa et al., 2021; Costa et al., 2021; Costa et al. al., 2022). If this hybrid and collaborative knowledge is “emancipatory”, it is not only emancipatory from the local authorities or from the suffering of the disease, but from the enormous limitations that the “ontoeπισtemological pillars of the Ordered World” (Ferreira da Silva, 2019) of the “white” world that guide the health field and that favor the interminable implication in people’s lives of the “monologue of modernity” (Baquero et al., 2021). “Thereby we have the overcoming of the monoculture of knowledge and the imposition of static solutions” (Giatti et al., 2021, p. 248)

It is in this sense that the plural, collective and complex act of writing gained centrality. The written production of knowledge, provoked in the PARI-c research, implied several displacements and possibilities for the team. Mainly to understand collaboration as a relationship based on the active, discussed and textual production of knowledge, within the framework of principles of multiplicity and on (limited) attempts at symmetrization. Likewise, it implied for academics a certain “giving up” of textual authority, of the epistemic protagonism to which they are so used, of conceptual control and of the myth-conceptual procedures associated with modern “scientificity”.

To conclude, following the logic that we have cultivated in this process, we share a first-person text by co-author Elizângela, as part of her textual contribution to this article.

*My participation was just to write the experiences of facing the fight against covid-19, which was*

*done by us women from Rio Negro, to face the pandemic that has been destroying millions of lives worldwide. The research allowed me to share the knowledge of life that is stored in the invisible boxes of indigenous lives, which we call culture. I had the opportunity to describe and share about us and wisdom never described by anyone. Mainly knowledge about saving lives, where only the doctors at the hospital, shamans in the villages or communities do it. I mainly shared the knowledge of the women of Rio Negro and was able to write about the basket of life, which each one carries for her survival with her family.*

*This research opened up a small opportunity for us indigenous people to be able to record our experiences and share with the modern world the wisdom we have, especially in the face of a destructive pandemic spread throughout the world.*

*This experience had a “decolonial” or “emancipatory” force because the modern world only believes in scientific things, proven in scientific study laboratories and always aimed at generating capitalism. Mentioning “indigenous” alone is already annoying, because everything we have or are does not generate money, but the knowledge we have is inexplicable because we help keep the planet alive.*

*Indigenous knowledge, mainly women’s, is little talked about and shared, not only for indigenous women, but for all, because I see many men who write and few women. To be honest, women are invisible in many places, whether indigenous or not.*

*That’s why I contributed by writing about my indigenous experience, talking about the Baskets of Knowledge we have inside Rio Negro, our persistence in experiencing the modern world and the challenges we face on a daily basis. We have many things stored in these baskets. We are mothers, we are midwives, we are artisans, we are farmers, we are fisherwomen, etc.*

*Participating in the research helped me to look at things beyond what I already know in practice, but*

its importance was to commit it to paper, in writing, this strengthens us as indigenous women; to be able to break the taboo of life, which is to leave the traditional and become something intercultural. We need to cultivate and reopen new ways to share the knowledge that is stored in the basket of life, especially for those who are already in universities. Thus, through them, to open paths for other women to contribute more and thus expand the indigenous experience. Persistence is the key to sharing more of what's in the Baskets of Knowledge.

Every knowledge is a community process. We indigenous people, from the birth of a child, knowledge is always shared among women. The child grows along with the community or family experience, we learn in practice, watching the elders, doing and so we move on too. The pandemic was won because women dominated the practice; I mean, they all knew how to do it. Those who knew, that knowledge rekindled within her, the memory revived in the quest to protect and save lives. For my part, I know that I am just a small seed full of persistence to want to be born, grow and be cared for by many writers or researchers in this universe.

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### Authors' contribution

All authors were responsible for the research, analysis and writing. Olivar and Marques were the study coordinators. Costa, Olivar and Marques were responsible for conceptualizing the research. And Olivar carried out the conception of the article.

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