

“Vamos Descolonizar a Telinha:”
Indigenous Women’s Social Media Activism in Brazil

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Abstract

Indigenous women in Brazil have found unique and revolutionary ways to resist the current national regime through their activism on social media. These digital activisms involve women from multiple Indigenous groups across the country, along with non-Indigenous Brazilian supporters and international organizational allies. The purpose of this study is to consider how Indigenous women have used social media to resist the first two years of Jair Bolsonaro's administration, with a focus on the knowledge that emanates from their compelling concerns and the specific digital strategies they have employed in Brazil and beyond. Using a decolonial feminist practice that centers Indigenous women's experiences and framings, this thesis offers a Critical Discourse Analysis of selected representative digital initiatives, together with visual analysis where relevant, drawing upon theories developed within Indigenous feminisms and movements, as well as feminist and queer media studies. This study focuses on five crucial online and related events that took place between 2019 and 2020, in which Indigenous women activists played key leadership roles, producing data materials in formats ranging from social media posts to live broadcasts. Results indicate that Indigenous women activists are pushing back against the fascist forces currently shaping Brazilian politics, while exposing the limitations of social media platforms in conveying Indigenous activists' values and causes. Their strategies are informed by ancestral and land-based relational connections, supported by intergenerational spiritualities, and shared in creative solidarities with Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous supporters. By engaging meaningfully with Indigenous women's relational values and connections and the solidarities they have developed with anti-capitalist and anti-racist allies, settler societies in Brazil and elsewhere have a stronger chance of securing more promising futures and improved wellbeing for all human and more-than-human lives.

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Dedication

For all Indigenous women activists in Brazil whose digital materials inspired this thesis, and whose biographies follow, below.

Biographies of Activists Cited in Analysis

The women listed here, alphabetically by their first names, are pluralist and pluralizing activists in Indigenous movements in Brazil, who carry with them worlds of ancestral, land-based knowledges, and their relatives' voices, living and passed over.

Ângela Kaxuyana

Ângela Amanakwa Kaxuyana of the Kaxuyana people is one of the leaders of COIAB (Coordination of Indigenous Amazon Brazilian Organizations) and member of the APIB (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil). Ângela Kaxuyana has life-long activist experience in defending the Kaxuyana-Tunayana Indigenous lands located in the State of Pará, particularly during the years of military dictatorship (1964-1985). You can find her on social media as @angela_kaxuyana or @angelakaxuyana.

Célia Xakriabá

Célia Nunes Correa belongs to the Xakriabá people in the State of Minas Gerais. She is an educator, academic, poetess, and activist for the protection of the Xakriabá territories with a focus on supporting Indigenous women and youth. She was the first Xakriabá woman to obtain a master's degree, and is currently working on her PhD in Anthropology, on top of several activities related to her activism. You may find her on social media as @celia.xakriaba or @CXakriaba.

Cristiane Pankararu

Cristiane Gomes Julião is a member of the Pankararu people in the State of Pernambuco. Cristiane Pankararu is an academic and activist working in defense of the Pankararu lands. She is also currently working on her PhD in Anthropology in Rio de Janeiro, as well as representing Indigenous voices and interests close to the National Council for *Indigenista* Policy at the Ministry of Justice. She can be found on social media as @juliao.pankararu.

Daniza Kaingang

Joziléia Daniza Jagso Schild belongs to the Kaingang people of the States of Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul, in the south of Brazil. Daniza Kaingang is an academic and activist, currently finishing her PhD in Anthropology at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, while working as a consultant for UN Women Brazil on Indigenous women's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic, and organizing with her people, for example, at the Kaingang Institute. She is on social media as @jozi.kaingang.

Eunice Kerexu

Eunice Kerexu belongs to the Mbya Guarani people, and fights to protect the Morro dos Cavalos Indigenous territory in the State of Santa Catarina. She has an Environmental Management degree from the Federal University of her state. Eunice Kerexu is a key leader, both at the national level with APIB, as well as local with the Guarani Yvyryupa Commission. She will soon be running for Federal Congress to represent her people and all Indigenous women's concerns. She is on social media as @kerexu_oficial and @kerexuoficial.

Glicéria Tupinambá

Glicéria Jesus da Silva belongs to the Tupinambá de Olivença people and is one of the leaders of the Serra do Padeiro Indigenous territory, in the State of Bahia. Glicéria Tupinambá, or Célia, is an educator, artist, and activist, currently teaching at the public school in her Tupinambá land. She is also involved in the field of audiovisual and media production, particularly in developments close to Tupinambá youth. You can find her on social media as @celiatupinamba.

Leonice Tupari

Maria Leonice is a member of the Tupari people from Rio Branco Indigenous territory, State of Rondônia. Leonice Tupari has been involved in the protection of her traditional land for decades. In 2015 she helped found and currently presides over the AGIR (Association of Indigenous Warrior Women of Rondônia). Leonice Tupari is also a consultant for UN Women Brazil on Indigenous women's rights during the COVID-19 pandemic. She is on social media as @leonice_tupari.

M-boy Jegua

M-boy Jegua is a member of the Guarani-Kaiowá people in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul. M-boy Jegua is not active on social media, but very present in Indigenous women's and peoples' movements to protect Guarani-Kaiowá lands. The Guarani-Kaiowá people still fight for the right to occupy their traditional territories, such as the Ñande Ru Marangatu territory. This people faces brutal violence brought on directly by the Brazilian state, or through its negligence. Following spiritual guidance from the *nhandesys* (female elders), they founded the Kuñangue Aty Guasu, the Great Assembly of Guarani-Kaiowá women.

Nara Baré

Nara Baré belongs to the Baré people of the Amazônia in the State of Amazonas. In 2017 she was the first woman elected to lead the COIAB (Coordination of Indigenous Amazon Brazilian Organizations). After the 2018 Elections and with the ongoing fires, she became central in the resistance to protect the Amazon. Nara Baré also plays a key role in United Nations Climate Change Conferences. She shares her activism on social media as @narasoress.

Nyg Kaingang

Ny Kuitá Kaingang is a member of the Kaingang people living in their traditional territories in the south of Brazil, including the Apucarantina Indigenous territory. Nyg Kaingang is an activist and academic in the field of Social Work, often works with the APIB, co-founded the ANMIGA (National Articulation of Indigenous Women Warriors of Ancestry), and is involved in the Nën Ga Kaingang Youth Collective. Nyg Kaingang is on social media as @nyg_kaingang.

Shirley Krenak

Shirley Djukurnã Krenak belongs to the Krenak people in the State of Minas Gerais. She is an activist and trained journalist. Shirley Krenak is involved, like most activists from this group, with the APIB, and the ANMIGA. She also founded the Shirley Djukurnã Krenak Institute to support her social, cultural, and socioenvironmental activities, which she leads and develops with schools, universities and institutes at all levels in Brazil. Shirley Krenak can be found on social media as @shirleykrenak or @krenakshirley.

Sônia Guajajara

Sônia Bone de Souza Silva Santos is a member of the Guajajara people of the Amazônia from the Araribóia Indigenous land, State of Maranhão, one of the largest Indigenous groups in Brazil. She is an activist, environmentalist, politician, and educator holding a master's degree in Culture and Society. Sônia Guajajara is one of the main leaders of APIB, and in 2022 was listed among the 100 most influential people in the world by *Time Magazine*. Sônia Guajajara is very active on social media, where you can find her as @guajajarasonia or @soniaguajajara.

Tsitsina Xavante

Samantha Ro'otsitsina Xavante is a member of the Xavante people in the State of Mato Grosso. She is an activist, academic, and political organizer. She often collaborates with APIB and also co-founded the *Fag.Tar Review*, a home and digital platform built by a network of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women to tell Indigenous stories. Tsitsina Xavante is also a member of the National Indigenous Commission, as well as leader of Indigenous Youth Network. As the daughter of Mário Juruna, the first and only Indigenous person to represent Indigenous concerns at the Federal Congress level in 1983, until Joênia Wapichana made history in 2018, Tsitsina Xavante was introduced at an early stage to political and social movements. Tsitsina Xavante is on social media as @tsitsinaxavante or @rootsitsina.xavante.

Zenilda Araújo

Zenilda Maria de Araújo, respectfully addressed as Dona Zenilda Araújo, is an Elder of the Xukuru do Ororubá people, traditionally situated close to the Serra do Ororubá (a range of mountains) in the State of Pernambuco. Dona Zenilda Araújo's activism has evolved for decades side-by-side with her beloved partner Francisco de Assis Araújo, known as Xicão Xukuru, in demarcating the Xukuru territory. Chief Xicão was murdered in 1998, and Dona Zenilda Araújo preserves his spirit and strength in defense of her people, leading them to having the Xukuru traditional territories demarcated in 2001.

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List of Abbreviations

ANMIGA	<i>Articulação Nacional das Mulheres Indígenas Guerreiras da Ancestralidade</i> (National Articulation of Indigenous Women Warriors of Ancestrality)
APIB	<i>Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil</i> (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil)
ATL	<i>Acampamento Terra Livre</i> (Free Land Camp)
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
COIAB	<i>Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira</i> (Coordination of the Brazilian Amazon Indigenous Organizations)

Chapter 1

“Vamos Descolonizar a Telinha:” An Introduction

1.1 Charting the Problem Space

Indigenous women in Brazil have been historically positioned at the front lines in the struggle for Indigenous rights and land sovereignty, in part, owing to their specific cultural roles. Their activism has been well established through centuries of resistance against colonialist pressures and processes aimed at Indigenous women’s and peoples’ cultural erasures. Brazilian settler societies directly and indirectly benefit from the legacies of Indigenous people’s cultures, such as enrichment of the Brazilian language and the protection of our forests’ biodiversities, while remaining oblivious to their concerns for justice and survival of cultures, lives, and lands. While neglecting their dependence on the exploitation and survival of Indigenous lands and knowledges, Brazilian settler communities are largely behind in the work of holding themselves accountable for engaging with Indigenous women activists’ calls for action and support. This neglect of substantive reciprocities fuels an extreme polarization of lived realities within Brazilian societies. A classic example is how most of the land in Brazil is owned by a few white settler families and used for soy production and minerals extraction (Pinto et al. 2020), while Indigenous peoples struggle to protect their rights to traditional and ancestral lands. Moreover, Indigenous peoples represent roughly 5% of the global population, and yet, are responsible for protecting 80% of the biodiversity on Earth, while being routinely attacked in Brazil by precisely the enterprises of those few settler families (Raygorodetsky 2018). Therefore, as a member of Brazilian society, descended from uninvited European ancestors, my goal with this thesis is to recollect what settlers are accountable for, seriously and humbly engaging with Indigenous women’s activisms, in efforts to support more informed processes of decolonization.

After the election of Jair Bolsonaro in 2018, a neoliberal fascist with no respect for democratic due process, peoples, or planet, a scenario of shock and hopelessness hovered over leftist parties and social movements. I believe there are several reasons for that distress, but I will start with one: Brazilian experiences of oppression vary according to each population’s social positioning in relation to state-led violence. The closer a group is to

intersecting positions of privilege, the less it monitors the impacts of normative violence toward minoritized groups. Indigenous women and peoples were disappointed, yet not surprised by Bolsonaro's victory, because Indigenous and Black populations have dealt with violence and racism in Brazil without interruption since the emergence of Euro imperialisms, independently of who might currently be sitting as the presidential chair of state governance. For example, in the 2018 Elections, the opposition to Bolsonaro came from Workers' Party candidates, yet their platforms do not offer decolonizing solutions. In the 14 years that former Presidents Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff were in office, much damage was done to Indigenous lands, impacting the health of the Tuxá, Pankararu, Pipipã, Truká, Kambiwá, Tumbalalá, and Anacé Peoples, due to water transfers from the São Francisco River (Gonçalves et al. 2018; B. B. da Silva and Gonçalves 2021). However, one of the key changes in political scenarios between the Workers' Party and Bolsonaro's administration consists of the ways Indigenous peoples are no longer welcomed at the table of governance, even if their concerns were never fully embraced by previous administrations.

With this in mind, progressive opposition parties seem to have grown more reactive than organized against Bolsonaro's regime (Bíscaro 2020). Meanwhile, Indigenous activists have remained in motion, organizing nationally and internationally to expose crimes committed against Indigenous peoples, in part by building a strong online presence on social media. One example is the *Jornada "Sangue Indígena: Nenhuma Gota a Mais"* ("Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More" Advocacy Tour) in late 2019. A group of Indigenous activists toured Europe to denounce the increased cases of deforestation and fires, along with invasion of Indigenous lands by miners and farmers, resulting, for example, in the murder of Chief Emirá Wajãpi in the State of Amapá (Hermanson 2019), among other Indigenous leaders.

Indigenous women activists using social media to resist Bolsonaro's regime are showing immense resilience and inventiveness. Creating community and kinship via Facebook groups and through Instagram accounts, seeking partnerships with other movements nationally and internationally, and campaigning for Indigenous politicians in local elections are a few examples. Because Indigenous people's experiences are often invisible to mainstream media, Indigenous women are deploying social media affordances to broadcast their concerns and to seek strategic alliances. With a clear understanding of the functioning of Brazilian settler societies and its technologies of oppression, including racism and sexism, Indigenous women activists mobilize against these overdetermining systems, including online, by rapidly exposing and adapting to new circumstances.

It is important to note that even though Brazilian Indigenous peoples organize under the category “Indigenous,” there is an enormous diversity of lived experiences, cultures, languages, and knowledges in play through their online activisms. Throughout this study, the expression “Indigenous women” will be used to reference selected women’s activisms emerging from richly diverse groups of peoples, organizing against Brazilian fascism from distinct unceded traditional territories. Many other intersecting identities, including ethnicities, but also gender identities, sexual orientations, social classes, professions, living in *aldeias* or having been brought up in the city, inform the activisms and resiliencies under review. That the activists I am citing often have a footing in both urbanized academic spaces and their home territories means that they are often consciously navigating multiple social positioning systems, as will emerge more fully in my analysis and discussions.

I place Bolsonaro’s politics in the category of “fascism” to follow the lead of Indigenous women activists, and because his politics fit both dictionary as well as prevailing political definitions. Online English dictionaries generally characterize fascism as a quality of movements, politics, systems, or regimes magnifying polarized sentiments around patriotic nationalisms and targeted processes of racialization and minoritization (“Fascism” 2022a; “Fascism” 2022b) that place totalizing ideologies above the needs of the people, and sustained through the systematic suppression of opposing perspectives, often through proactive construction of a militarized state. This thesis provides several indicators that the term “fascism” applies categorically to the present Brazilian government. A simple example is found on Bolsonaro’s initial campaign and tentative government slogan: *Brasil acima de tudo. Deus acima de todos* (Brazil above everything. God above everyone.). This abstract slogan contrasts profoundly with former President Dilma Rousseff’s *Brasil: país rico é país sem pobreza* (Brazil: a wealthy country is a country without poverty), or former President Lula’s *Brasil: um país de todos* (Brazil: a country for everyone), both of which demonstrate, by comparison, the radical change of tone in recent Brazilian politics.

Placing “Brazil” above everything reinforces a universalizing narrative of nation that does not represent the diversity of peoples and communities gathered within the Indigenous territories, today known as Brazil. Such practices of drawing upon a universal idea of “one nation” and thereby capitalizing upon cheap and dirty nationalisms to mobilize the bigotry of the masses corresponds to a classic definition of fascism (Bobbio and Matteucci 1981), while aligning with contemporary understandings that include overt religious fanaticism (“God above everyone”) and placing corporate economic interests above the wellbeing of the many Brazilian communities, ethnicities, diverse Indigenous and settler populations, and lands

(Chomsky 2018). Interestingly, most online Brazilian-Portuguese language dictionaries still define fascism mainly in relation to Italy's historical context and language ("Fascismo" 2021), with little expansion on contemporary applications of the term. This reflects a longstanding tradition in Brazilian history of denying the depths of fascist heritage rooted within the country, by placing its origins abroad and in the past, a practice which is particularly striking when it comes to the military dictatorship established in 1964 and lasting until 1985.

Bolsonaro's administration is fascist when, for example, it openly and intentionally incites violence against Indigenous peoples and Indigenous lands online, when the administration's main communications with Indigenous women activists are by force, through the Military Police, and particularly when preaching the uniformization of a "Brazilian nation" via heightened Euro-religious discourses. The Catholic *doctrine of discovery*, which advocates violent seizure of peoples and places occupied by non-Christians, is alive and well in Brazil. Fascism intersects very neatly with neoliberalism, which does not limit its alignments with necropolitics via any particular set of ethical commitments as long as "democracies" and nation-states prioritize capitalist development in ways that externalize detrimental effects, including targeting Indigenous peoples' well-being (Patnaik 2020). Bolsonaro's chaotic politics undergird an intentional plan to disrupt Brazilian societies, and it affects racialized minoritized groups more pointedly, because it works within international neoliberal capitalist systems already founded on disparity politics grounded in racism and sexism.

When in office, President Dilma founded the National Truth Commission in 2011, being herself a survivor of torture by the dictatorship, which produced much evidence that Indigenous peoples and rights were particularly attacked by the military regime ("Relatório Da Comissão Nacional Da Verdade" 2014; "CNV e Indígenas" 2016). Yet, supported by the spread of percolating ignorance and hatred, Bolsonaro was elected, while openly celebrating Dilma's torturer during his campaign. This is one illustration among many signs underlying Euro-settler systems that separate and attempt to make invisible Indigenous and other minoritized resiliencies in fighting fascist imperialisms across Brazil's long colonialist history.

One illustration of said resilience involves how Indigenous women activists rallied in the *Acampamento Terra Livre 2020 - ATL* (2020 Free Land Camp) to *articulate*, for example, the deplorable conditions endured as a result of their peoples violent suppression from spaces where decisions are made about their lands and lives. The *Acampamento Terra Livre* is one

of the largest Indigenous gatherings, organized annually since 2004, with the goals of making Indigenous rights visible and to bring their compelling concerns before the Brazilian State. Temporarily, this event was switched to a social media broadcast format (on Facebook/Instagram Live), due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The quote which frames this chapter's title *vamos descolonizar a telinha* (let's decolonize the little screen) comes from a conversation led by Telma Taurepang, Jaqueline Guarani, Shirley Krenak, Leonice Tupari, Nyg Kaingang, Cristine Pankararu, and Tsitsina Xavante, who were attending the Indigenous women's online roundtable. This slogan highlights the ways that Indigenous women activists are both aware of the problematic logics behind the geo-political and online systems they are navigating, while also pushing for the potentials of a sustained decolonization project that engages and subverts them, using strategies that have evolved from centuries of examining and resisting the egregious human errors of judgement, accuracy, and accountability that enable colonization in the first place.

Here, I wish to clarify the use of the word *articular* (to articulate) as a practice of accountability. From a Brazilian Portuguese context, *articulação* (articulation) is the relational *praxis* of negotiating everyday politics as observed in most social movements and political organizations. From this English speaking, North American location, lobbying might be a related expression, and yet that implies a certain level of institutionalization. When Indigenous women *articulam*, however, they are simultaneously operating on multiple levels of negotiation: organizing regionally with other Indigenous groups, settler societies, government officials, or within their own ethnic groups, families, and at other interpersonal levels. They are also manifesting change by doing things differently, emphasizing solidarities rather than separation. *Articular*, then, is a political method to unify and connect what is in conflict, bringing light to common ground, rather than focusing on disagreements, in order to accomplish shared goals. *Articular* calls for acknowledging such differences as a rich part of the evolving processes of living that help humans to find canny solutions for the difficult circumstances that we often generate, ourselves, through reductive systems that exacerbate challenging conditions.

The gap maintained between Indigenous women's activisms and Brazilian settler societies is just one part of a sophisticated set of colonialist structures and technologies that torment Indigenous peoples through targeted experiences of simultaneous invasion and exclusion. Brazilian communities are diverse and not always "settler-descended," as in the case of Afro-Brazilians whose ancestors were abducted from their own Indigenous lands. The umbrella term, "Brazilian settler societies," is used in this study to represent those who

continue to hold oppressive power over racialized Brazilians and other minoritized groups, along with those who support and benefit from such oppressions. Currently taking form through neoliberal capitalisms, this politicized system of exceptionalist processes ensures that Indigenous women's knowledges remain invisible among mainstream publics with their complicit investments in hegemonic discourses. Exceptionalisms abandon justice as a matter of convenience to those individuals, groups, and states empowered by structural entitlements to interfere in everyone's affairs, without consequences, as if this were a "natural" or "necessary" condition. Wherever they are complicit with settler societies, the political left and feminist movements often fail to acknowledge and meet Indigenous women activists' concerns, respectfully, and as active supporters. At the same time, they miss opportunities to collaborate with Indigenous women and peoples, to engage in processes of decolonization, and to support Indigenous women in liberating Indigenous lands currently enclosed by the nation state of Brazil.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

It should be noted that Indigenous women activists' concerns are many and diverse, reflecting their situated contexts and experiences, all holding plural situated meanings. A point of convergence for most concerns, however, is the Indigenous right to land sovereignty, which ensures the survival of Indigenous' ways of knowing and of nature's diversities and capacities to adapt. This study aims to demonstrate the legitimacies of Indigenous women's calls for solidarities in their decolonization projects and to shed light, therefore, on the ways that current fascist approaches are inherently illegitimate. My main goal, as a Euro-settler-descended Brazilian-Canadian supporter, is to amplify these vital Indigenous women's activisms beyond Brazil, mobilizing their critical interventions into a Canadian context, where international business interests, such as mining and agriculture, are deeply embroiled in the conflicts under analysis. This thesis argues that by bringing their activisms online, this particular group of Indigenous women activists are occupying colonialist and imperialist technologies for their own goals, and by doing so, they are transforming the digital spaces they occupy into something much more important and meaningful than contemporary online marketeering.

1.3 *Sem Volta*: My Positionality as Researcher

I decided to move to Canada because I wanted to specialize in gender studies. When Bolsonaro was elected, I made the necessary arrangements quickly, because one of his first targets was to defund public universities. My hopes were to go back to Brazil after finishing my master's program and make a difference in my community. I soon realized that, given the

current political climate under Bolsonaro, my chances of having a future and healthy career would not be an option in Brazil; there is no longer any pathway for me: *sem volta*. This decision was not taken lightly, since it includes leaving behind loved ones – which, during the COVID-19 pandemic, has proven to be the heaviest consequence of my choice to immigrate, to date. Even if I was raised to be a “citizen of the world,” without great attachments to specific lands or a particular nation, I still feel the strong effects of belonging neither here nor there, and having my tropical roots exposed to harsh Saskatchewan winters.

The first two years of Bolsonaro’s government (2019-2020) were brutal, with frequent news of Black and Indigenous activists and youth being murdered. I felt guilty for leaving my country and powerless when reading the news, until I started working on my thesis. I noticed how much movement leadership was coming from Indigenous women on social media, and how there was something more substantive happening in their efforts, beyond the superficial layers of sharing images and video posts that usually flood social media platforms. I decided that the best use of my graduate degree would be to support Indigenous women activists’ struggles in Brazil and to raise their concerns in Canada. Therefore, I must position myself in relation to my research topic, so as not to reproduce the same logics of erasure that are foundational to the colonial structures I aim to criticize. My goal is to align with and support Indigenous women’s decolonial causes, as they are working within systems that were not created for that purpose.

I come from the State of Mato Grosso, unceded land of the following peoples: Apiaká, Apurinã, Arara do Rio Branco, Aweti, Bakairi, Bororo, Chiquitano, Cinta larga, Enawenê-nawê, Guató, Ikpeng, Iranxe Manoki, Kaiabi, Kalapalo, Kamaiurá, Karajá, Kisêdjê, Krenak, Kuikuro, Matipu, Mebêngôkre (Kayapó), Mehinako, Menky Manoki, Nahukwá, Nambikwara, Naruvotu, Panará, Paresí, Rikbaktsá, Paíter-Suruí, Tapayuna, Tapirapé, Terena, Trumai, Umutina, Waujá, Xavante, Yawalapiti, Yudja/Juruna, and Zoró. Most of the population in my home state are of Indigenous, Black, and Afro-Indigenous origins, with a minority of white and *mestiços* in positions of wealth and power. Being white, educated, and middle class means that my experiences are embedded within colonialist practices that operate in favour of my visible identities in ways that are rarely questioned. As an atheist, I am unwelcome in a Brazil that holds the second highest national number of self-identified Christians in the world, yet I have no spiritual connection to the land as do most Indigenous women. For the activists whose works I will examine in this study, leaving is neither a likely nor easy decision, since protecting land, peoples, and culture is their received and chosen purpose.

In a world where receiving education is a privilege and not a guaranteed human right, my position and standpoint as a Brazilian academic in Canada requires further consideration. Black feminist, Djamila Ribeiro (2019) elaborates her understanding of social positioning through her discussion of the standpoint of speech, a notion that situates my work as a researcher in terms of its critical engagements with the prevailing distribution of power relations and discourses, from which I benefit. Although academics are professionalized to make knowledge claims, Indigenous women are both producers and keepers of knowledges emanating from their own experiences with activism, based on their social positions within and beyond current power structures. Therefore, I acknowledge the role of the researcher as embedded in prevailing power structures since, in many ways, my positionality influences my choices of interdisciplinary methods, methodologies, analysis, and interpretation.

The best ranked universities in Brazil are 100% public and free of tuition and fees for all levels of education; however “democratic” this may sound in relation to the North American context, Indigenous peoples and other people of colour face great challenges (Vieira 2020). To access these free, public Brazilian universities, one needs to pass highly competitive entry tests, built around prevailing ideologies. Due to deep rooted inequalities created by colonialism and neoliberal systems of exclusion, the majority of the students accessing this “free” high-quality education are white and middle-class, students who have often received basic and secondary education from private schools, like myself.

Because half of my years in basic education were completed within private schools, my entry into a public Brazilian university and, ultimately, graduate training in Canada, has involved strategic navigation of systems where the norm for most students is to graduate with massive student debts, not unlike the ways the global North sold debt to the global South in the 1970s, as an intergenerational mechanism of control (Jaggar 2002). As there are not enough Indigenous women attending Brazilian universities, due to inequities of access, there is a burning need for more publications by Indigenous women about Indigenous women in the Brazilian academy, and indeed, all over the world. My particular positions and privileges also hinder my accumulated efforts to include Indigenous women from Brazil in the theoretical discussions undertaken in this thesis, as I have not been able to access more of the grey literature they are circulating in Brazil, as I am geographically elsewhere.

However, being Brazilian gives me first-hand experience of state mechanisms of oppression. As a non-binary bisexual woman, I have felt the intimate effects of heteronormativity, heterosexism, misogyny, and sexism pervasive to the Brazilian social order. However, due to my dominant identities (e.g., white, educated, cisgender), I can

navigate these mechanisms with much greater ease, compared to other queer women in Brazil who are gender non-conforming, racialized, or Indigenous women on the front lines of land sovereignty struggles. If I went back to Brazil today, my personal safety would not be at risk from writing this thesis. Indigenous women and peoples receive daily threats to their lives for advancing their activisms. Although writing about Indigenous women's activisms will not place their lives at further risk, since I am using material collected from open social media posts, I acknowledge that my privileges permit me to write on this topic without serious repercussions to my safety.

As an immigrant in Canada since 2019, I have benefitted from the teachings of Indigenous peoples from Treaty 6 Territory in Saskatchewan. Witnessing conversations about Indigenization and Reconciliation on campus at the University of Saskatchewan and in the larger community, led by Indigenous people, has played a key role in my thinking about the development of this project. Similar conversations have been happening in Brazil for decades, with several civil society initiatives, including among academic groups and political parties who support Indigenous rights (PIB - ISA 2022a). Nevertheless, these efforts are insufficient, as Indigenous peoples continue to lose their lives and lands. Ironically, my move to Canada facilitates my efforts to engage with Indigenous women activists' decolonizing leadership in Brazil. Entering the diaspora by moving from the Brazilian Portuguese to an Anglo-colonialist context, helps me to enlarge the publics for Indigenous women activists' voices and supports my efforts to challenge the Portuguese and British colonialisms that have shaped my own subject-formation and that of others caught in the larger imperialist systems with which both nation states are deeply complicit.

A decolonial feminist practice recognizes evolving socio-political machineries that support the exploitation and theft of Indigenous people's knowledges and lands. Also framed as abyssal thinking, western knowledge production often divides the world into the "west and the rest," simultaneously erasing and appropriating Indigenous knowledges in the name of "ground-breaking innovation" (Santos 2015). Indigenous women activists' denunciations of the violence taking place on their lands include reports that farmers and miners are often at the center of brutal acts; even if they did not invent such vicious deployments of colonial aggression as a tidy solution to inconvenient, systemically-produced problems, they enforce dominant ideologies and exceptionalist narratives, with built-in excuses to permit injustices.

Colonialist violence is also perpetrated within university walls, in the form of western exceptionalist apologists who shore up prevailing imperialisms on multiple scales (Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill 2013; Arvin 2019). Rather than incorporating the topic of Indigenous

women's activism on social media as an appendix to mainstream feminist theories (Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill 2013), this research seeks to amplify Indigenous women's concerns about the malfeasance of Brazilian colonialisms for larger international publics. I think of "publics" through and beyond the western definitions of the public sphere, where social life informs public opinion and, ideally, the democratic functioning of institutions (Habermas, Lennox, and Lennox 1974). Contemporary social media, however inequitably accessible, is a much more dynamic site for summoning diverse publics into being than anticipated by canonic western scholarship (Ncube and Tomaselli 2019). As activists on social media, Indigenous women are defending relational networking practices that are much more democratic in terms of values and agency than mainstream settler models. The "publics" they invoke, onscreen and off, are even more complex. My thesis, then, however limited by the processes in which I remain enmeshed, is my answer to the call for Brazilian settlers to engage with Indigenous peoples in processes of decolonization, by highlighting Indigenous women's extraordinary expertise (Bishop 1994) in fighting authoritarian regimes.

Building substantive solidarities is a long-term endeavor which requires a great deal of learning energy for those caught in imperialist systems. Thus, I frame my engagements with Indigenous women's activism as an ongoing project. In her book *Becoming an Ally*, Anne Bishop (1994) provides an accessible guidebook for those who wish to advocate for themselves and others without erasing experiences that differ from their own. Bishop's advice is to begin by learning about oppressions: their origins, affects, diverse effects on individuals and institutions, and how they often sustain each other (Bishop 1994). Because manufactured ignorance, as a by-product of knowledge-power alliances, is often a tool that supports oppressive systems, learning about the conditions that activist Indigenous women are navigating is a large part of my research.

Bishop also advises being aware of my own privileges, how they intertwine with Indigenous women's oppressions, as a way to ground my commitments to healing these disparities. My liberation from the oppressions outlined above depends on the liberation of Indigenous women, because the systems that oppress us all sustain each other. Therefore, it is my responsibility to co-dismantle them as an aspiring supporter. As an apprentice worker for my own and others' liberation (Bishop 1994), my goal is to one day become a fully productive supporter for Indigenous women; for now I continue to practice co-building solidarities by cultivating a learning spirit (Battiste 2013). I write this to remind myself that good intentions do not justify the inevitable mistakes and tensions, and to remain humble in

my attempt to create a dialogue with this particular group of Indigenous women activists, as I seek to contribute to substantive, verifiable processes of decolonization, on their terms.

1.4 Language and Translation

Language and translation issues arising from the scope of this research require critical attention. The reader will soon find that, although this thesis is produced in an Anglo-Canadian context, the Indigenous women activists with whom my research is in dialogue do not routinely engage the English-speaking universe. Because translation and interpretation form a cross-cultural and political act (Palmary 2011), the translator's positionality and analysis are neither neutral nor universal. As a white settler and Brazilian immigrant in Canada, therefore, my position has great impact on the data analysis, as many levels of translation are involved. First, not all Indigenous women speak or read Brazilian Portuguese (an imperialist language) as their first language, so there is often at least one level of translation taking place to make organizing with non-Indigenous speaking supporters possible in Brazil, before the materials I examine here are accessible to me. Second, I am translating from Brazilian Portuguese to English. The English language, itself, brings imperialist structures to Latin American realities. As a translator of languages and cultural meanings, my identities – as outlined above – inevitably interfere with any fully immersed interpretations and analyses of Indigenous women's words and ways of knowing. All of these disclaiming statements acknowledge that, undoubtedly, my role as the researcher requires great humility when I act as a translator, not only of languages, but also of meanings, and constructions of reality.

The imperialist Portuguese language has been occupied and appropriated by Indigenous and Black peoples in Brazil to organize and resist during the colonial period of Portuguese occupation, when Indigenous and Black communities were forbidden to speak their own Indigenous languages. Not unlike the transformational impacts of Indigenous presence on social media platforms, such appropriations transformed European Portuguese into the contemporary Brazilian version, introducing a much more pleasant musical phonology, with enriched vocabularies drawn from North to South, in dialects now easily distinguished from European Portuguese.

There is an ongoing and lengthy linguistic debate, dating back to the 19th century, around how the Portuguese language was transformed by various Indigenous languages, such as Tupi-Guarani (Góis and Martins 2019; Lemos De Souza 2020). Brazilians owe the Indigenous peoples of the Americas and of Africa their very means of daily verbal communication and yet, settler societies constantly oppress Indigenous languages.

Given issues of accessibility to Brazilian public universities along multiple dimensions of social disparities, although Indigenous student populations have increased over the past 10 years, they may continue to face additional barriers in completing their programs, particularly when Brazilian Portuguese is not their mother tongue (Sito and Kleiman 2016; Ponso 2018; Neto 2018). Brazilian public universities continually fail to welcome and celebrate the cultural diversity present in their student populations. This is particularly cruel given that, for example, the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, my Brazilian *alma mater*, is built on unceded Indigenous lands and claims Brazilian Portuguese as its only official language, rather than including Tupi-Guarani, Xokleng, and Kaingang.

With these reflections in mind, I intend to cite Indigenous women activists to their every accessible word. I will translate from Brazilian Portuguese to English, while affirming that the original text is also crucial to my analysis. Therefore, I will center Brazilian Portuguese quotations followed by the English translations in my analysis. This decision aligns with the decolonial feminist practice of centering Indigenous women's experiences (in this research by engaging primarily through their words), while offering literal and contextual translations, reserving the right of not offering any translation at all, where none is responsible. Such transgressive strategies have often been used by the queer Chicana feminist scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa (Anzaldúa 2003; Esplin 2016), as a way to show that standard written English is not sufficient to the scope of this research – or for any context where multilingual and diverse cultural backgrounds inform the analysis. Anglo-Canadians must also learn to face these gaps and deficiencies in their own knowledge claims, at home and abroad.

I wish to reproduce some discomfort in the experiences of my Anglo-identified readers, because I believe that such tensions can help produce solidarities with some of the critical conditions that Indigenous women navigate in order to take their activism online. Although my language politics are necessarily confrontational, I hope these approaches may come to be viewed by the English-occupied reader as a gift. Additionally, for all the Latines/Latinxs doing research in North America and forced to use official state languages for academic production, this research provides another chance to remind the *gringos*¹ to

¹ A Latino term referring to white people from the political North, more commonly referring to North Americans, and sometimes Europeans, often linked to stereotypical tourists (like “ugly Americans”), entrepreneurs, and military operatives. Sometimes *gringo* is said to offend, but I notice that it is also used by Latines/Latinxs to disturb with humour the asymmetries of power between the politicized construction of Northern and Southern hemispheres. I also use it affectionately with the white people who are in my life to call out little “*gringo* moments,” like buying expensive bad Starbucks coffee or having too many cars in one

recognize that their ways of being and knowing are limited and limiting. For example, it would make much more sense for the University of Saskatchewan's official languages to be Plains Cree, Michif, Saulteaux, Dakota, Lakota, and Chipewyan, yet Indigenous peoples of the Canadian prairies have to fight for their languages while navigating most of their post-secondary learning in English, in order to occupy academic spaces. So, let the colonizers read with subtitles for once.

1.5 Research Questions: Answering the Call to *Descolonizar a Telinha*

As an alternative to the prevailing goals of mainstream media, Indigenous women activists in Brazil have created spaces on social media to tell their stories, share their struggles and build more accountable solidarities. Indigenous women activists are making use of particular relational strategies that predate their appropriations of digital media, and are grounded in long-standing local struggles. Strategies such as finding and nurturing relationships with supporters, or taking back control over narratives about Indigenous peoples, all depend on manipulating prevailing technologies to fit Indigenous people's goals. Simultaneously, Indigenous women activists navigate the multiple levels of power structures encrusted in social media platforms and protocols, as they have been doing in settler societies for centuries.

In this context, my study is asking the following research questions:

- How have Indigenous women activists used mainstream social media to oppose the first two years of Bolsonaro's regime in Brazil? How might their uses of social media prove to be subversive and revolutionary?
- What specific strategies are Indigenous women employing in this setting of online activism? When and how have their strategies been formulated?
- What knowledges are emanating from specific uses of social media platforms, led by Indigenous women to resist the current fascist regime in Brazil? How are their interactions with other Indigenous women and peoples, and with non-Indigenous supporters, producing new strategies for resistance?

This research takes seriously Indigenous women activists' calls to decolonize Brazilian settler societies. As a decolonial feminist and white settler researcher, I seek to explore the evident knowledge gaps between Indigenous women's activism and Brazilian settler societies. I argue that, because of their long-lasting resistances to colonialisms,

household. It also gives me a space to detect when I fall into those "*gringo* habits" myself, by force of being white and now part of the Brazilian diaspora living in North America.

Indigenous women offer valuable knowledge frames and a deepened understanding of competing Brazilian realities, and the uses of social media for resistant purposes.

Acknowledging Indigenous women's ways of knowing about resisting imperialist fascisms is necessary to rethinking the future of Brazil, and of nation states more broadly. Because they began in violence, the question remains as to whether nation states possess any vestiges of representative legitimacy at all. My work seeks to amplify the ways Indigenous women's activism illuminate these critical issues by addressing them from within both Brazilian and Canadian contexts.

1.6 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 contextualizes Indigenous women's activism, outlines the purposes of my study, discusses my positionality as researcher, including language and translation methods, and my research questions. Chapter 2 reviews the academic literature on Indigenous peoples' struggles with Brazilian settler society, exploring how Indigenous women activists interact with feminist theories and movements, generating theories and practices, as well as outlining important considerations around digital media technologies.

Chapter 3 reflects on the history and current issues of data management and surveillance permeating Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube and their aftermaths, including notes on WhatsApp and podcast hosting companies, which have been used as secondary social media tools for Indigenous women's activism. Chapter 4 contextualized five selected events from 2019 and 2020, where Indigenous women were protagonists, in the following order: *Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: "Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito"* (First March of Indigenous Women: "Territory: our body, our spirit"), *Jornada "Sangue Indígena": Nenhuma Gota a Mais"* ("Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More" Advocacy Tour), *Acampamento Terra Livre 2020* (2020 Free Land Camp), *Maracá - Emergência Indígena* (Maraca – Indigenous Emergency), *Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra* (Global Gathering of Indigenous Women – Earth Healing).

Chapter 5 discusses my theoretical framework, mobilizing decolonial feminist practices and perspectives in conjunction with Indigenous women's digital activism. This chapter also presents Critical Discourse Analysis as my methodology for examining the different types of textual, visual, and cultural data found in my selected digital archive, focusing on meanings and knowledge production emanating from Indigenous women's activism. Rather than separate my mutually imbricated theoretical framework and methods into separate chapters, as is typically done, I have combined them in a single chapter, in part, because I take seriously the ways that Indigenous women's lived activist practices come from

their temporally and spatially relational ethics. I am attempting to affirm their ways of working to strengthen communities and resistant knowledges together.

Chapter 6 contains my analysis, discussion and reflections on Indigenous women activists' main strategies and practices to create, maintain, and catalyze connections in comprehensive and sustainable ways. Lastly, Chapter 7 concludes with a summary of the research findings and arguments, writing Bolsonaro into the histories he could never have controlled in any case, and Indigenous women into the futures they continue to fight for. This chapter also outlines the strengths and limitations of the present study, with recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

“Eu Já Nasci Militando”: A Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Indigenous resistance to authoritarian regimes in Brazil frames one of the oldest stories not told in books. Indigenous women’s activism is not a new phenomenon, and neither are Indigenous people’s uses of the Internet. There has been increasing visibility of Indigenous women extending their activism from grassroots engagements to online platforms and back again, in recent years. One reason for this involves Brazilians having become extremely active on social media, with the number of users tripling over the past 10 years. This makes such spaces attractive for Indigenous activists seeking alternative ways to take back control over their narratives, especially among Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth and young adults, who must navigate narrowing planetary futures with more life-affirming visions than decadent and defensive imperialists can begin to grasp.

In order to contextualize Indigenous women’s social media activism against Bolsonaro’s regime in Brazil, my literature review will focus first on concepts that assist a discussion of the structural disconnect among the lived realities of mainstream Brazilian settler societies and of Indigenous women and peoples. Then, I will explore how selected Indigenous women’s activism relate to other feminist theories and movements. Lastly, the connections between Indigenous women and digital media technologies will be considered, based on practices of judicious resource use, arising from centuries of experience working in cooperation with the land and other cohabiting species. This literature review is influenced by my queer and diasporic Brazilian standpoints and is affected by my position as an academic working in Canada and learning with Indigenous peoples of Treaty 6 territory.

2.2 *O Distanciamento de Realidades*

Brazilian institutions and social relationships are heavily shaped by colonialism, presently represented by the neoliberal “democratic” Brazilian state. The attempt to create one homogenous Brazilian nation has led to centuries of oppression for Indigenous peoples, whose cultures do not fit that fabricated and reductive monolithic delusion of prevailing prowess. In this context, in the words of Sônia Guajajara (2020), Indigenous women “*já nascem militando*” (are born in activism). Guajajara is the first Indigenous woman ever to

run for presidential elections in 2018, with the Socialism and Liberty Party. Fighting for the basic right to be heard and seen on her own terms, Guajajara criticizes the *distanciamento de realidades*, the historic distance between Indigenous people's ways of living and the settler imaginary, as fostered through centuries of manufactured misinformation and prejudice.

The idea that neoliberal states can be called democracies is contested by Indigenous women activists and most social movements, including those in Brazil. It is important to call reductive constructions of democracy into question when they constantly facilitate fascist projects. Contemporary examples of such practices are common in Canada, where the government has used considerable public funds to litigate against Indigenous children who suffered from racism and colonialism through the child welfare system (Cecco 2021); or in the United States, where local police and military forces were used to target the 2020 and subsequent Black Lives Matter protests. Similarly, calling Brazil a democracy is a contradiction in terms, since the 1988 Constitution remains under constant threat by neoliberal, imperialist, and fascist encroachments.

Several illustrations of such threats are found in the field of hydroelectric power plants alone, which in Brazil are considered the “cleanest” form of energy production and make up over 67% of national energy consumption (Ministério de Minas e Energia 2022). To build these gigantic dams, the Brazilian government forces entire communities to dislocate, without meaningful consultation or full consent, damaging the health of rivers by inundating entire ecosystems. Since 1988 the number of dams has tripled (Ministério de Minas e Energia 2022), the largest one being the Belo Monte Dam at the Xingu River, planned while the 1988 Constitutional review and elaborations were underway. In a meeting with representatives of the project and the Indigenous peoples of Xingu, an iconic photo was captured where Tuíra Kayapó touches her machete knife on the face of the national power company's president and says that electricity will not provide her people with food, and that their future depends on the river running free (J. Pereira 2020). Although extremely frustrated, Tuíra Kayapó did not actually hurt the company president, whose Brazilian company did hurt Tuíra's people when the Workers' Party continued the project in 2011. To Indigenous peoples who exist in kinship with the Xingu River, the construction of the Belo Monte Dam attacked a member of their family, something the planners could not grasp because to them the river only meant a source of energy for the economic development of Brazil.

Brazil has created a very specific international state image, under the prevailing influence of the United States (U.S.). It presents as a friendly, tropical land filled with

beautiful *mestiça* (mixed-race) women, available to privileged *gringos*, repeating a familiar imperialist power dynamic between Brazilian settlers, global tourists, and Indigenous women. For diplomatic or economic purposes, this projected state image was exacerbated in its racist and sexist dimensions during the military dictatorship (1964-1985) (Machado et al. 2019), as a way to disguise its deep foundations in violence committed against Indigenous women's bodies and traditional territories. One example is the military regime's 1970s National Unification Program, which gave Amazonian lands to settlers under the slogan "lands without men for men without lands," while moving Indigenous peoples into the Xingu Reserve (PIB - ISA 2022b). This shows that, for the predominantly Catholic Brazilian nation-state: 1) Indigenous peoples are not considered people, thus, the land is "unoccupied" and the borders of the Amazon unprotected, and 2) Indigenous women's existence is doubly burdened by gender and race, as sharp as a double-edged machete knife, as Tuíra Kayapó reminded those oblivious Brazilian settler developers.

Because the narratives surrounding the meanings of Brazilian national identity are controlled by settlers, they work to erase Indigenous women's experiences of state violence and its failures to represent their perspectives or interests. Such controls can be observed in elementary education, where all children learn that Brazil is a *mestiço* country, where Indigenous peoples' experiences are part of a shared colonialist history based on their assimilation into "civilization." Another example is how Brazilian settlers portray Indigenous women as naïve and wild through the *Literatura Indigenista* genre, romanticizing Indigenous peoples in an imagined and projected past.² The extensive settler control over narratives about Indigenous peoples is further preserved by, among other tools, the exclusion of Indigenous peoples and languages from the public university system.

Using decolonial, intersectional feminist lenses, this research posits the fabrication of a Brazilian national identity closely connected with the attempted ethnocide of Indigenous peoples. A parallel case to the one Patricia Hill Collins (1998) makes, showing how the constructions of gender, race, and nation in the U.S. follow the political contours of a patriarchal family structure, might drawn within Brazil. Collins (1998) explains how North

² An example of the *Literatura Indigenista* tradition is found in the famous romantic novel *Iracema* by José de Alencar (1865). The author tells the story of the alleged creation of the new *cabloco* race, said to be the first true and pure Brazilians. The son of a Tabajara woman (Iracema) conjoins with a Portuguese white settler and is used to represent the perfect blend between the naiveté attributed to Indigenous women, and the culture and knowledge attributed to European men. First, this narrative assures the erasure of Indigenous peoples from the contemporary moment, and firmly places them and their cultures in the past. Second, the construction of race as "pure" and based on a masculinist imaginary is a fascist abstraction, foundational to all imperialisms. Third, Indigenous women have long debunked the myth of miscegenation as a process of love and demonstrated its foundational investments in violence in Brazil and elsewhere.

American political rhetorics affirm a state that is homogeneous, white, middle class, and composed of heterosexual households and nuclear families, systematically established to marginalize those who do not conform to these dominant norms. Such rhetorics impose patriarchal values like hierarchy, territory, property, borders, and blood ties as keys to citizenship, in ways that are inconsistent with the realities and practices of Indigenous peoples and their epistemologies. Depending on where people are located along the continuum from privileged citizenship to de facto exclusion in Brazil, the advances and setbacks of its so-called liberal democracy will affect them differently.

That said, Indigenous women and peoples in Brazil may experience different racialization processes, compared to those operating in North America. To maintain the mechanisms of white supremacy when the majority of the Brazilian population is Black, Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous, public policy has worked toward an *embranquecimento* (whitening) of the population (Cardoso 2014; Machado et al. 2019; A. dos Santos and Machado 2019). This miscegenation process has been underway for as long as the nation state of Brazil has existed or been imagined, based on theft of Indigenous lands given to settlers, and on repeated violation of Indigenous women's bodies. Miscegenation is an aspect of colonial processes of erasure that Brazilians have learned to be proud of, as the reason for a territory rich in culture, "friendly and free" of racism. One of many truths behind miscegenation, however, is the rape of Indigenous, Black, and Afro-Indigenous women. Racialized women are also more likely to be victims of *feminicídio* in Brazil, to this day.

On the subject of liberal democratic pretenses regarding territorial and cultural uniformity, Indigenous peoples must challenge systems that aim to appropriate or eliminate Indigenous cultures and knowledges, daily. As Chandra Mohanty (2011) argues, liberal democracies work hard to criminalize specific populations. At the center of struggles for Indigenous land sovereignty, Indigenous women are criminalized by the military police, demonstrating that the necropolitics of the state are, themselves, more accurately understood as criminal, and therefore, without legitimacy (Mbembé 2003). For example, constant death threats and the murder of Indigenous leaders across the country are a frequent reality (Farias 2019; Kokama, Pjhcrc, and Gonçalves 2021). Further, one of the first changes made in Bolsonaro's government was shifting Indigenous healthcare from local communities to the cities, rendering healthcare service delivery extremely precarious, both geographically and culturally, in rural areas (Lima 2019). The negative impacts on Indigenous health were only accentuated by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

To elaborate this point, that the Brazilian state uses active institutional aggression to police, punish and privatize its positions in relation to Indigenous peoples, I will call upon Deonandan and Bell (2019), who apply the concept of “disciplining dissent” as developed by Lara Coleman and Karen Tucker, from Foucault’s notion of disciplinary power. “Disciplining dissent” refers to “the practices though which political opposition and resistance are neutralized or precluded altogether” (Deonandan and Bell 2019, 28). Under Bolsonaro’s administration, this type of blatant violence, especially when directed at Indigenous women activists, involves constant attempts to invalidate their campaigns, dismissing their contributions to Brazilian politics, in approaches ranging from State-led intimidation of activists, to downright incitement to violence against Indigenous women and peoples, online. Bolsonaro is known to have actively incited local miners, farmers, and other extractivist pawns to invade Indigenous lands, organizations, and activists’ homes, and to kidnap and violate Indigenous women and girls, while avoiding being directly connected to those crimes, himself. Another clear symptom of “disciplining dissent” by the current administration is the increasing Military Police involvement when it comes to conflict on Indigenous lands. These state representatives of “law and order” never step foot into Indigenous lands to help protect Indigenous peoples, but rather enable and enforce extractivist invasions of Indigenous lands.

Nonetheless, Indigenous women continue to resist ethnocidal policies, operating under more life-affirming constructions of family and kinship. For the group of activists I engage with in this thesis, activist organizing is inspired by knowledge systems with collective appreciation for intersubjective existence, drawing upon epistemologies that expose neoliberal hyper-individualisms as grounded in mindless consumption under increasingly authoritarian regimes, which, in turn, affect Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The knowledges emerging from Indigenous women’s activism offer notions of power that affirm shared and equitable sovereignties, arising from the land. In the section that follows, I will argue that Indigenous women’s activism can function in dialogue with local and transnational feminisms, only if members of those movements are willing to challenge colonialist assumptions about race, cultural and other minoritizing differences, *and* gender.

2.3 Indigenous Women’s Activisms and Mainstream Feminisms

Arvin, Morrill, and Tuck (2013) define settler colonialism as a scheme whereby newcomers or settlers invade a place and work to erase Indigenous cultures. The main colonial tools for achieving such erasures involves occupying the territory and disrupting Indigenous peoples’ lifeways as physically, culturally, and spiritually connected to the lands with which they live in mutual relations. In this context, how can non-Indigenous feminists,

generally, and from Brazilian settler societies in particular, be part of productive and meaningful alliances for Indigenous women's causes (Arvin 2019)? A first move towards decolonizing feminisms is to examine the deep roots of settler colonialisms within Brazilian societies and institutions, as well as in feminist theories and movements more broadly – including how academe takes part in the theft of lands and knowledges from Indigenous women and peoples (Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill 2013). In order to take decolonization seriously, Brazilian feminisms must commit to producing radically accountable collaborations with Indigenous women, co-conceiving solidarities that address cultural differences, responsibly. Black congresswoman, Talíria Petrone, for example, advocates for Black communities alongside Indigenous peoples and Quilombolas at the federal level of Brazilian politics. Most importantly, Brazilian feminists need to understand Indigenous knowledges as crucial to creating a future where Brazil is not administered by sequential neoliberal fascisms.

Settler feminisms in Brazil constantly reinforce notions of whiteness through *embranquecimento*. Whiteness is a social construction that upholds structures of white supremacy (Leonardo 2004), with understandings of race that shift, depending on the local demographic context (Elgenius and Garner 2021; Driscoll 2021; Matias and Mackey 2015). In Brazilian settler society, as in most places in Latin America, skin pigmentation is the ordinary indicator of race, a direct result of the government politics of *embranquecimento* (whitening through miscegenation) to “improve” the country (Mitchell 2022). As a white *Latine/Latinx* member of the diaspora, I have witnessed many diasporic *Latines/Latinxs* friends identified as white in Latin America, struggle with the racialization process of becoming a person of colour in North America and Europe, where white supremacy is more exceptionalist in applying citizenship criteria.

Historically, as is common in the global North, Brazilian feminisms have been dominated by white and *mestiças* liberals (Duarte 2017). Constructed around the neoliberal projects of economic development adopted in most Latin American countries, mainstream feminisms cultivate alliances with governments and international agencies, without questioning sufficiently the colonial structures in which they are embedded (Suzack 2010; Bastian Duarte 2012). In response, Indigenous women have coined a mixed strategy of working with them as individuals, in collective contexts where settler feminists can learn to be more critical. With land sovereignty as a top priority, Indigenous women hold individual concerns within their own nations, building relationships with a wide range of social actors: from rural and Indigenous organizations, to churches, to civil and multilateral organizations.

A notable example of this relationship building can be seen in the level of engagement Indigenous women showed during the many rounds of *Ele Não* (Not Him) protests against Bolsonaro's misogynistic and racist declarations (Xakriabá 2018). Bolsonaro has made many problematic statements, such as: "I would never rape you because you don't deserve it," addressing a congresswoman from the opposition; "the military dictatorship's mistake was torturing instead of killing;" or "[the policeman] solves the problem, and if he kills 10, 15 or 20, with 10 or 30 shots each, he has to be decorated and not persecuted" (Kokay 2018). In the context of such necropolitical endorsements of state violence, the main goal of the protests was to oppose Bolsonaro's presidential campaign, led by a Facebook organizing group named "Women against Bolsonaro." The *Ele Não* protests turned out to be the largest demonstrations organized by women in all of Brazilian history, where Indigenous women found ways to nurture productive solidarities evident in the first 2 years of resistance after the 2018 elections. Mostly, this meant that after walking side by side in opposing fascism, Indigenous women's concerns became more visible to other social movements.

Again, it is impossible to frame any singular notion of Indigenous feminisms, particularly where feminism is misunderstood to reflect western epistemologies. Uma Narayan (2000) affirms that Western culture has no unique purchase on feminisms and calls for deconstruction of the essentialist packaging of cultures as homogenous (including Western ones). Understanding cultures as steeped in traditional practices, untouched by time, does not account for contrasting views among individuals pertaining to and living within specific cultures. Narayan recommends that feminists avoid approaching cultures in such essentialist ways and instead encourages them to consider the constant changes in practices, different attitudes emerging from those practices, and the multi-variate negotiations underlying such changes (Narayan 2000). Embracing the richness of diverse experiences allows for more complex propositions in dialogues involving Indigenous women's activisms, social movements, political parties, academe, and other sectors of Brazilian settler society. This anti-essentialist challenge is particularly important in fighting fascist reductionisms and in considering how the changes that digital technologies and social media, specifically, have affected all kinds of cultural practices.

To imagine a singular Indigenous or any other feminism is counter-productive, given that Indigenous women's realities are so diverse, throughout the Americas and beyond (Cardoso 2014; Castillo 2001; Cunningham 2006). The word "Indigenous" is itself a limited descriptor, for the *articulação* of related activisms and avenues of diplomacy among hundreds of peoples. Indigenous women who identify as feminists have co-developed

opportunities for partnerships against colonialism, when they have encountered a readiness to welcome specific concerns, while celebrating cultural differences (Suzack 2010). My efforts to dialogue with Brazilian Indigenous women's activisms in this study involve engagements with the Guajajara, Kayapó, Krenak, Guarani, Pankararu, Xavante, Taurepang, Tupari, Kaingang, Xakriabá, Tuxá, in particular, among the many Indigenous peoples involved in the events and campaigns to be analyzed in the present thesis.

In terms of post-secondary education, with the 2012 *Lei de Cotas* (affirmative actions law) the student population of Brazilian public universities has been slowly changing from a majority of white middle class students toward more diverse groups of emerging scholars and academics with various backgrounds (Baptista 2022). This law estimates that 50% of vacancies in federal universities and institutes will be reserved for people who received their basic and secondary education in public schools ("Lei Nº 12.711" 2012). Such affirmative actions toward minority inclusions are created in proportion to the populations of Indigenous, Black, and racialized peoples, as well as people with disabilities, within each federal State. As discussed in the previous chapter, due to a long historic denial of access to post-secondary education for Indigenous women and peoples, only very recently modestly repaired, there is scant availability of peer-reviewed resources published in Brazil by Indigenous women about Indigenous women's activisms. Said inequity of access results in a significant absence of Indigenous women scholars from the Brazilian context to comment on the work undertaken in this thesis, both in the present chapter and in my theoretical framework, although a number of the women whose work I study here are moving in that direction. Indigenous women's relative scholarly absence does not reflect the sophisticated theorizing strategies and practices operating through their activisms (Terena 2020); it does, however, reveal the outright falsehood of the "democratic" Brazilian university and exposes its role in extending the knowledge gaps between the realities of Indigenous peoples and Brazilian settler societies.

Nevertheless, in the past 10 years, there has been an increase in the number of Indigenous people attending universities, with Indigenous women taking their activisms and decolonial projects to the academe with considerable skill (Terena 2020). Ana Manoela Karipuna (2021), Indigenous activist and anthropologist of the Karipuna people, writes on the tensions arising from colonialist occupations, and the experience of facing the frequent questions by non-Indigenous colleagues about what she understands as Indigenous feminism. Karipuna is less interested in answering whether or not there are Indigenous feminisms (which she qualifies as necessarily plural because Indigenous women and peoples are plural), and more in reflecting on why such a question is being asked in the first place, and how her

body, words, actions, and academic research are claimed as feminist by non-Indigenous scholars (Karipuna 2021). Through live social media broadcasts (lives), Karipuna creates a dialogue with relatives from several Indigenous peoples (e.g., Guajajara, Krenak, Xakriabá, Desana), positioning their perspectives alongside her own.

Collectively, Indigenous women understand colonization as an originator of inequities, including of gender, in Indigenous lands. According to Karipuna (2021), what unites feminisms and Indigenous women's activisms are conversations about gender, especially organizing to reclaim spaces where decisions are made and voices are heard for access to education and meaningful information, and for finding solutions for gender-based violence. Yet, Indigenous women endure a specific set of oppressions that differ from those faced by non-Indigenous women, as the former are rooted to Indigenous lands and cultures, while prevailing gender politics came later, with the colonizers.

Referencing Isabel Dessana, Karipuna (2021) presents the idea that Indigenous women academics are mediators between the knowledges arising from Indigenous lands and cultures, and universities, where they are building dialogues between their peoples and epistemologies, and the multiple subjects discussed within university walls, feminisms among them. By making these distinctions, Indigenous women can continue to build solidarities across movements, recognizing and supporting non-Indigenous partnerships, while maintaining clear roots and goals specific to their own aspirations. Karipuna identifies as a feminist individually, because of her position as a mediator between her people and the university, but she would not suggest that all women of the Karipuna people (and others) would self-identify as feminists, collectively.

I particularly appreciate this point because it aligns with the proposition that Indigenous women's activisms and movements are not appendices to feminisms. Indigenous women in Brazil appropriate feminisms, as they appropriate colonialist languages, universities, and social media, to advance their activisms through strategic alliances that do not claim ubiquity of perspective. However, generalizations about feminisms often result in erasure of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized women's voices and contributions to the feminists' movements and theories, which do not belong to white or western epistemologies, as Narayan explains (2000). Karipuna (2021), then, reaffirms both her Indigenous epistemologies and her critical feminist perspectives to break this invented binary. She describes this as an intense process for her as an academic and activist, invested in honouring her relatives who do not feel comfortable within feminisms' relational positioning vis a vis their traditional territories.

Another of the tensions faced by Indigenous women who are activists and mediators between Indigenous peoples' movements, epistemologies, and academe, is criticism around the uses of essentialist connections to collective identities. For feminist, queer, and transgender studies, essentialisms are problematic when they support biological or naturalized claims used in defining gender, race, gender identity, and so on. Indigenous activist movements may deploy what Spivak (1987) defines as “strategic essentialisms,” which is the *articulação* of elements understood to be of essence, while simultaneously acknowledging and questioning essentialist qualities, critically. For example, in their fight to protect Indigenous lands from extractivist trespassers, Indigenous women will mobilize arguments such as “*Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito*” (territory: our body, our spirit), voted the theme of the *Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas* (First March of Indigenous Women) and likening Indigenous women's bodies and spirits to the land. Simultaneously, Indigenous activists sought more comprehensive guarantees of Indigenous rights during the *Primeira Marcha* activities, emphasizing the need to protect Indigenous women's diverse cultural backgrounds, while promoting concomitant potential futures based in practices that are grounded in – but not necessarily bounded by – Indigenous lands and cultures.

Absence is an issue that complicates readings of Indigenous women's activisms and movements, often posing barriers to creating dialogues from within academic contexts, as a result of vastly different understandings of nature and life. The dichotomy of artificial categories like humans, more-than-humans, plants, trees, roads, land, women, men, activism, and academia, are rarely found in Indigenous cosmologies, and yet Indigenous women's activisms take place in delicate negotiations across worldviews that have potentials to encounter and transform each other (Cadena 2010; Lugones 2014; Cadena, Risør, and Feldman 2018). For Indigenous women with whom I am seeking critical dialogues, mountains, monkeys, trees, rocks, bees, birds, and rivers are beings with as many rights, knowledges, and spiritual lives as themselves. Embracing these ways of experiencing life in full relation with all beings offers Brazilian settler societies (and academe) an expanding set of possibilities for futures, other than those scripted by extractivist neoliberal politics.

The aim of this study is to focus on productive partnerships and solidarities that could work toward the goals laid out by Indigenous women, as a decolonialist practice. As stated, a starting point is to acknowledge the problems of colonialist assumptions pervasive in imperialist feminist theories and movements (Arvin 2019). To support Indigenous women's concerns and face the uncomfortable realities of racism and imperialism, feminist theories and movements will need to engage in ongoing decolonial projects that are multiple, situated,

and collaborative. Concentrating on the intersections of gender, class, race, ability, sexual orientation, and geo-social location, as situated by the deconstruction of colonialist institutions, is the main goal of any decolonial feminist project (Lugones 2014). Any such project must thus be consolidated within Indigenous women's struggles, engaging their ontological and epistemological core aims in substantive efforts towards radical change in Latin America, in alliance with rural social movements, and resistant academic knowledge production.

Notions of authority and leadership have functions for Indigenous peoples that differ from settler societies, where ideas of oppressive power and hierarchy are supported by colonialism. For example, Rebecca Tsosie of the Yaqui people (2010) studies Indigenous women's understandings of leadership and how they are achieved, not through conquest, but as earned through positive reputation within the community. From this particular study emerges other possibilities for ethics in leadership, founded on Indigenous feminist principles and based on a shared sense of responsibility with culture and community as key elements, a model of generative power that nourishes the collective, rather than focusing on any specific individual leader. Moreover, Indigenous women in Brazil talk about leaders and leadership positions, frequently accompanied by references to sustaining groups and peoples (Machado et al. 2019; Terena 2020; Munduruku 2020; Guajajara 2020; Kokama, Pjhcrc, and Gonçalves 2021). For example, when Silvia Nobre of the Waiãpi people joined Bolsonaro's administration, she was never acknowledged and celebrated as an Indigenous leader, since she maintained no significant connections to Indigenous movements and had no intention of elevating Indigenous rights (Cruz 2019). Leadership, in the context of Indigenous women's activisms, is a term applied to a pluralized speaking subject (Menchú Tum 2006; 2012) who brings integrity into the conversation, not only for themselves, but for the experiences of the peoples, lands, and species to whom they are accountable. Thus, by moving their activisms online through social media, Indigenous women bring with them rich relational networks of voices, heavy with connections to the land.

Similarly, Indigenous women in Brazil celebrate particular aspects of their cultures by taking up traditional leadership roles, building relationships with neighbouring Indigenous nations and sharing knowledge and framing techniques (A. dos Santos and Machado 2019). They create new knowledge by expanding their activisms through social media. Local activisms are key in achieving self-determination. Mobilizing through Indigenous women's associations facilitates greater diplomacy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous nations in Brazil and abroad, pushing Indigenous people's concerns into deeper negotiations with the

Brazilian and other states. An illustration of Indigenous women *em movimento* (in movement) occurred when they travelled to Brasília, some for the first time, for the *Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas* in 2019 (Encantadas 2019), to protest unjust policy changes impacting their daily lives.

So far, this literature review has focused on understanding the *distanciamento de realidades* between Indigenous women's activisms and Brazilian settler societies with its national, political, and economical structures, as influenced by neoliberal capitalism. The present section attempts to provide a brief summary of selected literature relating to decolonial and Indigenous feminisms, including decolonialization of mainstream feminisms. The following section will discuss Indigenous women's use of digital media technologies, especially social media.

2.4 *Ocupando a Telinha*: Digital Media Technologies

As far as Indigenous women and social media are concerned, there are a few critical issues to consider. First, there is a harmful stereotype, associated with neoliberal development discourses, of Indigenous peoples belonging to the past (A. dos Santos and Machado 2019; Souza 2018; Duarte 2017). Indigenous women are either romanticized by the canons of Brazilian literature, or seen as dangerous warriors who will unsettle white people's land ownership. Challenging such notions, Indigenous women are appropriating colonialist technologies, and putting them to other uses than initially intended. For example, during the online roundtable with the 2020 Free Land Camp, those who were present in the Indigenous women's roundtable highlighted that they were *ocupando a telinha* (occupying the little screen) as part of a project of decolonizing received technologies ("Mulheres Indígenas" 2020). The act of camping on or occupying stolen land is an ancient tactic to protest the dispossession of Indigenous traditional territories throughout the American continent.

However, Indigenous women have never owned social media, which were certainly not conceived to accommodate Indigenous women's activisms. So why are Indigenous women claiming to occupy and take back this territory? Mainstream media (TV, radio, newspapers, publishing houses) are among the communications tools that control the narratives surrounding Indigenous women and peoples. They concentrate mostly on urban publics, and ownership is confined to five powerful families (Media Ownership Monitor 2017), all of whom maintain strong political ties that ensure their private interests are upheld within the neoliberal "democratic" system.

In these circumstances, Indigenous women's efforts to occupy digital media technologies arise from the need to take back control over prevailing narratives about who

they are as women and peoples (F. C. Silva 2018). Broadcasting their conversations and sharing their experiences on social media allows for connections with other Indigenous nations – as well as for developing productive solidarities with some sections of Brazilian settler societies – ultimately supporting Indigenous struggles for land sovereignty. For example, in the awareness campaign about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (“Maracá - Emergência Indígena” 2020), there is a mix of pleas from Indigenous peoples across the Brazilian territory, with notable support from various allies with renowned international careers, such as singer, Chico Buarque and actor and filmmaker, Wagner Moura.

Some scholars have argued that Indigenous peoples have gone from a projected “primitive” status to recognition as modern citizens among mainstream publics, just because they use the Internet (Carvalho and Rodriguez 2019), as if this were a matter of simple causal effect. Such essentialisms try to link the oral traditions of Indigenous languages to the production of video, and promote notions that aim to integrate Indigenous peoples imaginatively into Brazilian settler societies (Machado et al. 2019). It is a delicate matter, though, simply linking Indigenous uses of the Internet to purported assimilation into “modern” settler societies, or concluding that YouTube automatically supports Indigenous peoples, because most ethnicities have an oral tradition in knowledge keeping. These ideas can be cavalier towards the many levels of negotiations undertaken by Indigenous women who share their concerns online.

Social media platforms are not simply providing Indigenous women a space for activism, since they are as hostile and overdetermined as any other settler colonial space. The reality is that Indigenous women are negotiating with that space, as they do in any other public space, without being less Indigenous, or belonging less to their peoples. One flippant Instagram post by Geni Núñez of the Guarani people explains this point: “In 1500, settlers didn’t have smartphones, computers, jeans... how come you are white if you drive a car and not a sailing ship?” (Blog Tucum 2020). Western societies have no unique purchase on feminisms or creative uses of digital media technologies.

In this thesis, technologies are defined as both tools and concepts. For settler societies, technologies have been associated with the refinement of machines through the development of scientific knowledge, such as the construction of dams for the production of electricity, which do impact Indigenous women’s activisms in tangible ways. However, Indigenous women’s approaches to technologies consider the refinement of relational networks, already grounded in the land through ancestral spirituality as technologies. For example, in the Krahô cosmology, seeds came from the star, *Catxêkwy*, who visited earth as a frog, fell in love with

a Krahô boy and joined the Krahô people in human form in order to share with them knowledges around food. *Catxêkwy* always retired into a *cabaça* to rest (Londres et al. 2014). *Cabaças* are made from gourds, which are hard shelled fruits used by many Indigenous peoples for storage and as ornaments. To this day, *cabaças* are intimately related to the preservation of food species that would otherwise go extinct if dependant on settler technologies, such as Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Within Krahô knowledge systems, seeds are a relative, and to lose a variety of seed is cause for mourning (Londres et al. 2014). The technology of *cabaças* connects the Krahô people to their relatives, the seeds, allowing for transportation and sharing among communities in market season, which ensures their diversity and continuity.

My research has also identified literature around Indigenous uses of digital technologies that treat all Indigenous peoples strictly as its victims. This approach undermines respect for Indigenous women's agency (Duarte 2017). Once again, by dismissing the negotiation work Indigenous women undertake in order to use social media to share their perspectives, conformist academics reinforce the colonial tradition of making Indigenous knowledge production invisible. As part of its decolonial feminist practice, then, this study seeks to understand how Indigenous women's ways of knowing are evolving through social media and joining growing efforts to support resistant academic knowledge production.

Despite such potential pitfalls, dealing with issues of accessibility and the affordances of digital media technologies is still important to my research. In order to listen critically to Indigenous women, an understanding of the levels of negotiation they undertake to become social media activists is called for. First, it is vital to recognize that Indigenous women are moving around and through their engagements with this colonialist set of tools, which are still shaped by prevailing hegemonic power structures operating at large in the material world (Nakamura 2014). As the rise of digital media technologies is enabled by these structures, they reiterate the violence mobilized by a capitalist system that provides the infrastructure and labor to bring such technologies to life. Thus, it is imperative to critique the infrastructure access limitations that Indigenous women and peoples may face (Gasparotto 2016), everything from obtaining well-functioning hardware to locating a good internet signal, especially for those living far from urban centers.

This digital divide is measurable among differently situated populations. More than a lack of hardware, this access gap is caused by prevailing imbalances of power in Brazilian settler societies, affecting whose voices are represented and heard on social media, or not.

Contrary to the colonial narrative of Indigenous people's mesmerized passivity in face of new technologies, Indigenous leaders have been working to bridge the digital divide for a long time. For example, in 2007, when Chief Almir Narayamoga of the Paíter-Suruí people³ travelled to Silicon Valley and approached Google to seek partnerships for education and capacity building in digital technologies, he clarified how the Paíter-Suruí are specialists of the forest, as much as Google is of technologies (Costa 2012; W. S. de Oliveira and Almeida 2017), emphasizing reciprocity.

On the other hand, leading sectors of Brazilian society are pushing back against Indigenous peoples' solidarity work. Bolsonaro's administration has attacked public education since the electoral campaign and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic with ramifications that will be felt for decades to come. Instead of supporting municipalities to make a smooth transition to remote learning, Bolsonaro vetoed a federal law, requiring the government to provide clean water and internet access to Indigenous territories (Saringer 2020). It was two years into the pandemic before a temporary measure was approved to guarantee internet access to students of the public education systems, including Indigenous peoples and Quilombolas communities (Agência Senado 2022). This temporary measure has yet to reach most Indigenous populations.

Digital technology, and by extension, its algorithms, are often assumed to be neutral by end users, a patent fallacy. Biases resulting from colonial power structures are routinely transferred to digital media technologies. Algorithm bias arises from written computer instructions that, themselves, contain biases; machines also learn biases from online content posted by the users of search engines (Gasparotto 2016) or social media. For example, Facebook has often censored posts with pictures of Indigenous women and peoples on the grounds of community standards violations, due to nudity (Scannavino 2017). Meanwhile, Bolsonaro is free to spread racism, misogyny, and misinformation to a large public on the same platform without retaliation (Equipe Lupa 2018). Facebook's application of community standards sheds light on a disjunction happening between what is allowed for Indigenous women activists and other minoritized groups versus what is allowed for white settlers. Further, the solutions Facebook has offered to Indigenous women, for whom bared breasts

³ The Paíter-Suruí are from Northern Brazil, living on Indigenous territories today known as State of Mato Grosso, where this author was born, and the State of Rondônia. In late 1960's, the Paíter-Suruí population was estimated to be over 5,000 individuals, and by the end of the 1980's, reduced to about 250 after contact with Brazilian settler societies through violent conflicts and invasion of their lands. In 2012 the Paíter-Suruí population was 1,350 (Costa 2012; W. S. de Oliveira and Almeida 2017).

are not an erotic invitation, is to fill out more forms explaining why their posts are not pornography, an extra level of bureaucracy that Bolsonaro does not face as a white male settler and fascist public figure, routinely making prejudicial statements and inciting violence.

Settler colonialism also perpetuates its power structures through surveillance of Indigenous women's activism. A Brazilian intersectional feminist organization named Coding Rights aims to defend human rights in the development, regulation and uses of technologies (Coding Rights 2020), a mission particularly important under a fascist regime. Recently, Coding Rights released a detailed report of how Bolsonaro's government is creating a mega database for citizen surveillance, in addition to cataloguing activists on social media (Varon, Santos, and Anastácio 2020). Such an undertaking by the government defies the basic principles of democracy, fragile as they may be, and the Brazilian Data Protection Act. This mega database criminalizes Indigenous women's activism as dangerous and subversive to Bolsonaro's regime, thereby increasing the risks for Indigenous women leading resistance movements.

The term "legitimacy" in settler societies is intrinsically dependant on its own institutions. Knowledge is often embraced as more legitimate if it comes from academia, and information is considered more credible when specific authorities and their official communication channels are the source. However, when electoral debates are taken online without mediation, and candidates pay for voters to receive a tsunami of misinformation beeping from every conservative uncle's pockets (B. M. dos Santos 2018), the fragility of democratic institutions is exposed, and the constructed reality of what is considered legitimate and illegitimate is also undermined. Brazilian settler societies' dependence on institutional "legitimacy" is related to the "rule of law."

For Indigenous women and movements, unreliable diplomacy with the Brazilian nation-state can be frustrating, especially when it consistently works against its own 1988 Constitution, the most important formative document affirming that Indigenous peoples social organization, languages, beliefs and traditions, have rights over the lands they have traditionally occupied (*Dos Índios*, 1988). Alexandra Munduruku (2020) explains that Indigenous peoples place importance in the legitimacy of the human word, without need of papers and pens, which have been wielded to appropriate lands and lives. For Indigenous women activists and the epistemologies and ethics they engage, legitimacy occurs in reciprocal relations, undergirding a connection of trust and accountability that is ongoing through continuous relationships. In short, the measures of legitimacy that inform Indigenous

women's activism is much more rich, rigorous, and accountable than the legitimated "formal" norms of the Brazilian nation state.

There are several factors influencing the possibilities of legitimate social justice discourses in the context of Brazilian settler societies. In addition to the racist, sexist and ableist algorithms that permeate social media platforms and near monopoly control of mainstream Brazilian media, there are constant threats to the lives of women who stand up for the rights of Indigenous peoples. Despite these constraints, Indigenous women find ways to fight back colonialist gender roles, as in the case of O-é Paiakan Kayapó, who recently assumed her father's post as chief of the Aldeia Moikarakô of the Mebêngôkre (Kayapó) people (Mídia Índia 2021), a role traditionally bestowed on male Mebêngôkre members (PIB-ISA 2022), at least in recent history. Navigating such wide-ranging complexities requires much energy and skill from Indigenous women activists, in articulating their aims for a wide range of audiences.

The *articular* of Indigenous women's activism is creative and complex, out of the need to face the many disjunctures emanating from colonialisms and the neoliberal capitalisms to which they have given rise. Arjun Appadurai (1990) frames these disjunctures as occurring within what the author calls "scapes," which are historically, politically and culturally situated platforms of power and process, enacted by many actors/entities, ranging from nation-states to social movements to families. The author develops a case for five dimensions of global cultural flows: ethnoscapas, mediascapas, technoscapas, finanscapas, and ideoscapas (Appadurai 1990). Indigenous women are constantly navigating the contradictions facilitated by these flows as they *articulando* with a wide range of actors to advance decolonial and deconstructive effects within these interwoven scapes. One example of this occurred in the *Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas* (First March of Indigenous Women) in 2019, when Indigenous women called for artistic engagements from Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This call worked both to make the March visible and to engage others in this historic event, which resulted in a number of powerful images on social media in formats ranging from posters to short-documentaries (Morais 2019; "Primeira Marcha de Mulheres Indígenas" 2019).

A further example of the complexity of *articular* is the *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* (APIB) (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil), which is a bottom-up national organization created in 2005 through the *articulação* of seven well-established regional Indigenous organizations (APIB 2021a). The APIB advocates for Indigenous rights parallel to the Brazilian State, Brazilian settler Societies, and so on. As is

expected, such practice of *articular* is neither smooth nor linear. Recently, an Indigenous protest during the 2020 *Carnaval* raised consternation when a white Brazilian actress marched with Indigenous ornaments and body paint. Three years earlier, Indigenous queer artist Katú Mirim launched the hashtag #ÍndioNãoÉFantasia (Indian is not a costume) to call out a settler habit of dressing up as Indigenous (Mirim 2019); the 2020 *Carnaval* reignited that discussion. APIB's official position defended the actress as a consistent ally, noting that the body paint was made by an Indigenous artist and the actress marched side by side with Sônia Guajajara and Célia Xakriabá (members of APIB) (Putti 2020), even as other Indigenous peoples online found it disrespectful. All this is to say that, even if APIB is constantly mobilizing for Indigenous people's rights and *articulando* different perspectives, it does not mean that APIB automatically represents all Indigenous people's opinions, which are rich and diverse.

Entangled with meanings of *articular* is the concept of disidentification, coined by José Esteban Muñoz (1999). Indigenous women negotiate strategies of survival in a colonialist country like Brazil, where their culture, experiences, and ways of knowing do not conform to the fabrications of Brazilian settler societies, or gender roles for that matter. Disidentification enables activists to use the ideas of Brazil, democracy, feminism, social media, and so on, adapting such notions to their own Indigenous values, in order to achieve productive political results. Muñoz (1999) also emphasizes how disidentification is antiassimilationist, which means that although people may organize under colonial terms such as "Indigenous" or "women" and some may talk about the future of "our Brazil," activists are well aware of the negotiations happening when entering processes of *articulando* with settler societies. There are many examples of the understandings Indigenous women hold on the intricate and intersectional dimensions of disidentification. For instance, Bia Pankararu (2021) explains how the LGBTQ+ acronym does not quite embrace the complexity of her identities. She does occupy LGBTQ+ spaces, because they offer a minimum of representation – even if that representation is not particularly accurate.

The aim of the present literature review is to situate and reflect on Indigenous women's activisms in relation to various Brazilian settler power structures, feminist theories and movements, as well as digital media technologies and scapes. Due to settler colonialism, mechanisms of erasure are present in all of these sites of Indigenous feminist intervention. The knowledge gap between Indigenous women's realities and Brazilian settler societies is extensive. Even though Indigenous women are constantly seeking productive solidarities with Brazilian settler cultures, Brazil is not stepping forward to answer their calls for

decolonization – including feminist academic knowledge production. As a white Brazilian settler researcher, I mobilize from my position to present my research questions and outline my theoretical framework, methodology and methods in an effort to practice solidarity with Indigenous women’s activisms in Brazil by centering their perspectives in my work.

Chapter 3

Examining Social Media Aftermaths

3.1 Introduction

Social media is an umbrella term that refers to interactive websites, platforms, applications, messaging feeds and public following features that permit users to create and share content and/or to engage in social networking in virtual spaces that are set up by host organizations. Each social media platform is designed around particular and sometimes shifting specifications in terms of size and format of textual, image, and audio/visual posts, duration, and management of archived materials for both users and owners, and establishing various, often evolving conditions around marketer access, privacy/security features, fee structures, if any, and so on. Most providers make their profits by developing participant market profiles organized around predictive preference algorithms, used by advertisers and other groups to target users for particular kinds of messaging.

Recent scandals have demonstrated that global platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, have permitted harmful and polarizing content, even in cases where there is ample evidence of mental health impacts on younger users or targeted effects in state politics. Hacking attacks by bots and phishing scams are fairly common, presenting current challenges to safety and privacy, not only for individual users, but also organizations and governments. Because platforms are multiple and offer varied services, users and providers may mobilize them with profoundly divergent motivations. Often, audiences for specific platforms are marked by generational emergence, ongoing availability of the format, desire to access or avoid distinctive publics or counter-publics, and/or interest in becoming an internet entrepreneur/influencer through the marketing or publicity affordances of particular platforms, sites, and feeds.

Early internet users may recall platforms that have long since vanished from effective use. A recent example is Orkut by Google, a social media option so present in Brazilian lives that its discontinuation caused a strange, shared mourning by an assorted population of users due to the loss of 10 years' worth of collective digital archives. For Indigenous peoples, and other minoritized populations, Orkut allowed for the creation of online forums called

“communities” where groups of people supported each other in building and protecting Indigenous identities (R. M. R. dos Santos and Lopes 2012; Meneghini 2015). Orkut operations moved to Brazil in an attempt to fight several lawsuits regarding safety and privacy, notably related to hate speech and misinformation on the platform. These are not small issues in considering minoritized social justice engagements with social media markets.

There are the easily identifiable and popular platforms with globally distributed contemporary usage, such as Instagram or Facebook, both with short-form, limited duration messaging systems, and others that are inconspicuous, yet popular, like Wikipedia or the reviews and ratings of organizations and businesses appearing on Google Maps. However different, some key elements remain the same: social media relies on content produced by users with individual or group profiles, operating within websites/applications available through high speed internet, where such websites/applications are supported by social media services, each of which ultimately consists of and survives based on the intuitive convenience provided in connecting users’ content (Obar and Wildman 2015; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; boyd and Ellison 2007). Attempts to delineate available social media in more specific terms than those outlined above are complicated by, for example, regular platform updates in functionalities, frequent integration of services across platforms, including via changes in companies’ ownership, just to name a few of the fairly volatile structural features conditioning the ways such platforms operate in relation to wider assemblages of power relations.

This chapter reflects specifically on how Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube came into being and certain aspects of their contemporary operations, their impacts on relational systems as well as brief notes on WhatsApp and podcast hosting companies which have been taken up as secondary social media tools for Indigenous women’s activisms. The selected details I outline here will be helpful to subsequent analyses of the concrete ways that Indigenous women in Brazil are *descolonizando a telinha* (decolonizing the little screen) by taking their activisms to social media platforms that were not necessarily designed with them in mind.

3.2 Facebook

Created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook started as a social network for Harvard-only students, initially designed to rate perceived students’ attractiveness, working as a markedly cisgender and heterosexual dating tool. Facebook’s early alignment with an elitist private American educational institution provides critical insight into the aspirations and subsequent evolution of this foundational web-based networking system. The platform

opened to the public two years later, already worth billions of U.S. dollars and involved in several intellectual property lawsuits (Boyd and Ellison 2007). Over the 18 years of its primacy as a top-performing social media company, Facebook developed many simultaneously public and market facing functionalities while acquiring an array of other products that did not necessarily integrate into its main social media platform. Following neoliberal capitalist methods, Facebook perceives individuals as consumers, with its numerous functionalities working to construct the platform's public as markets and maintaining markets as publics. One example I have observed is how it became common for influencers, users who are social media savvy and grow a large base of followers, to be approached by brands wishing their products advertised. Eventually, Facebook incorporated enough tools to ensure that Mark Zuckerberg profits from such transactions. Still, what interests me most is how the initial interaction between influencer and follower is transactional, commercialized, and marketed.

In recent years Facebook has faced significant criticism for lack of transparency in the conception and reinforcement of community guidelines. The turning point, however, came when in late 2021, former product manager Frances Haugen decided to share documents that proved the extent to which Facebook has allowed, for example, public misinformation to spread in order to keep users logged into the platform for longer (Isaac 2021; Jeff Horwitz et al. 2021; Smith 2021), including discredited claims of election fraud by Donald Trump or misinformation around COVID-19 by Jair Bolsonaro. A collection of articles by the *Wall Street Journal* was published, along with a podcast, under the catchy name of "The Facebook Files," delineating the concerns raised.

According to this journalistic investigation, Haugen signals how Facebook is struggling to retain users, given that members of younger generations are leaving the platform to avoid parental surveillance and in search of more micro-format features. Corporate desperation to retain users, even if it means neglecting safety and breaching its own community guidelines, leads, unfortunately, to the seductive and cumulative spread of polarizing hate speech and misinformation.

Activists received the news of this investigation with no surprise, as they have been navigating this hostilities-friendly platform for years. For example, back in 2014, the company decided to promote "safety" by asking users to prove that their online names match their "real" ones on identification documents. Needless to say this "safety" measure disproportionately impacted activists using alias names, as well as transgender and non-binary people, and other minorities who have good reasons to remain anonymous (Peña and

Varon 2018). For example, the Akroá-Gamella people in Maranhão, who face constant death threats in their struggle for land sovereignty and leadership, resort to anonymity for safety reasons (Kokama, Pjhcrc, and Gonçalves 2021). Meanwhile, Facebook kept a list of millions of “elite users” consisting of celebrities and politicians who are often held immune to community guidelines (Jeff Horwitz et al. 2021). The fiscal incentive to support polarizing and, therefore, dramatic and affectively-engaging content, is substantial. Thus, activists’ social media accounts are constantly being blocked for highly contestable interpretations of community guidelines, while political leaders who are recognized bad-faith actors, wilfully abusive of myriad publics – like Jair Bolsonaro, are able to post hour-long live broadcasts, spreading misinformation and inciting violence, without deterrent.

3.3 Instagram

The popularization of smartphones in the late 2000’s allowed for social media services to move from desk and laptop computers into users’ pockets (Maryville University 2020). Instagram was then launched in 2010 as a mobile application (app) focused on picture sharing, which takes advantage of the built-in cameras on smartphones. Facebook bought Instagram two years later and changed, among several aspects, its Terms of Service to allow the selling of users’ photos to third parties without notification or compensation (*BBC News* 2012; Lynley 2013). Several features were added over time, making Instagram a very complex app to navigate, in terms of implications for users. In addition to the picture and video editions, users may now access Augmented “Reality” filters and audio management tools, location sharing, instant messaging chat, voice and video calls (now all merged with Facebook’s messenger), 24-hour-disappearing messages (Stories), live video broadcasts with multiusers, Instagram TV for longer videos (IGTV), short multi-clip videos (Reels) and, finally, the in-app purchase system that allows businesses to post pictures of their products with a “price tag” so that users can consume them more easily via the platform.

3.4 WhatsApp

The mobile application WhatsApp was launched in 2009, initially as a status update service turned instant message app by user demand. Over the years, its features evolved to include messaging pictures, videos, audio-clips, various documents formats, location sharing, 24-hour-disappearing picture and video status, voice and video calls, desktop and web versions to access the platform, as well as special features for businesses (“About WhatsApp” 2022). Perhaps predictably, Facebook purchased WhatsApp in 2014, allowing for integration across platforms and a higher focus on commercial uses. One may post a 24-hour-disappearing picture status on WhatsApp with the possibility of cross-posting it on Instagram and

Facebook, for example, indicating a product “sale” or celebrity gossip message. However, WhatsApp is not only used by business, but also mobilized by Bolsonaro and his followers, for example, to attack decisions by the Supreme Court and negotiations with Congress (Benites 2020), including decisions relating to Indigenous lands. Even if WhatsApp prides itself on ensuring end-to-end cryptography protected messages, there are also plans to integrate this platform with Facebook’s Messenger service, which remains opaque when it comes to personal data protection policies.

A key-feature of WhatsApp are group chats, which played a fundamental role in the dark backgrounds of the 2018 Brazilian elections. Until recently, one could create a group chat, add anyone, and send them messages as long as the initial user had their smartphone number. Beyond involuntary presence in large family group-chats, this also allowed for unknown numbers to send out links to blogs and documents. WhatsApp is the preferred medium for the white middle-aged conservative Brazilian male user to share “information.” Unfortunately for democracy, this rebellion against traditional media quickly turned into a channel for ludicrous conspiracy theories and resulted in massive falsified “news” stories favouring Jair Bolsonaro, thereby interfering with critical media consumption. Essentially, WhatsApp proved fruitful for perpetrating regime-affirmative propaganda. Such interference by social media users in national elections is not specific to Brazil, as similar issues have been observed in countries like India, Nigeria, and the U.S., with harmful effects exacerbated by the presence of private “consulting” companies invested in advancing said propaganda.

Widespread news of a massive data leak from Facebook by Cambridge Analytica, a private consulting company for political advertising, happened right before the 2018 Brazilian elections. Simultaneously, for the first time, Brazil allowed for electoral content produced by candidates to be shared and promoted on social media (and search engines) via paid ads (B. M. dos Santos 2018). This rendered elections even more vulnerable to the highest bidders than previously. Meanwhile, procedures for the proposed 2018 approval for a personal data protection law in Brazil dragged on, and was not implemented until late 2020 (B. M. dos Santos 2018). All of this increased the extreme polarization of Brazilian elections between Jair Bolsonaro and former President Lula (Workers’ Party), especially when the latter was wrongly (and intentionally) sent to prison and prevented from participating in the elections, as a result.

Consequently, Bolsonaro continued to avoid public televised debates, a crucial tradition of Brazilian elections, taking his isolated campaign to managed live broadcasts on Facebook. His online script consisted of attacking his opposition and minorities: “If they

want to stay here, they will have to put themselves under the law of all of us. Either go abroad or go to jail. These red thugs [referencing the left] will be banished from our homeland” (Kokay 2018). On the subject of affirmative action for public university access, Bolsonaro stated that it “cannot continue to exist. Everyone is a ‘victim’: poor Black people, poor women, poor gay people, poor people from the Northeast, poor people from Piauí. We’ll end it” (Kokay 2018). Although Criolo (2017) sang fiercely that “*meninos mimados não podem reger a nação*” (spoiled boys can't rule the nation), both as a candidate and as president Bolsonaro is still not able to speak to mainstream media about the opposition or public education without throwing fits of anger, which he prefers to offer online, where Facebook community guidelines do not apply to his hate speech.

3.5 Notes on the “Metaverse”

Given several similar scandals resulting in material harms to individuals and democratic processes, Facebook has been dealing with some very bad press. The renaming of the company from Facebook to Meta was underway even before the global COVID-19 pandemic, although the last two years have accelerated the change, through concerted efforts to shift the Metaverse brand away from expanding criticisms. With this in mind, the Meta website is full of images of “diversity” (women, Black people, queer, people with disabilities) and short impactful sentences appropriating words like “collective,” “empowerment,” and “connection,” all aimed at marketizing relational networks, just as Facebook has always done. For example, Facebook’s “intelligent algorithms” matched my profile, as part of the group “*Mulheres contra Bolsonaro*” (women against Bolsonaro) organizing the *Ele Não* protests, to an advertisement on t-shirts with feminist slogans. The efforts to present Meta as a “new” more diversely-accountable company, are blatantly mercenary, performative, and especially ineffective in disguising the neoliberal values behind its policies, which place profit above people’s privacy, safety, or power to secure responsible governance.

I believe that most humans – the thoughtful, organic kind that still walk the earth – will experience a high level of discomfort or *vergonha alheia* (vicarious embarrassment) when watching Mark Zuckerberg’s launch video presentation on the “collective” construction of the metaverse. More than once I wondered if Zuckerberg was really there or if this was a realistic avatar, which made me question both my sanity and the internet connection. Relying on the development of Virtual and Augmented Reality technologies, Zuckerberg explains how “3D spaces in the metaverse will let you socialize, learn, collaborate and play in ways that go beyond what we can imagine.” (“Welcome to Meta” 2021). Parts of his presentation show him standing awkwardly in a digitally conceived room, speaking in what appear to be

automated tones to the following themes: “social connections,” “entertainment,” “gaming,” “exercise,” “work better and do more,” “education” and finally, to the real point of the metaverse, “commerce.” All themes were embedded within formats of consumption during the presentation. For example, a Black woman comes home from work after a long day, sits on the couch and “goes out” for drinks with a friend, while another woman of colour logs into a concert in Los Angeles from Japan, and then both of them proceed to buy virtual merchandise together.

3.6 YouTube

Launched in 2005, initially for desk and laptop access, YouTube is a form of social media focused on online video sharing and streaming. The website was acquired by Google a year later (“YouTube” 2022) and is the second most accessed website in the world, preceded only by Google itself (“Most Visited Websites” 2022). As with all social media, YouTube conducts frequent features updates and, although it remains largely free, it now offers a music and movie streaming service for a monthly fee subscription. Other features include YouTube Stories (similar to Facebook and Instagram, 24-hour disappearing posts), a YouTube Community Tab, where content creators may interact more closely with followers, and YouTube for Artists, where musicians may promote and sell concert tickets, as well as broadcast live. Because YouTube is owned by Google, videos posted in that platform will appear first on a Google search, which is why some users utilize YouTube as a secondary repository for their creations. Indigenous women and movements use YouTube strategically at least in two ways: content created for YouTube then circulated on Facebook and Instagram, and conversely, as a Facebook or Instagram live broadcast might be archived on YouTube for further dissemination.

3.7 Podcast Hosting Platforms

A podcast is composed of a series of audio files available online which can be downloaded onto a device or streamed at the user’s convenience. The term “podcast” was accidentally coined by a *Guardian* article author discussing amateur internet radio (Hammersley 2004). Podcast hosting, as well as music streaming services carrying podcasts, are not as open as the previously presented social media platforms in terms of how many people use their services. One reason for this might be because some hosting services charge a monthly subscription fee for unlimited and uninterrupted content, contrary to the more primary and popular social media platforms, which remain free of charge, betting on the value of data mining for future consumer targeting, even if users have little disposable income in the early stages of platform usage. For an individual, group, or organization to

upload podcast episodes into a hosting service, there are no fees required, unlike music streaming, where artists must pay a subscription in order to have their content displayed. Examples of popular podcast hosting and music streaming services include Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Listen Notes, Deezer, Podnews, and Google Podcasts.

3.8 Using Social Media

Brazilians spend a daily average of 3 hours on social media, with Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and Instagram as the most popular versions, mostly accessed via apps (B. M. dos Santos 2018; Volpato 2021). Social media companies' main source of profit is advertising, which explains why users' personal information is in such high demand by private advertising or consulting companies and why Facebook (now Meta) and Google have operated for so long without discussing their community guidelines with transparency. Civil societies have been pushing for governments to pay attention to these giant social media companies for a long time, especially in the case of "intelligent advertising," which consists of algorithmically managed ads targeting people at a specific time, in a particular virtual space, on a specific platform, according to the calculated norms of their preferences and usage profiles. Such practices depend upon data mining, which is the extraction of information from raw user's data without informed consent and for – as far as colonial traditions of extraction go – profit (Peña and Varon 2018; 2020; Werbin, Lipton, and Bowman 2017). I will return to the reproduction of bias in algorithms and the proximities between virtual data and colonialist mining projects, below.

Introduced by Twitter in 2007, hashtags are captions preceded by the # key forming a structure that allows for sorting, organizing and interconnecting posts (Sebastian 2019). Hashtags become popular on Instagram and Facebook as, in theory, they allow for a topic to become visible to a larger public than one's followers. Social media companies treated the hashtag as a tool that empowers users to take control over content visibility on their platforms, which added to the illusion that social media offers an effective democratic tool for contemporary societies.

The very coding of social media platforms is entrenched in oppressive colonial traditions of knowledge production and transmission, with Meta holding structural power over which content and narratives remain accessible and visible. For example, enmeshed online and offline racist systems reflected on the #MeToo movement, where accounts from white cisgender-heterosexual women were considerably more visible (meaning: first listed on feeds and with most engagement in the form of "likes," comments, re-posting) than those of Black women, when the #MeToo campaign was first conceived by Tarana Burke for Black

and Brown women and girls (Onwuachi-Willig 2018). On a similar note, Indigenous activists of Turtle Island (or North America) participating on the 2021 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls awareness campaign (#MMIWG) reported the arbitrary and automatic deletion of several posts on Instagram by Facebook (now Meta) (Native News Online 2021). Both examples point at how social media cultivates bias in its coding and algorithms, revealing how such digital spaces are not neutral “democratic” grounds for activists, but rather a modern mechanism of surveillance and censorship that interferes with Indigenous women’s activism. Such interference is not by chance, as corporate decisions have the goal of profit over relationships and safety, while Indigenous women continue to operate within long-term, land-based, ancestral ethics for meaningful and authentic relationships and exchanges.

Zuckerberg’s vision for the metaverse depends on the ongoing commodification of large collections of data, without informed consent from users. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and algorithms rely upon the daily capture and extraction of data from billions of people (Peña and Varon 2020; Werbin, Lipton, and Bowman 2017), to penetrate and test interpretations of reality from social interactions and online behaviours, and to alter reality and living landscapes in the name of profit. Data mining bears close resemblance to the colonial practices of land extraction and destruction, because it literally mines the very land Indigenous women are fighting to protect. Given the actual environmental cost of social media (López 2020), accessible public information seldom accounts for the amount of, for example, finite and rare metals and minerals used to produce a smartphone or laptop computer, often sourced from contested Indigenous lands without consultation with Indigenous peoples. An inescapable and growing pile of electronic waste that cannot be recycled, with leaking batteries poisoning the land and water, are all aggravated by the constant marketing of new gadgets that will be obsolete next year, due to frequent operational system and app updates (Tecnología Libre de Conflicto 2022; Martín 2020). Environmental costs in terms of carbon emissions, water consumption, and land usage of the buildings housing hardware and processing data of social media platforms must also be taken into account (Cummings 2021; Derudder 2021). Social media platforms and the gadgets required to access them have direct political, environmental, cultural, and relational costs for life on earth, and Zuckerberg’s “dream” will only help aggravate the climate and environmental crises that Indigenous women seek to resolve.

In the Amazon, the Sateré-Mawé people have an ancient rite of passage called *Waumat*. It consists of young men collecting poisonous Tucandeira ants from the forest,

assembling them on woven gloves and being bitten while dancing for hours, preparing them to be resilient hunters and leaders. Although social media platforms can hardly be juxtaposed to such powerful medicine as the Tucandeira ant, they can be compared to the poison produced by the insect. Indigenous women activists are working homeopathically with toxic social media systems to counteract the harmful effects of oppressive colonialist structures operating within multinational corporations and Brazilian settler societies, in order to rebuild real world possibilities.

With this in mind, Indigenous activists use Facebook and Instagram primarily for sharing news and activities, as seen at *The Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: "Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito,"* while YouTube and podcast hosting services work as digital archives (however ephemeral) of recorded activities, as observed at *Acampamento Terra Livre 2020, Maracá - Emergência Indígena,* and *Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra.* Finally, WhatsApp works as a supportive background technology for internal collaboration, such as *Jornada "Sangue Indígena: Nenhuma Gota a Mais."*

Chapter 4 Background on Selected Events

4.1 Introduction

Indigenous women in Brazil engage a wide range of actors at home and abroad with the goal of protecting basic Indigenous rights. As they move across Brazilian biomes and international borders, or log-in for virtual gatherings, Indigenous activists are constantly recruiting valuable supporters and carefully composing potent alliances in order to face ongoing colonialist attacks. This chapter will bring out key points on the history and context of events selected for examination in this study. While the points I will discuss follow an intentional pattern, the events selected must be considered part of a larger frame of reference that exceeds the scope of this thesis.

Below is a table to help readers navigate events considered in this chapter:

Table 4-1. Summary list of events (table by author)

EVENTS	TRANSLATION	SHORTENED	DATE
<i>Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: “Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito”</i>	First March of Indigenous Women: “Territory: our body, our spirit”	<i>Primeira Marcha</i>	August 2019
<i>Jornada “Sangue Indígena”: Nenhuma Gota a Mais”</i>	“Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More” Advocacy Tour	<i>Jornada “Sangue Indígena”</i>	October 2019
<i>Acampamento Terra Livre 2020</i>	2020 Free Land Camp	<i>ATL 2020</i>	April 2020
<i>Maracá - Emergência Indígena</i>	Maracá – Indigenous Emergency	<i>Maracá</i>	September 2020
<i>Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra</i>	Global Gathering of Indigenous Women – Earth Healing	<i>Cura da Terra</i>	September 2020

4.2 *Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: “Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito”*

The *Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: “Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito”* (First March of Indigenous Women: “Territory: our body, our spirit”) of 2019 was, in fact, the first time that diverse Indigenous women from different parts of Brazil camped and marched together to challenge the current Brazilian government. The planning for the *Primeira Marcha* started during the previous *Acampamento Terra Livre (ATL)* (Free Land

Camp) in April, the most important Indigenous political gathering of the year (Tikuna 2019). Later in this chapter I will develop a deeper description of the *ATL*, as well as the national organization *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* (APIB) (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil), since most events addressed in my study are connected through both APIB and *ATL*.

Following preparations in April, the successful *Primeira Marcha* took place on August 2019. Under the theme *Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito* (Territory: our body, our spirit), reaffirming and strengthening Indigenous identities, some 2,500 women representing 130 unique Indigenous peoples, travelled to the capital for the *Primeira Marcha* and several other demonstrations, interventions, and meetings. Beyond the broadly interwoven goals of gender justice and Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous women gathered to protest and reject Bolsonaro's government as it worked to dismantle many public and social institutions collaborating with Indigenous peoples, particularly as his administration was moving to erase the national policy for Indigenous healthcare (Manifesto da Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas 2019) created two decades prior under the former President Lula⁴ administration.

The Indigenous women activists' goal was to stop the privatization of *Secretaria Especial de Saúde Indígena* (SESAI) – the Special Secretariat for Indigenous Health. Activists were also moving to sack the SESAI coordinator at the time, Sílvia Waiãpi, an Indigenous woman allied with the right-wing administration, who did not represent substantive accountabilities to Indigenous movements. Waiãpi did step out of that position a few months later due to increased pressure by Indigenous movements. Another critical purpose of this gathering in the Brazilian capital was to gather women from different generations, across as many Indigenous peoples and communities as possible, for the International Day of the World's Indigenous peoples (Manifesto da Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas 2019). The second edition of the event in 2021 gathered even more: five thousand women from 172 peoples (ANMIGA 2021).

⁴ In Brazilian culture, formality carries different meanings in language than in French or English-speaking Canadian context. Lula was the first leader emerging from the masses, serving as President from 2003 to 2010. Even if I critique of some of his politics and alliances, I join in the humor that Lula is the “ex” most Brazilians miss, and we will always cherish him by his nickname instead of his official title. Depending on the context, too much formality takes away a much more valued human connection. I believe this lack of formality, inherent in my culture when referring to important figures of authority and leadership, renders such figures closer to real life, making them “one of us,” *gente como a gente*, and thus accountable to the population. On the other hand, the refusal to place a title as important as “President” so close to Jair Bolsonaro's name is a sign that I refuse to acknowledge his hold on the future of Brazil, in step with Indigenous women activists who refuse to accept Bolsonaro's politics against Indigenous lands, peoples, and biodiversity.

The impact of Indigenous women advancing from near and far to the capital city of Brasília – some for the first time in their lives – was tremendous, because it connected them to where the decisions that shape their day-to-day lives are made, and the power they have to influence those decisions. Indigenous women also entered the SESAI buildings (not without security resistance) and proceeded to hold a peaceful sit-in demonstration. They met with important political figures such as Carmem Lúcia of the Supreme Court. They released their *Manifesto* (2019), the final document related to this event, which highlights the collective agreement among Indigenous women from Brazil, outlining why they refuse to be silenced, to back down, or to quit the fight for all of life and for their futures. The *Primeira Marcha* resulted in the creation of *Articulação Nacional das Mulheres Indígenas Guerreiras da Ancestralidade* (ANMIGA) (National Articulation of Indigenous Women Warriors of Ancestrality).

Unfortunately, the privatization of SESAI continues to advance with Christian missionary organizations taking control over national institutional provisions for Indigenous health, resulting in proselytizing and invasion of Indigenous lands, all in step with ongoing imperialisms in the region. An example is a trip organized by the Women's, Family and Human Rights Ministry of SESAI to the Suruwahá people, who have chosen to live in isolation from Brazilian settlers and have cast out invaders in the past (Fellet 2020). Such processes of Christianization and neo-liberalization of basic Indigenous rights became even more clearly harmful to Indigenous peoples with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. Indigenous peoples who, before Bolsonaro was in office, had a somewhat reliable health system still requiring improvements, now had to face a Global Pandemic without the basic guarantees of primary healthcare offices or facilities close to their communities. Because of privatization and religious interference – the reporting of COVID-19 cases among Indigenous peoples differs from those provided on February 2, 2022, by SESAI (58841 confirmed cases and 865 deaths) versus numbers independently reported by APIB (64738 confirmed cases and 1261 deaths) (SESAI 2022; APIB 2022). The *Maracá - Emergência Indígena* (Maraca - Indigenous Emergency) event, outlined below, explores the COVID-19 Pandemic in more detail.

Brasília has been the stage for the *Acampamento Terra Livre* since 2004, and now the *Primeira Marcha* from 2019 onward; therefore, some contextualization of the city's history is provided here for readers less familiar with its positioning in these narratives. The federal capital of Brazil since 1960, Brasília, was founded under President Juscelino Kubitschek's (known as JK) administration and designed by Oscar Niemeyer, renowned Brazilian

modernist architect. Brasília has been built on unceded Indigenous territory, using the exploited labour of internally displaced Indigenous workers and other people of color migrating from the Northeast region (Santarém 2013), where terrible labour conditions analogous to slavery, persist.

JK's campaign slogan was "50 years in five," conveying the promise of modernization through rapid industrialization, using the United States, where industrialization advanced quickly through a series of wars, as a reference. About the alliance between Niemeyer's architectural intervention in Brasília and JK's determination to "modernize" the provincial country, suffice it to say that, as with all modernist development projects of the period, the goal was to use rapid urbanization and capitalization of land for mining, forestry and agriculture, to finance the establishment of a modern production economy (Santarém 2013). This obsolete model is styled after Eurocentric ideals of the World Bank, World Trade Organization, and International Monetary Fund, with their characteristic dependence on fossil fuels to navigate an increasingly monocultural set of global markets.

After one in many periods of political turbulence, by the mid-20th century, Brazil began to track related cultural changes with increasing rural flight. Located at the geographic heart of the country, Brasília represented a "democratic" dream after a turbulent political period,⁵ shifting the national spotlight away from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. This liberal, "democratic," capitalist dream for Brazil was literally imprinted on city planning; from an aerial perspective, Brasília looks like an airplane, with administrative buildings on the "pilot plan" such that people routinely make dinner plans with friends to meet somewhere in the "north wing." However, because the project of the new Brazil remains elitist (as liberal "democratic" projects generally are), the roads, avenues and squares around the ministries and other important administrative buildings are so enormous that pedestrian walkways are virtually non-existent. It remains, above all, a city built for what – at the time – was considered the symbol of modernization: automobiles.

Brasília's architecture and urban planning reduced the impact of collective action and massive protests on social discourse – by making it more difficult to create the galvanizing

⁵ Brazilian "democracy" is new, and most of our political periods could be described as turbulent, with only JK serving his full mandate (1956-1961) between dictatorship periods. Since the formation of Brazil as a Republic in 1889 we have accumulated two dictatorships: *Estado Novo* or the Third Brazilian Republic (1937-1945) and the Military Regime (1964-1985). Consequently, between 1926 and 2022, from the 26 presidents in power, only 6 have been directly elected by the people and completed their full terms in administration, Bolsonaro included.

effect a protest produces for both participants and bystanders – which says much about the kind of “democracy” JK championed. For example, the *Esplanada dos Ministerios*, a colossal square surrounded by ministry buildings, is capable of holding 2.3 million people. Thus, when Indigenous women plan an event where they often must move from place to place for meetings and demonstrations, as well as march down busy central streets, they do so with complicated transit challenges. Given that Brasilia seized unceded territories for its ambitions, land conflicts still take place in “the heart of Brazil,” as the Yanomami, Fulni-ô, Tuxá, Kariri-Xocó and Guajajara peoples fight to protect lands and cultures in the Federal District (Mapa de Conflitos 2022). Considering the similarities with the history of Washington D.C., Brasília’s “democratic” model is also founded on harms to Black, Indigenous and People of Colour, stripping those who actually built brick and mortar “democratic” institutions from accessing the promises of an equitable, inclusive future for decolonized mutual flourishing.

Social media, much like Brasília, was not built to host or promote Indigenous values. Even so, Indigenous women are occupying digital spaces that were never designed to welcome their ways of knowing and living. During the *Primeira Marcha*, Indigenous women posted and reposted news and updates from related activities, either on their individual social media accounts via Facebook and Instagram with synced posting, or through the Mídia NINJA and Mídia Índia accounts – both independent media collectives, the latter comprised solely of Indigenous communicators. A short documentary entitled “ENCANTADAS” (“enchanted”) was produced through an initiative of *Associação Nacional de Ação Indigenista* (ANAÍ) (National Association for *Indigenista*⁶ Action), supported and sponsored by the Malala Fund (*Encantadas* 2019), and distributed on YouTube. During the documentary, Indigenous women were interviewed to reflect on the *Primeira Marcha* and what it meant to them, with a focus on their aspirations on behalf of Indigenous youth. Increasing use of social media can be observed in the second *Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas* (ANMIGA 2021), where event broadcasting was organized into six episodes via YouTube, perfecting ways of amplifying their cause in more accessible formats.

⁶ *Indigenista* refers to policy, cultural and intellectual production about Indigenous peoples by non-Indigenous actors. For example, Indigenous literature refers to novels written by Indigenous authors while *Indigenista* Literature is constituted by novels written primarily by Brazilian white settlers.

4.3 Jornada "Sangue Indígena: Nenhuma Gota a Mais"

Only two months after the *Primeira Marcha*, Indigenous women activists working alongside other Indigenous leaders were touring Europe in October, with a very busy agenda across 12 countries in 35 days. Named *Jornada "Sangue Indígena: Nenhuma Gota a Mais"* ("Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More" Advocacy Tour), the main goal of this campaign was to condemn the violation of Indigenous and environmental rights since Bolsonaro took office that year (APIB 2019a). Indigenous leaders promoted marches and rallies in the main streets of European capitals in collaboration with local civil society organizations, led panel discussions in universities, met with members of local congresses, contacted members of the European parliament, hung posters and banners in front of a hotel where major corporations met to discuss future investments, barged into said corporate meetings, protested in front of large European banks, visited the Pope, demonstrated in front of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's home, engaged with local media (for example, by giving live interviews on television and leaving a series of news articles behind), while engaging multiple other forms of protest, alliance and advocacy building (Poirier 2019; Earthsight 2019; APIB 2019b). As expected, this group was very busy for the long month they spent in Europe, so they shared the labour and responsibilities of their full schedule, collaboratively. Countries visited included Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and Vatican.

This advocacy tour was coordinated by APIB (Articulation of Indigenous peoples of Brazil), the umbrella organization connecting regional Indigenous communities and groups with each other. The APIB was created as the stage for national Indigenous mobilization in 2005, during the second edition of *ATL* (Free Land Camp) that same year. It was created from grassroots movements with the purpose of strengthening the union of Indigenous peoples, the *articulação* and collaborations across different regions and local organizations, and mobilizing Indigenous peoples against ongoing attacks on Indigenous rights. According to the APIB website (2021a), it is composed today of the following organizations representing all Brazilian regions:

Table 4-2. Regional Indigenous organizations composing APIB (Table by author)

ORGANIZATION	TRANSLATION	REGION/STATE
<i>Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira (COIAB)</i>	Coordination of the Brazilian Amazon Indigenous Organizations	States of Acre, Amapá, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima e Tocantins
<i>Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Nordeste, Minas Gerais e Espírito Santo (APOINME)</i>	Indigenous Peoples Articulation of the Northeast, Minas Gerais, and Espírito Santo	Northeast Region, and States of Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo
Conselho do Povo Terena	Council of Terena People	State of Mato Grosso do Sul

ATY GUASU – Assembleia Geral do Povo Kaiowá e Guarani	General Assembly of the Kaiowá and Guarani People	South and Southeast regions
Comissão Guarani Yvyrupa (CGY)	Guarani Yvyrupa Committee	South and Southeast regions
Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Sudeste (ARPINSUDESTE)	Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of the Southeast	Southeast region
Articulação dos Povos Indígenas da Região Sul (ARPINSUL)	Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of the South Region	South region

The following map from APIB’s website demonstrates visually the geographic dimensions of this organization’s origins and efforts:



Figure 4-1. Mapa das organizações regionais que compõem a APIB. <https://apiboficial.org/sobre/>

During the *Jornada “Sangue Indígena,”* Indigenous leadership also sought to create spaces of action and dialogue in close proximity with European civil societies. The idea was to remind them and circulate the fact that Brazilian products being consumed in Europe are often coming from Indigenous lands suffering under conflicts promoted by the Brazilian state or through one-third-world corporations. By raising awareness among European consumers, that such businesses are

directly harming the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples in Brazil (APIB 2019b), they sought solidarity with misinformed complicit publics. Another plea was for local, European, and United Nations politicians to refuse the free-trade agreement between the Southern Common Market (Mercosul) and the European Union, which was conceived without consultation with Indigenous peoples and is designed to further complicate conflicts and deforestation on Indigenous lands (Earthsight 2019; European Commission 2021).

In fact, since the 2019 *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* took place, that agreement was approved by both parties, but a few European countries like Austria and France refused to ratify the treaty due to its lack of environmental protections and guarantees (Berghe 2021). Although Indigenous activists were not able to halt approval of the Mercosul-EU free-trade agreement, they certainly brought to light many issues that European societies were comfortably oblivious to, forging long term relationships and alliances with a variety of individuals and organizations from that part of the world. The following year, a second

advocacy tour was led by APIB (2020a) under the theme *Jornada “Vidas Indígenas Importam”* (Indigenous Lives Matter) where leadership met online with ministers, members of various parliaments and trade committee members to reinforce the need to protect and promote Indigenous peoples rights. Repercussions from the first *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* were also affirmed when it received the Annual Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award from the US-based Institute for Policy Studies, as well as when one of the largest French banks, BNP Paribas, ended its relationship with companies that the advocacy tour group denounced as having been involved in illegal Amazon deforestation (APIB 2021b; 2020b). Even if these victories are not absolute, it does demonstrate the strategic influence and potency that Indigenous movements have forged, within and beyond Brazil.

At the end of every visit in each country, a podcast episode was freely shared across all possible streaming and podcast hosting services: from Google to Spotify, Deezer, Apple, and others that I and many never heard of. Erick Terena was the communicator behind these episodes; he is also the co-founder of *Mídia Índia*. The podcast was advertised as a travel journal, or in this case, the advocacy tour journal. Although there were short, one-minute report videos posted on YouTube as well, the podcast provided Indigenous women and other Indigenous leaders more space to elaborate and reflect on each day’s agenda, as well as the successes and challenges emanating from the *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”*.

4.4 Acampamento Terra Livre 2020

When the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic in March 2020, APIB was a month away from the 17th edition of the *Acampamento Terra Livre* (Free Land Camp). Like most people, Indigenous movements had to adapt quickly to the new scenario, in order to be safe without giving up the essential work of such a crucial annual gathering (Baré and Junior 2020). This version was historically significant for many reasons, one being that it was the first time the event was so accessible to non-Indigenous audiences. The *ATL* always takes place in Brasília (APIB 2020d), but in 2020, it took place exclusively online. The event has never been closed to non-Indigenous people; many researchers, journalists, and other professionals and allies have been individually invited to attend specific meetings. The 2020 edition, however, was only a click away.

Although Indigenous women were involved in various discussions and roundtables throughout this online edition of the *ATL*, they were excited to gather in a session reserved for women only, entitled *Mulheres Indígenas: O Sagrado da Existência e o Nosso Espaço de*

Direitos (Indigenous Women: The Sacredness of Existence and Our Space of Rights).⁷

Reclaimed in the 14th edition of the *ATL* back in 2017, many activists and leaders describe this space as one that allows for cathartic experiences of connection and exchange with women from across the country (“Mulheres Indígenas” 2020), a recovery space where activists can discuss issues pertaining to gender and to their peoples, emanating from both within their own respective communities, as well as from the larger national context, while finding comfort, solidarity, and strength in each other.

As of today, most of the recordings from the gathering remain available on APIB’s and Mídia Índia Facebook and YouTube accounts. Although initially all sessions were broadcast live, the social media platform allows for the recordings to remain available; however, sometimes the videos disappear under copyright warning messages. During the Indigenous women’s roundtable, it was often mentioned how this transition from the in-person camp to online activities was only possible due to the expertise of people like Célia Xakriabá, a prominent young voice of Indigenous leadership, Erick Terena, (co-founder of Mídia Índia), or Tsitsina Xavante, who was hosting that particular session.

Once again the use of technology put the Indigenous movement at the forefront of national and transnational resistance because it allowed, so early in the pandemic, a meaningful space for knowledge exchange, spiritual affirmation, tradition, and unity across diverse ethnicities, as well as developing the key action points needed to guarantee land protections and culturally appropriate healthcare for Indigenous peoples (APIB 2020d). Featuring Indigenous women’s voices in this designated space is still a relatively recent tradition of the annual gathering, only secured in 2017.

4.5 Maracá - Emergência Indígena

Five months into the global pandemic, Indigenous peoples in Brazil were facing hardships caused by a significant lack of Indigenous healthcare infrastructure due to anti-Indigenous government policies, which in turn caused an increase in racism cases targeting Indigenous peoples. At the beginning of August 2020, APIB coordinated a Facebook live (broadcast) called *Maracá - Emergência Indígena* (Maraca – Indigenous Emergency).

Maracá (from Tupi-Guarani language) is a musical instrument present in many Indigenous

⁷ On a related note, I found it promising how on the same day Indigenous women were meeting, there was also a roundtable by Queer youth titled *Visibilidade dos LGBTQIA+ Indígenas “Tire seu preconceito do meu caminho, irei passar com meu cocar”* (Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Visibility: “Get your bias out of my way, I will go by with my headdress”) (2020), another reclaimed space to address issues of hetero and cissexism within Indigenous communities and Brazilian settler societies.

cultures throughout Abya Yala (America in Guna language), usually played by Elders and often spiritually connected to traditional rituals and prayers, and built and decorated according to each people's tradition for different occasions. In this social media broadcast, the *maracá* was played as a call for an international mobilization to save lives (APIB 2020c), summoning allies to help bring attention to the challenges Indigenous peoples in Brazil were facing, not only because of COVID-19, but also with the Amazonia, Pantanal and Cerrado fires, and other imposed threats to Indigenous sovereignty.

The original *Maracá* event was edited into an 8-episode mini-series, with a broad range of participants from settler Brazilian artists and professors, Black activists, and scholars, as well as Indigenous peoples from across the country and abroad. Some artistic personalities who might be known to the North American public also engaged with the Indigenous movement, such as the photographer Sebastião Salgado, artist Vik Muniz, and the actor, Alec Baldwin. Indigenous women were key to this event, with texts written by activist and poet, Célia Xakriabá with activist and politician Sônia Guajajara, and read to the camera by a variety of participants, including some *gringos* who made the effort to learn the Portuguese words. Most of the Indigenous activists portrayed on the edited mini-series version of the event were also women.

Even though this was a one-time only event, like many other events organized by Indigenous peoples, it produced deep and meaningful alliances and solidarities. The *Emergência Indígena* website, where the event was first announced, turned into a hub for COVID-19 related actions: for reporting COVID-19 cases among Indigenous peoples; to share each plan from the seven grassroots Indigenous organizations comprising APIB in efforts to protect their communities (including pamphlets on how to protect individuals and communities from the virus); to report with transparency expenses related to such efforts; to organize a vaccination campaign for Indigenous relatives; or to organize a formal request to the Supreme Court, as a challenge against Bolsonaro's administration, which took away protections from Indigenous lands that had not yet been approved (APIB 2020c) by their primary inhabitants.

This is another crucial point in protecting Indigenous peoples from COVID-19, since the first cases among Indigenous peoples were caused by SESAI workers who illegally entered Indigenous territories in the State of Amazonas and contaminated many individuals (ISA 2020; Farias 2020; APIB 2020c). That is bad enough in itself, but to add to the horror, SESAI invaded communities from the Vale do Javari, with the highest population of Indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation from recent contact, increasing their

vulnerabilities to the virus. Another movement documented within the *Emergência Indígena* website is called the *Memorial da Vida Indígena* (Indigenous life memorial). It provides a virtual way to mourn collectively, to heal, and to celebrate the lives and stories of those who passed away due to the pandemic, notably the Elders who are the most vulnerable.

4.6 *Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra*

In early September 2020, Indigenous women from around the world answered the call for support and allyship from Indigenous women in Brazil in times of pandemic, climate change, fires, and genocide. The *Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra* (Indigenous Women Global Gathering – Earth Healing) is a series of events held prior to *ELLA - Encuentro Latinoamericano de Feminismos* (Latin-American Gathering of Feminisms).⁸ According to the groups' website (2020), the event is organized by and for Indigenous women. To honor women from the Amazônia, Cerrado, Pantanal, Pampa, Caatinga and Mata Atlântica biomes, the event was named *Cura da Terra* and organized in a roundtable format, framed in terms of land, body and spirit (PRE-ELLA 2020). Several participants contributed with reflections, prayers, live music, poetry, and other types of artistic performances.

Cura da Terra was broadcast via Facebook and Instagram and, for now, is archived on Facebook and YouTube in an 8-hour long video, with live voiceover translation in Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish, and English. Five introductory videos from different leadership figures were posted online by way of invitation into the conversation: Célia Xakriabá, Leonice Tupari, Sônia Guajajara, Tsitsina Xavante, and Watatakalu Yawalapiti. A form was also available on the PRE-ELLA website for Indigenous women to sign-up freely for the virtual gathering. About 11,000 people followed this event on social media, where more than 267 Indigenous women from 116 peoples in 37 countries contributed to the posted reflections (PRE-ELLA 2020). For most events on social media, it is difficult to have a grasp of attendance if organizers are not careful to collect and share such numbers, which the women behind the organization of *Cura da Terra* were mindful to do. Since the videos remain available to the global public, the event continues to touch audiences.

The *Cura da Terra* gathering was about building solidarity across imagined state borders and unifying solidarities with Indigenous women and peoples, in efforts to generate some sense of hope against oppressive systems and their different facets across the world. A

⁸ ELLA is a transnational group started in 2014 and born from *Latino America* with the goal to strengthen and collectivize feminisms. See: <https://planetaella.org/quienes-somos/?lang=es>

key goal was to heal: the earth, the land, the peoples. It was not the first time Indigenous women have organized transnationally, nor will it be the last. Approximately a year after *Cura da Terra*, they met again in person, at the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties, 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow. While colonial extractivist governments, corporations and leaders (including Bolsonaro) were given a seat and a microphone at the climate change conference table behind closed doors, Indigenous women gathered in a sharing circle to exchange reflections and affections (Obadowski 2021), once again centering Indigenous women's voices in the continuing context of our global climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reviewing the context and background of events selected for this study highlights how hard Indigenous women and movements have to work in order to fill-in and contest the information gaps created by the Brazilian government and other states and global processes complicit with it. This administration creates such gaps not only by negligence, but also by openly leading the project of interrupting Indigenous lives and ways of knowing. Still, Indigenous women stand in hope alongside their peoples and relatives, living in the ethical contexts of their cultures and supporting each other, as they have done for centuries.

Chapter 5

Theoretical Background to Methodology and Methods

5.1 Introduction

This chapter defines the theoretical conversation into which Indigenous women enter with their activisms. As happens in the literature review chapter, the theoretical framework reflects my positions as an academic in Canada, learning with Indigenous peoples of Treaty 6 territory, as influenced by my queer and diasporic Brazilian standpoints. Below, I discuss Critical Discourse Analysis as my chosen methodology, followed by an explanation of my data selection, method, and processes of data analysis.

5.2 Theoretical Framework

This work is conducted using a decolonial feminist perspective and practice, privileging Indigenous women's epistemologies and experiences to focus on their social media activisms, while labouring under a fascist regime. This section will introduce some of Indigenous women's key practices, in relation to useful theoretical concepts, in order to argue that Indigenous women's activisms in Brazil are framed by their own situated ancestral knowledges and practices, which are, in effect, theoretical in their own right. As a reminder to the reader, the research questions guiding this thesis are the following:

- How have Indigenous women used mainstream social media to oppose the first two years of Bolsonaro's regime in Brazil? How might their uses of social media prove to be subversive and revolutionary?
- What specific strategies are Indigenous women employing in this setting of online activisms? When and how have their strategies been formulated?
- What knowledges are emanating from specific uses of social media platforms, led by Indigenous women to resist the current fascist regime in Brazil? How are their interactions with other Indigenous women and peoples, and with non-Indigenous supporters, producing new strategies for resistance?

Dictionary definitions of "theory" in the English language are full of important words such as "formal," "most acceptable," "reasonable" ("Theory" 2022a; 2022b). Some

definitions found in the Brazilian Portuguese language suggest, surprisingly, that theory is separate from and even an opposite to practice (“Teoria” 2022a; 2022b). Such limited definitions, of course, will not do. Engagement with Indigenous women’s activisms and knowledges calls for far more fluid approaches to the relationships between theories and practices, as they are experienced and lived as mutually constituting, without notions of hierarchy or primacy. Indigenous and feminist studies, such as decolonial and transnational feminisms, have long stretched and resisted the colonial ties that seek to separate theory from practice. Conversations about “theory” have grown to consideration of one’s context and experiences, particularly engaging the perspectives of marginalized groups as those too often routinely left out of the “formal” and “most acceptable” knowledge systems (Tuhiwai Smith 2012; Mohanty 2013; Lugones 2014; Curiel 2019). In Indigenous cases, the *ethos* based in shared practices of relational power produce unlimited possibilities for theorizing, without failing to reflect on their encounters with settler societies and western knowledge systems, often framed by violent attempts of erasure. As previously discussed, Indigenous women and peoples have historically been excluded from Brazilian public education (Vieira 2020; Terena 2020). Therefore, my efforts to articulate Indigenous women’s practices as comparable to academic theory is part of a larger strategy to bridge the knowledge gap between Indigenous women’s activisms and the assumptions and presumptions informing settler societies and their power assemblages, including via exclusive and exceptionalist theorizing.

According to de Leeuw and Hunt (2018), there is no single definition or set of guidelines on what practicing decolonization means. The authors argue that the term refers to a profound questioning of how knowledge production furthers the marginalization and exclusion of specific populations, including Indigenous peoples (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018). To engage in decolonization, thus, opens up possibilities for celebrating multiple and situated Indigenous ways of knowing. However, because academe follows “Western” traditions in knowledge production, scholars and institutions leading discussions and practices on decolonization remain predominantly non-Indigenous, as is the case with this thesis (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018). Although this work answers the call of Indigenous women’s activists in Brazil to engage in processes of decolonization, it is operating under colonial research formats, including theorization and citations trails (Tuck and Yang 2012). Exposing such limitations is part of the process of dealing with the tensions produced by colonialist knowledge traditions and is a way to imagine other ways to do research and theorizing.

I will frame my engagements with Indigenous women’s activisms in Brazil as part of “nourishing the learning spirit” (Battiste 2013, 180). Marie Battiste (2013) of the Mi’kmaq

people argues that from an Indigenous perspective, the act of learning is a life long process, linked to one's experiences through language and culture. It is also a communal activity, integrating Indigenous and Eurocentric knowledges in a holistic and spiritually oriented manner. To approach this research from a decolonial feminist practice, then, means to listen respectfully to Indigenous women's experiences in Brazil and their aspirations for Indigenous rights and land sovereignty, which have the potential to secure all life forms in collaborative commitments to futures that involve caring for the earth and for one another other. Such experiences grow from grassroots movements deeply connected to the lands Indigenous women fight to protect. Their idea is to acknowledge the colonial power structures while seeking solutions to further create solidarities, spaces that are safe and respectful of the embodied knowledges of Indigenous women in Brazil, and their wider relational networks within and across borders, species, and histories.

Indigenous women's bodies have been materially and spiritually connected to the land they fight to protect, even when urbanized, and from that connection emerges extensive knowledge and commitments that exceed those of mainstream settler knowledge production. On that note, it is important to distinguish Indigenous women's spiritualities from understandings of their spiritualities appropriated by settler societies, which have been generally turned into products to be consumed. The "wellness" industry has never been more profitable, an indicator of how much settler societies crave healing and connections, like all life on earth. Examples of commodified spiritualities in settler societies are many, such as the promise of new age healing crystals, incenses, and even the ancient art of yoga, often co-opted by neoliberalist logics of consumerism. In contrast, Indigenous women's spiritualities, in turn as rich and diverse as peoples *articulando* under the word Indigenous, are connected to the land in kinship instead of consumption (Biazi 2020). Indigenous spiritualities will vary according to each peoples' ancestral traditions and cosmologies, such as the relationship of the Sateré-Mawé people with the *Tucandeira* ants, of the Krahô with the seeds, and the Krenak with *Uatú* (Doce River).

Dian Million (2008) of the Tanana Athabaskan people in North America makes a critical intervention in affirming Indigenous feminisms by promoting theoretical frameworks that are based on embodied action and feeling. The author argues that such actions are "informed by experience and analysis, by a felt theory," an embodied sense of what is appropriate, accurate and just (Million 2008, 268), based on lived Indigenous heritage. Similarly, as Indigenous women resisting fascism in Brazil are the ones feeling its colonialist oppressive effects, their sense of injustice is most acute and accurate, which means they are

acting out of “felt theory,” not just what is fashionable in hegemonic academic circles at any given moment. The counterhegemonic movement of Indigenous women in Brazil resisting exceptionalist, religious, universalizing nationalisms are informed by their connectedness with the land, in turn connected to ancestral feelings and experiences of resistance. Such embodied theories and understandings of Brazilian realities have potential transformative effects for all peoples living in territories today ascribed to the colonialist nation-state. Indigenous women nourish land-based practices of care and accountability that are also present in some feminisms. Indigenous, Black and other peoples of color have rich histories of contributing to the development of more accountable feminisms (Prindeville 2000; Mohanty 2013; Snyder 2014), such that feminist movements and theories have never been limited to the assumptions informing mainstream feminisms.

Settler Canadian scholar, Emily Snyder (2014) elaborates on the need for careful engagement with Indigenous feminisms that do not reinforce binary categories such as male and female, or romanticize the past of Indigenous social practices as if Indigenous cultures and practices were not altered by colonialisms over time and through spatialized hegemonies. Although the Indigenous women activists I engage with in this thesis do not discuss feminisms as central to their immediate goals during the selected events, they certainly understand the gendered oppressions advanced by the Brazilian colonialist nation-state to challenge different Indigenous practices of, for example, dividing labour within the community that sometimes places women in charge of the care of children and elders while the men hunt and hold designated leadership positions. Indigenous activists in Brazil are challenging all limiting gender-based notions by being activists, by taking control over reproductive matters, fulfilling women’s leadership roles, undertaking university training, and celebrating queerness as evidence of the failure of the gender binary, and so on.

Snyder (2014) also addresses Indigenous law as part of inevitably multi-judicial societies. However much the rule of law informs the colonialist nation state, citizens, including Indigenous people, live by their own ethical and moral codes, which may call the legitimacy of prevailing norms, policies, and laws into ethical question (Snyder 2014). Whenever a state does not represent the best interests of all who live there, its legitimacy can be called into question through the use of its own mechanisms. Such is the case with the 1988 Constitution, the most absolute guide of Brazilian State formal law and its “democratic” institutions, and yet consistently disrespected at many levels by current government. Because Indigenous laws are not fixed in the past, but actively interact and transform the multi-judicial context of Brazilian laws, the activation of the 1988 Constitution to condemn crimes

committed against Indigenous peoples becomes an instrument of both Brazilian leaders and several Indigenous nations who embraced it as their own when Indigenous peoples contributed on the conception of the document after the military dictatorship. Given their investments in the mutual flourishing of all peoples, places and species, Indigenous laws, although largely ignored by the Brazilian government, aligned as it is with the harms of neoliberal capitalisms, may have considerably larger claims to legitimacy, not only for Indigenous peoples, but for all of the territories currently making up the nation state of Brazil.

Following Indigenous women's lead, I frame activists as *encantadas* (enchanted) beings, entities inhabiting Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian cosmos in South America.⁹ *Encantadas* live in reciprocity and harmony with the spiritual and physical world, cooperating to protect peoples and ecosystems (humans and more-than-humans), based on grounded ancestral knowledges. This invocation of Indigenous epistemologies also celebrates the situatedness of Indigenous activists who might not follow traditional ways or have been brought up in Indigenous culture, because *encantadas* are represented in Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian stories as more-than-human beings, while often weaved through storytelling into contemporary events to interact with and impact human lives. Depending on which part of Brazil, or which community, these spiritual beings might take human form to be part of political struggles (blurring the hard line between spiritual and material worlds), or they may simply give people a "little push" towards whatever their goals are, and sometimes play tricks on humans to communicate the potential for multiple perspectives. When invoked by participants of this group of Indigenous women activists, *encantadas/os/es* also represent the fact that, much like more-than-human entities, Indigenous women activists are operating on a different set of epistemologies about the operations of time and space in human histories, building toward well-being for all Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples on the long run.

Within Brazilian settler societies, the narratives around Indigenous cosmologies have been contaminated by the racist, colonialist traditions of *Indigenista* Literature, such as in the works of Monteiro Lobato,¹⁰ where Indigenous traditions and histories are frequently

⁹ An example of one *encantade* is *Curupira* who – according to the Guaraní people's stories in northern Brazil – is an entity who protects the forest from anyone causing it harm. Teachings around who *Curupira* is and how they protect the forest are varied, depending on location and historic struggles. Sometimes they are a child, sometimes a grown man, often imagined with flames instead of hair, helping chase away unkind hunters, lumber people, or miners. Because *Curupira* is very sneaky, the sure way to recognize them is looking at their toes – which are pointing in opposite directions. Although portrayed as a scary *encantade*, *Curupira* also brings hope and comfort as they are out there, protecting the forest from the greedy.

¹⁰ Lobato's attitudes are apparent in the children's book series *Sítio do Pica-pau Amarelo*, published in early 1920s, where the treatment of Afro Brazilian and Indigenous experiences is openly racist. Monteiro

classified as folklore and fables, instead of important vessels for spiritual knowledges (A. L. Pereira and Pereira 2022). However, when Indigenous women call each other *encantadas*, or call on the *encantadas* to give them strength, they are calling on ancestral connections from the spiritual spectrum, tightly woven within the places of the living as these dimensions are not as far apart as settler monotheists societies conceive. Such ancestral connections for the *encantadas* are interwoven in the land, bodies, memories, and relatives (humans and more-than-humans) of Indigenous peoples. *Encantadas* call on these connections to find strength and unity in their fight, while accounting for the colonialist forces that often interrupt the very connections they are calling upon. By celebrating the epistemological richness in the many ways activists live their Indigeneities in Brazil, rather than reinforcing stereotypes on what it means to be Indigenous women activists in Brazil, they are asserting the power of Indigenous epistemologies to expand the playing field of negotiations and the ways of conceiving power available to the actors involved.

Encantadas are skilled in the art of shapeshifting. As Indigenous women navigate invented dichotomies between, for example, knowledge production on Indigenous lands and in universities (which are often built on unceded Indigenous lands, both in North America and Brazil), the *encantadas* will adjust their bodily presentation to navigate in spaces that are made hostile (Hunt 2014). At the same time, the art of shapeshifting manifested by the *encantadas* is connected to ancestral knowledges as well as plural, sometimes conflicting perspectives from individuals belonging to different Indigenous peoples, professions, social positions, etc. Again, embracing the situatedness, plurality, and non-neutrality of knowledge production is key to embracing ways of learning, teaching, and being that are relational and organic for all Indigenous as well as non-Indigenous peoples (Tuhiwai Smith 2012; Battiste 2013; Hunt 2014). The *encantadas*, then, mold forms of resistance that negotiate multiple planes of existence, while recruiting witnesses and partners who wish to collaborate in changing Brazilian and global realities in ways that are more life and diversity affirming than the monocultures of imperialisms and neoliberal hegemonies.

I wish to combine what I understand about the practice of the *encantadas* with the concept introduced by Bonaventura de Souza Santos (B. de S. Santos 2015) of an ecology of knowledges. De Souza Santos invites reductive imperialist hegemonies to move past abyssal thinking, or casting Indigenous knowledges into an irretrievable and irrelevant past, by

Lobato personally admired the Ku Klux Klan (A. L. Pereira and Pereira 2022) and wished Brazil was as strong as the U.S. in developing its own branch of the movement.

opening to their ongoing possibilities through an understanding of knowledges in living ecologies. An ecology of knowledges creates an ethical space that does not elevate any form of fallible human understanding in relation to other knowledges, and does not interfere with the sovereignties of other knowledges. Such an approach would celebrate the plurality of Indigenous women's spiritualities, the values they harbour, and the practices to which they give rise. Centering Indigenous women's experiences and appreciating the epistemological diversities arising from them helps to prevent the perpetuation of reductive universalizing claims and the failures to which they give rise, certainly not limited to narrow interpretations of Indigenous women's activism on social media. *Encantadas* in Brazil and elsewhere are sharing their life experiences of resistance through the more recently created venue of social media as a way to *adiar o fim do mundo* (delay the end of the world) (Krenak 2019, 52). Here, the end of the world refers to the brutal advances of neoliberal capitalism that sustain neocolonial power structures through, for instance, the election of Bolsonaro as president of Brazil, which places living systems at grave risk of collapse.

Indigenous women's stories are part of a great network of knowledge production, in motion for centuries and engaged in negotiating their sustained existences with local cultures and contexts, often working towards establishing relational accountabilities with their neighbours and environments, while resisting the aggressive power structures that pervade settler societies and their destructive engagements with the living land. Understanding that the rise of social media (and digital media technologies in general) are infested with the same colonial power structures that constructed "race," allows for making other uses of both social media and concepts of race (Chun 2013). Through a process that I have named *ocupação online Indígena* (online Indigenous camp), as inspired by Indigenous women in conversation during the 2020 Free Land Camp roundtable ("Mulheres Indígenas" 2020), Indigenous women are recruiting colonialist technologies to serve their agendas. This is a clever way of connecting with the many forces that remain in alignment with Indigenous world views, even when they are captured by the mechanisms of neoliberal capital and colonialist hegemonies. Instead of presenting Indigenous women as victims of racialization, cultural erasure, and digital media technologies, this research will focus on analyzing the *ocupação online Indígena* as a locus of agency for Indigenous women, using Indigenous languages, Brazilian Portuguese, and the affordances of social media as tools of resistance against fascism.

To further assist on the interpretation of *ocupação online Indígena*, I draw from Stuart Hall's discussions on media and audience (Hall 1999) to mobilize the concept of encoding-decoding as another key framework, in order to access the levels of negotiation Indigenous

women are undertaking by bringing their activisms to social media. Again, rather than seeing Indigenous women as passive to the colonialist design of social media, this research will investigate their interpretations of key meanings (and knowledges) surfacing from their *ocupação online Indígena*, as resources for imagining not only different destinations for capital, but different horizons of possibility for peoples and places than colonialist designs can fathom. When Indigenous women decide to take their activisms online, while being aware of the colonial structures social media uphold, the encoding-decoding processes they enable are profound, as when Indigenous women pointed at their smartphone cameras to say *vamos descolonizar a telinha* (let's decolonize the little screen) during the online roundtable of the 2020 Free Land Camp.

To understand what it means to *descolonizar a telinha* and social media platforms, this study mobilizes the ecomediasphere framework created by Antonio López (2020). Lopez developed the expression “ecomedia literacy,” to invoke active situated learning about the political economy of media as intertwined with the material and living environment. Lopez argues that engaging students in understanding the ecomedia sphere facilitates the study of uses and meanings of ecomedia objects (social media, news articles, smartphones, the Internet, and so on). He encourages use of four lenses. First is lifeworld, or the ecology of perception, as in people's experiences of time, space, and place. Second is culture, which represents the meanings, values, ways of life, practices, and meaning making, that shape ecomedia trajectories. Third is political economy, considering all hegemonic systems underlying digital media scapes. Fourth is materiality, which involves how the actual material conditions of the technological object are taken into consideration (López 2020). With all this in mind, *descolonizar a telinha* is developed by Indigenous women activists and explored in this thesis to consider the operating (oppressive) systems and cultural beliefs behind smartphones and social media platforms, as well as the potentials that emerge when they are stripped from their colonial power frameworks and repositioned in new ways, by working to recognize the practices of sovereignty informing Indigenous women's activisms, organizing to get their critical concerns addressed.

This section has focused on my theoretical framework and introducing key concepts for my research, aligned with Indigenous women's activisms. In the discussion that follows, I will emphasize how nourishing the learning experience as holistic and communal is linked to one's language and culture (Battiste 2013). As well, I will be working from the premise that the *encantadas* are operating from an ecology of knowledges that reject universalisms and embrace diversities of experiences, which reinforces “stronger objectivities” (Harding 2007).

In solidarity, I will bring critical light to the ways that Indigenous women's virtual mobilizations, *ocupação online Indígena*, appropriate and enrich prevailing discussions of race, gender, language, and digital media to serve their particular needs and concerns. As a method, I will take up Hall's practices of encoding-decoding to analyse the ways that Indigenous women are navigating social media and making meaning from their *ocupação online Indígena*. Finally, this Indigenous-centering framework promotes decolonial and Indigenous feminist practices by engaging their positionalities and perspectives with respect for language, translation and analysis as socially, culturally, and politically situated.

5.3 Methodology: Critical Discourse Analysis

Centering Brazilian Indigenous women's experiences to investigate the strategies informing their *ocupação online Indígena* is at the heart of my analysis. In order to engage with Indigenous women on social media, this study will conduct textual and visual cultural analyses, with a focus on meanings and knowledge production emanating from their activisms. The choice of methodology is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which allows for examination of the different types of textual and visual data found on social media (Hodes 2018).

Fairclough (2013) introduces critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a way to uncover power structures tied to other social elements that are otherwise naturalized by societies. Such structures include, for example, aspects of racism particular to Portuguese colonization permeating Brazilian societies that are not necessarily known to English-Canadian readers. Fairclough presents CDA to signal the researcher's responsibility to invest time and energy in questioning the *status quo* and "making visible the interconnectedness of things" (Fairclough 2013, 39). Analysis, here, then, is understood as relational, reflecting on the interaction of social structures, selected events, and Indigenous activists with each other (Fairclough 2012). Since this work's analysis is relying on Indigenous women's words collected from social media platforms, CDA opens possibilities for questioning, interpreting and reinterpreting the digital architecture (or coding) of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, etc., in how they shape, assist, and limit Indigenous women's activism, how those structures relate to larger aspects of settler societies, and how Indigenous women's words circulate through such platforms (Kuo 2018). CDA allows me to engage with the realities of Brazilian societies in a manner that goes beyond description, as I seek to explain and demonstrate the ways that Indigenous women are proposing revolutionary strategies for activisms.

CDA methodology distances itself from the binary of theory versus practice, holding a space of possibility for offering meaningful dialogue that is potentially productive to

Indigenous women in Brazil (Hodes 2018). In this respect, CDA values context, as centered around the historical and social positions of Indigenous women within Brazilian settler societies, while bringing a critical deconstructive lens (Derrida 2003) to the colonial power structures in which their activism on social media are taking place (Hodes 2018). Aside from Critical Discourse Analysis fitting the selected archive for this study and the kinds of interdisciplinary practices proposed by Indigenous women's activism and decolonial feminisms, this flexible methodology enables accountable interpretations of the prevailing discourses permeating Brazilian societies.

This work brings a decolonial feminist lens to CDA, centering Indigenous activists' words and perspectives, emanating from their experiences at the same time that it situates their positions in relation to settler societies and the persistent brutality of state practices. Intersectional feminist uses of CDA, assist me in uncovering the power structures within Brazilian societies and social media platforms which Indigenous activists must negotiate (Lazar 2005; Tran 2022). This supports reflections on how and why colonialist institutions are maintained by Brazilian societies, or how, for example, gender roles are sustained by Indigenous and mainstream Brazilian cultural traditions.

Tuhiwai Smith and Archibald (2019) introduce Indigenous storywork as a form of knowledge production developed since time immemorial by Indigenous peoples around the world. This approach challenges the monopoly of "acceptable" knowledge production and celebrates the diversity and ancestrality of Indigenous knowledges, which are relational, accountable, and reciprocal (Tuhiwai Smith, Denzin, and Lincoln 2008; Tuhiwai Smith 2019). Building on Tuhiwai Smith and Archibald's elaborations, Kovach asserts that stories are gifts and an Indigenous method of sharing knowledge that exists in relational to everything, impacting academic research traditions in positive ways (Kovach 2021). The author also affirms that "Story nurtures relationship. Story kindles reciprocity. Story compels responsibility. Story thrives where there is respect" (Kovach 2021, 156). The Indigenous activists whose digital profiles I engage with for this work share their stories as indicated by Kovach, sharing their words in conversations, but also in poems, music, spoken word, ancestral chants, and prayers, with the hope of constructing other possibilities for their own peoples, but also other peoples and places. With this in mind, the decolonial feminist approach to CDA centers not only Indigenous activists, but also their languages, land issues, culture, and their own interpretations of realities as presented in their digitally recorded conversations with each other and their recruitment of potential allies, all part of Indigenous activists' collaborative story-making.

In sum, CDA supports considerations of interactions between Indigenous women of different ethnicities, backgrounds, generations, social classes, gender identities and sexual orientations in Brazil and abroad, as well as Indigenous women with non-Indigenous allies, among the other factors that influence the possibilities of legitimate social justice discourse within Brazilian settler societies (Lazar 2005; Fairclough 2012; 2013; Kuo 2018; Kovach 2021). Given these critical emphases, the method is particularly useful in studying the legitimate claims of Indigenous women as situated in relation with the increasingly illegitimate Brazilian settler state. Further, this methodology also encourages the continuous exercise of self-positioning and reflection in relation to processes of interpretation and meaning-making, inserting this thesis work into an ongoing conversation without any pretense of absolute explanations about or of Indigenous women's knowledges.

5.4 Data Selection

I have decided to study five events that happened between 2019 and 2020, during the first two years of Bolsonaro's regime, previously introduced in Chapter 4. With the global COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a shift from using social media as a support for grassroots activism to its mobilization as one of the main channels that make Indigenous women's concerns visible, particularly given how blatantly the pandemic has been facilitated to target minoritized groups in Brazil. Although this shift to social media mobilization has not necessarily altered the *encantadas'* strategies, which precede social media itself, their presence online has increased along with that of everyone else who had to work from home. Indigenous women who took part in the selected events are often directly involved with the *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* (APIB) (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil) at a structural level or *articularam* through past events led by APIB, as this organization remains central to Indigenous people's movements in Brazil.

Bolsonaro's administration has persecuted members of APIB and recognized supporters of the Indigenous cause for organizing against his fascist politics and bringing light, nationally and internationally, to the violence of his administration. With support from the Federal Police department, Bolsonaro summoned Sônia Guajajara and Almir Suruí to the police station for organizing the event *Maracá - Emergência Indígena* (Maraca – Indigenous Emergency) (APIB 2021c). He did so by reactivating the National Security Act, an instrument of law conceived by the military regime, evidence of his abandonment of basic democratic procedures respecting opposition to government and of political incompetence.

Primary inclusion criteria for the five selected events are: Indigenous women at the center and in control of the narrative; falls within the first two years of Bolsonaro's regime

(2019-2020); events that were broadcasted, posted, or re-shared on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, as popular social media network platforms in Brazil; specific events that reached various Indigenous peoples across the territory called Brazil. The following table includes details of data collection, listing each event in chronological order:

Table 5-1. Summary of Data Collection (table by author)

EVENTS	TRANSLATION	DATA TYPE	MEDIA	AUTHOR
<i>Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: “Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito”</i>	First March of Indigenous Women: “Territory: our body, our spirit”	00:22:30 mini documentary 6 posts (4 of videos only, 2 of pictures) 2 video posts 1 video post 1 image (digital collage)	YouTube Instagram/ Facebook Instagram/ Facebook Instagram/ Facebook Instagram	Caturra Digital Filmes Mídia Índia Sônia Guajajara Célia Xakriabá Mavi Morais
<i>Jornada “Sangue Indígena”: Nenhuma Gota a Mais”</i>	“Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More” Advocacy Tour	11-episode podcast, around 02:30:00 long	Podcast hosting platforms	APIB and Mídia Índia
<i>Acampamento Terra Livre 2020</i>	2020 Free Land Camp	01:57:00 women’s roundtable broadcast	Facebook/ YouTube	APIB
<i>Maracá - Emergência Indígena</i>	Maraca – Indigenous Emergency	8-episode short-series around 02:30:00 long	Facebook/ YouTube	APIB
<i>Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra</i>	Global Gathering of Indigenous Women – Earth Healing	5 introductory videos around 00:10:00 total 07:58:00 long live broadcast	Facebook/ Instagram/ YouTube Facebook/ Instagram/ YouTube	ELLA ELLA

It is difficult to keep track of attendance for online events when organizers do not share those numbers publicly; moreover, knowing how many people were meaningfully touched by social media posts is impossible. Due to such constraints, I privilege Indigenous activists’ accounts with higher volumes of followers. For example, on the *Primeira Marcha* event data collection I turned to Mídia Índia, the collaborative youth-led Indigenous channel, and Sônia Guajajara’s account, who accumulated plenty of followers after running for Vice-President on the 2018 Elections. Both accounts use their considerably visible spaces on social media as a megaphone for other Indigenous activists across Brazil and the globe. As of June 2022, Sônia Guajajara has 510,000 followers, Mídia Índia 180,000, and Célia Xakriabá 108,000. Because social media was created for neoliberal consumerism, there are several social media metrics available to study the level of “productive engagement” from a specific account, which is why I only use followers as a factor for estimating “visibility.” As far as this study goes, CDA allows me to question these limitations of available data in multi-scalar

contexts, as well as my own role as a researcher involved in the interpretation and meaning-making built into the process of data analysis. Throughout, my goal is to mobilize what is known of the *encantadas*' situated knowledge as it evolves during their *ocupação online Indígena*.

5.5 Method

Data analysis is conducted through an iterative process. In this case, I used a binder of transcripts assembled from the events listed above. I used color-coding techniques to identify major themes to help pinpoint Indigenous women's activist strategies. I wrote extensive memos that allowed for a dynamic process of analysis, while reflecting on my social positions as interpreter, translator, and meaning-maker, a recommended habit for decolonial feminist work when engaging with Indigenous stories (Tuck and Yang 2012; de Leeuw and Hunt 2018; Tuhiwai Smith 2019). To write memos as part of the data analysis process favours the monitoring of themes and their relationships with each other, as well as challenging my own assumptions. I approached the routine of memo writing as comparable to keeping a research journal, although I kept my journaling "scattered" but aligned with the data, because I needed it to be connected to the specific Indigenous activists' words provoking my need for journaling. Further, writing simultaneously with data analysis allows for lateral movements from data archive to interpretive process to documentation, in intuitive combinations.

Initially, I thought NVivo would be my main tool for data analysis. NVivo is a software that supports qualitative and mixed methods research, organizes data for key words and phrases, trends, and insights, and provides ways for making comparisons across different aspects of the data. However, NVivo has translation limitations, among others, that became clear during the data transcription process, leading me to observe that its synthesizing, majoritarian emphasis could interfere with a data analysis process that is deeply engaged in decolonial practices and in doing justice to Indigenous women's extensive knowledges. Adopting NVivo still benefits this project in terms of data management, once I identified themes and their inter-relations, using my transcript binder, because it organizes many types of qualitative data including social media posts presented in image, video recordings, podcasts, roundtables, and short video series. It is worth noting that most qualitative data technologies – much like social media platforms – are tailored to the needs of a "universal" user, in NVivo's case, one who thinks and writes primarily in English. As language is a technology and medium in itself, carrying and making realities and meanings, I have chosen

manual data analysis on paper, hoping that it will allow for more meaningful connection with Indigenous women's voices, within the scope of this project.

In terms of visual data, I will analyse images, photographs, portraits, and videos to understand how Indigenous women are interacting with their environments on and offline, as well as with the objects and symbols they are using for their activisms. In addition to other elements that might help compose any given social media post, such as the natural or structural material invoked or the affordances of the digital environment, I will consider the following questions: Are they holding a smartphone or using a computer? Are they outdoors or inside? Are they using body paint and/or makeup? If so, what does it stand for, according to their available cultural interpretations? Is there anyone with them in the film/picture/frame? Is there symbolics meaning something to Indigenous publics that might get past non-Indigenous audiences? Visual analysis of video will only take place when I am also analyzing a specific matching textual passage.

I have included short biographies and portraits of the Indigenous women from Brazil whose digital activisms I will be engaging in the analysis chapter. This feminist approach seeks to shorten the distances between academe and grassroots movements, while recognizing that several of the activists are themselves mobilizing within academe as well as other sites and spaces. The idea is to acknowledge Indigenous women in Brazil who are resisting the present regime, risking their lives daily for the right to exist and protect Indigenous peoples' cultures and lands. Acknowledging and naming Indigenous women in the context of this research is not directly putting them at risk, as they are known leaders of Indigenous movements in Brazil and are not acting anonymously. Indeed, their digital visibility contributes to whatever measure of safety they can manage under a hostile government.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that in the first year of Bolsonaro's administration the total cases of violence against Indigenous individuals added up to 277, twice as much compared to 2018, of which 133 were killings ("Atlas Da Violência" 2021). Further, between 2009 and 2019, while rates of homicide committed against Indigenous individuals increased 22%, the rates for the general Brazilian population decreased 20% ("Atlas Da Violência" 2021; DW 2021). Indigenous women are particularly targeted for violence, as seen in the State of Pará when the *Associação das Mulheres Munduruku Wakoborũn* (Munduruku Women's Association *Wakoborũn*) was broken into by miners and documents were burned (Barbosa 2021), while known leader Alessandra Korap Munduruku often deals with death threats (Fellet 2022). Her home was also broken into with documents taken (APIB 2021c).

Online death threats are part of the day-to-day realities of the Indigenous women activists I chose to engage with in this work. They, themselves, by contrast, are dedicated to protecting the lands with its waters, air, and the biodiversities that all species depend on for survival.

Chapter 6

“Uma Relação de Vida”: Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to analyse how Indigenous women activists in Brazil have used social media to oppose fascism during the first two years of Bolsonaro’s administration. I argue that by employing social media for other purposes than intended by companies like Facebook and YouTube, Indigenous women occupy and transform these online spaces into *“uma relação de vida”* (a relationship of life) (Sônia Guajajara in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 19). This applies to the small screen as much as their appropriations and presence have transformed, for example, the Portuguese language and Brazilian public universities. Further, this study aims to investigate and contextualize the specific strategies employed by Indigenous online activists, as well as the knowledges emanating from the uses of social media by Indigenous women seeking to resist the current administration. Finally, I also analyse how Indigenous women activists' interactions with other women and peoples, and with non-Indigenous supporters, may produce new strategies for resistance, within and beyond their own communities.

Most of data analysis took place on paper, where I was able to study two years of activists’ speeches and conversations from selected events, chronologically arranged. Initially, I read through all the data and took note of my first general impressions using purple sticky notes, taking several breaks to write longer memos (on purple paper) accounting for my assumptions, questions emanating from the activists’ words and contexts that were not clear for me yet. I called this the “first layer” of my analysis process. Next, the “second layer” took place as I went back to fill in gaps identified from the “first layer” memos (purple) with follow up memos (green), adding another row of short adjacent sticky notes with a different color, developing memos of corresponding colors for each topic.

Drawing guidance from the voices of the Indigenous women, I adopted the overarching strategy of seeking solidarities. Key identified topics were organized around connection, education, balance, and accountability. The “third layer” of the analysis consisted of revisiting all sticky notes and memos, filling in gaps which led to the identification of

several moments across events where there was rich overlap among topics. To signal such intersections, I used the same range of colors with sticky page markers on both notes and memos, resulting in a colorful binder that inspired me with its colourful indicators of the directions Indigenous women’s activisms were using to steer Brazilian society toward futures with healthier, saner, more creative, and sustainable possibilities. Concurrently, in the second and third layers of the analysis, I commuted between paper and computer, while writing the present chapter.

The table below provides a brief summary of selected online activities for my reader’s convenience:

Table 6-1. List of events and activities’ summary (table by author)

ORIGINAL TITLE	SHORT	DATE	ACTIVITIES
<i>Primeira Marcha das Mulheres Indígenas: “Território: nosso corpo, nosso espírito”</i>	<i>Primeira Marcha</i>	August 2019	Indigenous women from all over the country go to Brasília to protest the new government attacks on Indigenous women, lands, and Indigenous health. Posts on social media and mini documentary work to amplify their messages and invite women from as many peoples as possible.
<i>Jornada “Sangue Indígena”: Nenhuma Gota a Mais”</i>	<i>Jornada “Sangue Indígena”</i>	October 2019	Indigenous women, as part of a group of activists, travel to 12 European countries to inform their societies and protest what is happening in Brazil. A podcast series presented as a travel journal is used to report back home and amplify messages abroad.
<i>Acampamento Terra Livre 2020</i>	<i>ATL 2020</i>	April 2020	This national gathering of Indigenous movements turned remote, due to the global pandemic and includes a roundtable for and by Indigenous women, which is live broadcasted through Facebook/Instagram and then archived on YouTube.
<i>Maracá - Emergência Indígena</i>	<i>Maracá</i>	September 2020	With the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indigenous movement calls for support to protect Indigenous peoples; Indigenous women are key protagonists. Social media live broadcasts turned into a mini-series, with non-Indigenous celebrities repeating women’s messages to the camera.
<i>Encontro Global de Mulheres Indígenas – Cura da Terra</i>	<i>Cura da Terra</i>	September 2020	Indigenous women from all over the world answer the call for help coming from Brazil, when the fires and the pandemic were ranging freely on Indigenous lands. These conversations were broadcast live on social media.

This chapter is divided into six subsections that reflect the levels of connections and solidarities Indigenous women are practicing, seeking, and/or expanding, in each case. My first subsection “*Tudo se Conecta,*” presents Indigenous peoples as specialists in forging relational connections. The second “*Eu te Protejo!*” examines Indigenous women’s intra-group solidarities. In my next subsection, named “*Toda Monocultura Mata,*” I consider how activists seek solidarities within Brazilian societies. This leads to “*Ererré!*” an analysis of Indigenous women’s activist roles in unsettling prevailing understandings of power, as well as expanded definitions of genocide in “*Um Grande Genocídio,*” with a final section called

“*Articulações Futuras*,” that looks at how Indigenous women are gathering and building solidarities abroad.

6.2 “*Tudo se Conecta*”: Indigenous Peoples as Relational Connections Specialists

To undertake academic research is a strange thing. To analyse Indigenous women’s words using tools and processes that are almost incompatible with how their teachings and ideas are framed, is even stranger. From the first moment of data collection to my readings and assessments of materials, there was a constant tension in classifying, coding, and interpreting Indigenous women’s knowledges and strategies, not because Indigenous epistemologies exist in opposition to settlers’, but mostly due to research being a relatively lonely process within this study’s chosen methodology. Initially, I thought this tension was my personal failure to articulate such complex notions on paper. Being a feminist, I knew this tension would eventually turn out to be productive, and so it has, as illustrated in the following example.

While in Germany during the 2019 *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* (“Indigenous Blood” Advocacy Tour), Célia Xakriabá stated that “*a árvore ensina muito mais viva do que como um papel morto*” (the tree teaches much more alive than as dead paper) (Célia Xakriabá in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 11). She made this statement in the context of supporting the *Fridays for the Future* youth-led movement for climate action in Berlin. This affirmation hints that Indigenous women’s disposition for activism is borne from living relationships that they declare in need of nourishment and protection from the advancements of capitalism and neoliberalism. My own analysis takes place on dead paper and using a computer made of natural resources extracted by the same conglomerates who are financing the invasion of Indigenous lands in Brazil and elsewhere, just as their conversations being transmitted using such technologies. Thus, the very materiality of my thesis and the processes leading up to it, limit the extent to which my project can grasp, with authenticity, the kinds of relational arrangements advocated by this group of Indigenous women taking their activism online. Similar to their goal of *descolonizando a telinha* (decolonizing the little screen) by taking their activism to social media, I press on by living the tensions of providing a meaningful representation of Indigenous women’s knowledges in a thesis format that holds my own efforts to decolonize academic experience, myself, as a feminist researcher, and you, my dear reader, as we proceed in always already compromised conditions of structural complicity with forces harming the relational matrices that the activists whose social media practices I study, are defending.

In my attempts to understand the complexity of Indigenous women's activist practices, I start by elaborating on this section's quotation from the 2020 *Acampamento Terra Livre (ATL) (Free Land Camp)* when Cristiane Pankararu speaks on the sacredness of life:

*Primeiro é valorizar o sagrado de toda a existência de vida na terra, ... de todas as espécies porque **tudo se conecta**. E quem mais entende de conexão somos nós, povos Indígenas. É a nossa conexão com a terra, nossa conexão com os nossos guias espirituais, ... essa conexão com a luta, com outros povos. Isso nos faz ser essas personagens de luta, de visibilidade, porque a gente acaba dando eco a quem tá na base. Por exemplo, nesse momento, eu como Pankararu estou aqui falando pra vocês, mas tem um universo Pankararu aqui comigo. Assim como ... com as pessoas que estão nos ouvindo.*

(First, it is to value the sacredness of all life on Earth, ... of all species because **everyone and everything connects** [emphasis mine]. And who understands that connection the most is us, Indigenous peoples. It is our connection with the earth, our connection with our spiritual guides, ... this connection with the fight, with other peoples. This makes us these protagonists of the fight, of visibility, because we end up echoing those who are on the ground. For example, at this moment, I am here talking to you as Pankararu, but there's a Pankararu universe here with me. As well as ... with the people who are listening to us.) (Cristiane Pankararu in "Mulheres Indígenas" 2020, 9:48.0).

Initially, Cristiane Pankararu addresses the sacredness of Indigenous women's existence, but suggests that the issues are inclusive of and broader than gender. Beyond humans, there are all other species, the land, the spiritual world carrying ancestral ties, Guiding Elders, and "*tudo se conecta*;" all these mutual connections are sacred. Cristiane Pankararu acknowledges her Pankararu identity, because that is also sacred and represents a universe of possibilities that are an inherent part of the conversation she is entering. Here, sacredness is understood to be shaped and shared by connections with the whole, contrary to monotheistic traditions of distant, unreachable gods; Cristiane Pankararu advocates for a palpable, accountable connection that unites all peoples in the struggle to create meaningful futures. Turning to the Indigenous and non-Indigenous publics watching that specific live broadcast on Instagram/Facebook, she affirms that they too carry a world of connections and potentials that must be brought to the fore.

By offering the notion that Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems are specialists in creating and maintaining such boundless connections, Cristiane Pankararu invites the public (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) to engage meaningfully with her peoples' perspectives. She invites audience members to reflect on what types of connections they are bringing into the conversation, as well. Mostly, Cristiane Pankararu's argument shows that interspecies, intergenerational, and ancestral land-based connections are germane to all life

on earth, undergird and precede all of the strategies Indigenous women employ in their activisms, and necessarily frame the lengths and limits of all common causes, including virtual ones.

About bringing their activism online, Cristiane Pankararu affirms:

*Essa conexão que a gente tem de várias formas, a internet é só mais uma que ... vem a somar nesses processos de conexões, de fortalecimento, de luta, e é interessante pensar que a internet, nesse momento de crise, de fake news, e tudo mais, estamos aqui nós dando a cara, **dando o corpo, dando o sangue.***

(This connection that we have comes in many forms; the internet is just another one that ... comes to add to these connections processes, of strengthening, of fighting, and it's interesting to think that the internet, in this moment of crisis, of fake news and all that, we are here showing our faces, **giving body, giving blood** [emphasis mine].) (Cristiane Pankararu in "Mulheres Indígenas" 2020, 9:48.0)

Cristiane Pankararu's reflection complicates Indigenous women's activisms in relation to an online environment that is unsafe and hostile, with Bolsonaro and his supporters routinely advancing social media racisms and misinformation. Still, activists show up and work to undo and decolonize these spaces. Cristiane Pankararu positions Indigenous women as "*dando o corpo, dando o sangue*" (giving body, giving blood), which can mean the material dangers arrayed against Indigenous women's bodies as they face down violence to fight for Indigenous rights. In opposition to Bolsonaro's regime of *Deus acima de todos* (God above everyone), the invocation of Indigenous women giving blood and body to protect their people suggests an image much closer to the Catholic Jesus that floats above many urban skylines than Bolsonaro's politics of violence in Brazil ("Atlas Da Violência" 2021). However, most Catholics in Brazil will go to extreme lengths to claim they are under attack by minoritized movements who seek a connection with Jesus' story of sacrifice. One example is found with actress, model and activist Viviany Belebani, who interpreted the crucifixion during the 2015 São Paulo Pride Parade, to protest the "Christian" country that kills the most trans people in the world (Dantas 2015). Viviany's protest resulted in her being summoned to the police station, as well as sued and harassed by several fanatic religious leaders and followers. Here, as with Indigenous women, the attempt to reconnect and find common ground within Brazilian societies is rejected, and the basic Christian values are summarily dismissed by "good" Christians themselves.

Returning to the setting of online activisms, at the *ATL 2020* Nyg Kaingang declares: "*não podemos estar juntos em Brasília, mas de alguma forma estamos conectados e tá lindo o ATL, a mobilização online, ocupando as redes.*" (we can't be together in Brasília, but we are somehow connected and the *ATL* is beautiful, the online mobilization, occupying the

networks) (Nyg Kaingang in “Mulheres Indígenas” 2020, 5:36.6). Indigenous women use social media to strengthen their fight, fully aware of virtual platform incommensurabilities with their lifeways and values, yet seeking to find and forge meaningful connections in inhospitable systems (Dean, Victor, and Guidry-Grimes 2016) is their speciality.

6.3 “*Eu te Protejo!*”: Indigenous Women’s Surrounding Solidarities

A critical step that Indigenous women take in creating and maintaining accountable relational connections involves nourishing solidarities among Indigenous women from various culturally-contextualized peoples. Tsitsina Xavante at the *ATL 2020* and later at the global gathering *Cura da Terra* repeatedly declares: “*Você não está sozinha. Você é guerreira. Eu confio em você e eu te protejo!*” (You are not alone. You are a warrior. I trust you and **I protect you!** [emphasis mine]) (Tsitsina Xavante “Cura Da Terra” 2020, 5:13:13.2). Such solidarity is sustained by dedicated practices of mutual care, even when the struggles impacting Indigenous peoples are geographically or politically different. During the *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* in Europe, the group makes sure to share meals even on busy days where they have dispersed to attend all scheduled activities, as noted by Nara Baré: “*a gente trouxe a nossa farinha e aí a gente resolve um pouco como tá tendo essa saudade de casa, da família, dos territórios*” (we brought our *farinha*¹¹ and so we solve a little bit of missing home, the family, the lands) (Nara Baré in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 30). In taking care of each other, Indigenous women are modelling the kinds of solidarities they are seeking and offering, among Indigenous women, with Indigenous peoples, with members of Brazilian settler societies, and supporters abroad.

On the diversity of Indigenous women’s activisms, Eunice Kerexu, a member of the Mbyá Guaraní leadership group, reflects on how:

... nós mulheres somos únicas, com feridas, com dores, com várias coisas que a gente carrega, que são iguais. Não importa o país, o estado, cidade, onde a gente está, nós estamos nessa unidade do mesmo sentimento.

(... we, women, we are unique, with wounds, with pains, with several things we carry, that are the same. No matter the country, the State, the city, wherever we are, we are in the unity of the same feeling) (Eunice Kerexu in “Cura Da Terra” 2020, 3:48:31.5)

Eunice Kerexu speaks to Indigenous women specifically, who face similar attacks on their lifeways by the capitalist, neoliberal state, and international systems across the globe. Even

¹¹ *Farinha* is an ancient Indigenous recipe of cassava (or yuca) flour, consumed in many forms throughout the territory today called Brazil.

when the effects produced vary according to each woman's context, imperialist capital affects them in ways that validate Indigenous women's solidarities.

Similar reflections are found throughout the data sampled in this study, a finding which demonstrates the extent to which Indigenous women across Brazil and around the world are finding ways to strengthen connections with and care for each other. Similarly, Daniza Kaingang notes:

Irmãs, a minha fala é plural. Entrego aqui a voz de muitas mulheres Indígenas que partilham comigo os pensamentos, a luta, a vivência. Essas mulheres que me compõem porque somos corpos coletivos. ... Cuidamos, alimentamos, fortalecemos, nós promovemos a vida.

(Sisters, my speech is plural. I deliver here the voices of many Indigenous women who share with me their thoughts, their struggles, their experiences. These women who are part of me because we are collective bodies. ... We care, we feed, we strengthen, we promote life.) (Daniza Kaingang in "Cura Da Terra" 2020, 4:59:07.4)

Modeling solidarities that are meticulously wrapped in mutual care both pluralizes personal subjectivities and promotes very efficient activist networks. Because everyone and everything is connected, accountability becomes an organic practice of respectful mutual representation. From the European advocacy tour to their annual national gatherings, Indigenous leaders like Sônia Guajajara make sure to connect their work to the realities of Indigenous women who are at the frontlines of many struggles: "*uma oportunidade ótima da gente tá fazendo esse podcast pra informar todas as regiões sobre o que a gente tá fazendo.*" (A great opportunity for us making this podcast is to inform all regions on what we're doing) (Sônia Guajajara in *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* 2019, 44). Simultaneously, Guajajara is opening up communications processes to suggestions from Indigenous publics about agendas and activities that the group might adopt while on their own specific advocacy tour.

Another demonstration of relational accountability comes from Tsitsina Xavante during the *ATL 2020*, where she calls upon other Indigenous women present at the roundtable and in the viewing public to take part in the profound responsibility that comes with speaking in the name of those peoples who are living in voluntary isolation from Brazilian settler society and do not have access to social media or Brazilian Portuguese as tools to resist the Brazilian state. Along these lines, Leonice Tupari extends her solidarity to:

... dizer pra aquelas mulheres que tão em áreas de ocupação ... que ainda não foram demarcadas, que a gente tá aqui, deixando a nossa voz pra todo o Brasil dizendo que a gente está aqui na resistência, a gente vai continuar resistindo a esse governo que tá aí, e os próximos que vierem.

(... say to those women who are in camp areas ... which have not yet been demarcated, that we are here, lifting our voice to all of Brazil, saying that we are at

the resistance, we are going to keep resisting this government out there, and the next to come.) (Leonice Tupari in “Mulheres Indígenas” 2020, 1:33:04.7)

For Tsitsina Xavante and Leonice Tupari, state governments that disrupt the relational matrices sacred to all Indigenous peoples must be resisted, because they are invested in destroying the potentials of living relationships for nothing more than the deadly profiteering that is embedded in all imperialist systems, including social media.

Highly aware of how social media platforms work and the coded biases of Instagram and Facebook’s “intelligent algorithms,” as well as the biases of mainstream Brazilian media, Sônia Guajajara recruits her publics to bend and extend the limits of these platforms, reaching backwards and forwards in time and space into real world relationships and ways of being:

Essa visibilidade ... que as redes sociais tão trazendo ... é bem importante, porque é certeza que a imprensa tradicional não tá cobrindo, não vai cobrir, porque é uma agenda nossa, de interesse nosso. ... Nós queremos muito que vocês possam ... ajudar a divulgar isso, a compartilhar, a comentar, ver nossas agendas aí ... estamos fazendo várias agendas por dia pra que a gente possa alcançar o máximo de pessoas. Muito importante nesse momento conscientizar as mentes, mas também sensibilizar os corações.

(This visibility that ... social media are bringing ... are very important, because it’s certain that mainstream media is not covering, and will not cover, because it’s our agenda, of interest to us. ... We really wish you to be able to ... help spread this information, to share, to comment, to see our agendas out there; we are making several messages per day to be able to reach as many people as possible. It’s very important at this time to awaken minds, but also touch hearts) (Sônia Guajajara in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 20)

Sônia Guajajara is challenging hierarchical messaging agendas and the ways that some connections, founded in imperialist approaches, are designed to harm other, more important, and primary networks of mutual survival. Efforts to awaken minds and touch hearts with pluralizing subjectivities, grounded in wider relational networks than social media can imagine, redirects that relational energy toward substantive decolonization of people and places.

Lastly, when Indigenous women gather to share their strength in representing their local struggles, Glicéria Tupinambá notes that “*com todas as lutas ... nós fomos modificadas*” (with all the struggles ... we were modified) (Glicéria Tupinambá in *Encantadas* 2019, 02:36). Her claim is particularly potent when considering the amount of Indigenous youth who were able to travel to the *Primeira Marcha* in 2019, as well as women who had never been to Brasília at a national gathering. The women camped for over a week in the city, and cultural exchanges were part of their everyday activities. Languages, body paints, headpieces,

beadworks, dances, songs, poems, instruments: Indigenous women in this movement carry their whole hermeneutic universes with them. Sônia Guajajara uses her popular social media accounts as a digital megaphone to report and portray prominent local and national Indigenous leaders and their key messages. This was certainly the case with Joênia Wapichana's speeches, the first Indigenous congresswoman in Brazilian history, and with those of Kayapó women, who are known to be extremely resilient in the fight to protect the Amazonia from deforestation. In fact, in 2021, the Kayapó people chose their first female Chief, decolonizing notions of gender and gender roles within their own organizations.

6.4 “*Toda Monocultura Mata*”: Seeking Solidarities within Brazilian Societies

When Indigenous women move to nourish solidarities within Brazilian settler societies, complications are likely to arise. In this project, I have described Brazilian settler societies as mostly white and *mestiça*, but they are much less homogenous than they seem, when Indigenous perspectives are accounted for. It is not acceptable to clump together settler Brazilians of European descent with Afro-Brazilian, Quilombolas and riverain communities, as they all suffer in diverse and multiple ways from the same extractivist systems that the Indigenous activists are challenging. It is precisely that diversity among settler communities, and of Indigenous peoples, to which Célia Xakriabá appeals, in order to recruit solidarities among those who appreciate the urgency of the Indigenous cause:

*Sem a diversidade o Brasil deixaria de existir. Nenhuma sociedade resiste à sua própria monocultura, porque **toda monocultura mata**.*

(Without diversity, Brazil would cease to exist. No society can resist their own monoculture because **every monoculture kills** [emphasis mine].) (Célia Xakriabá in “Maracá” 2020, 3:11.1).

Célia's poem, “Maracá” (2020) draws a parallel between colonialist politics and the practice of monoculture in agriculture, which destroys forests, drains rivers, dislocates Indigenous peoples, and sequesters their lands in alien propertied systems. Current Brazilian politics constantly attempt to subjugate Indigenous peoples by taking away their cultures, their lands, their lives, and to present the mainstream as homogenous and in support of fascist approaches to problem solving. Such attempted erasures of Indigenous rights and Brazilian diversities have never been passively met, as outlined by Glicéria Tupinambá: “*A gente nunca caiu de joelhos, a gente sempre está de pé ... marchando pra poder lutar e reivindicar os nossos direitos. E nós precisamos de aliados, parceiros firmes nessa luta.*” (We never fell on our knees; we are always on our feet ... marching to be able to fight and reclaim our rights. And we need allies, strong partners in this fight.) (Glicéria Tupinambá in *Encantadas*

2019, 18:23.5). The connective relational expertise of Indigenous women activists disrupts monocultural approaches that reduce the world's diversities to flat imperialist branding schemes that impoverish us all.

Recruiting Brazilian solidarities to decolonial causes is more complicated than forging solidarities among Indigenous women and peoples, because Indigenous women end up spending a lot of their time educating settler people on several critical subjects, about which many settlers have been rendered woefully ignorant, to their own peril. This is a current issue for most social movements seeking supporting partnerships with “outsiders.” Depending on the communities with whom Indigenous women are recruiting wider solidarities, the educational work might be more or less taxing. During the *Primeira Marcha* in 2019, Indigenous leaders joined forces with female rural workers in Brasília to increase their numbers and present a more impressive demonstration in the large and inhospitable avenues of the “airplane city.” To celebrate that collaborative unity, an unknown participant spoke at the stand, framing the costs of the globalization of capital in specific terms that point to other possibilities and destinations for human agency:

Importante a gente fazer a nossa manifestação e dizer que a gente não quer esse modelo de agricultura que explora ... Nós queremos territórios limpos, livres de violência doméstica, livres de trabalho escravo, livres de monocultivo. E, sim, a liberdade é um projeto de Brasil-nação a partir do povo trabalhador e especialmente das mulheres do campo e das florestas.

(It is important for us to lead our demonstration and say that we do not want this model of agriculture that exploits ... We want clean territories, free from domestic violence, free from slavery labor, ¹² free from monoculture. And, yes, freedom is a project of the Brazil-nation built from the working people and especially the women of the countryside and forests.) (*Encantadas* 2019, 20:19.0)

This appeal to women and working people as groups of mutually invested actors emphasizes that the operations of monocultures are inevitably violent, in ways that target and marginalize, but also frame necessary changes.

As far as can be confirmed in the selected data sample, the partnership between Indigenous women and rural workers has proved productive, with aligned values and goals, and a high level of accountability and shared solidarities on both sides. Conversely, Indigenous leaders met with Chief Justice Cármen Lúcia during the *Primeira Marcha* activities on much more tense terms, which required additional educational and negotiating skills from Indigenous activists. Because Cármen Lúcia is Chief Justice, her work is wrapped

¹² Brazilian law uses language on “work conditions analogous to slavery,” which is very common in large monocultural farms.

around corporate legal frameworks from the Brazilian “democratic” institutions that will frame and possibly enclose her support of Indigenous activists. Shirley Krenak, one of the leaders of the Krenak nation, spoke to Cármen Lúcia in a firm but level tone:

A gente não pode jogar sabedoria fora. Porque isso é contra todo o processo de vida do ser humano. E é aqui que nós estamos agora pedindo para que a senhora escute, de verdade, esse chamado da terra. Porque se algum dia a gente ficar sem água pra beber, a senhora também vai ficar.

(We can't throw wisdom away. Because this is against the entire process of human life. And it is here that we are now asking you to truly listen to this call of the earth. Because if one day we run out of water to drink, you will too.) (Shirley Krenak in *Encantadas* 2019, 14:37.9)

Here, Shirley Krenak is drawing attention to the high stakes at play when profit is promoted over water supply. She also connects Indigenous ways of knowing with protecting the earth, while opening the possibilities for collaboration with settler societies that are based in careful listening to one another. This is a clear move away from the abyssal thinking of dominant settler societies, towards the ecology of knowledges practiced by the *encantadas* (B. de S. Santos 2015), where different knowledges strengthen, rather than dominating each other. Further, as a pluralized and pluralizing leader, Krenak calls to accountability the institutions Cármen Lúcia represents, teaching her about the interconnectedness of life, regardless of which positions of momentary power one occupies in the current circumstances.

Shirley Krenak and the rest of the Krenak people lost their living river to the Vale, formerly known as the Vale do Rio Doce, a mining company (active in Canada) which killed the *Rio Doce* (Doce River) and then changed its corporate name to “rebrand” and evade responsibility. Any similarities that leap to mind with Facebook/Meta are not mere coincidences, as powerful companies operate in similar ways. As discussed in Chapter 3, Facebook/Meta's goal is to construct a digital world called “the metaverse” with artificial intelligence and augmented reality, plus all the paraphernalia developed to support access to such platforms. This task is being carried out both through mining the earth's resources as well as harvesting users' minds, by developing software that extracts affects and emotions as currently expressed on social media platforms (Padios 2017). Activists from other movements, then, may join a counter movement to these extractive models with Indigenous women who are interested in developing *uma relação de vida* (a relationship of life), celebrating relational networks by expanding accountable solidarities across movements and peoples.

Such counter-movements are not meant to produce instant, but rather lasting changes, and Indigenous women understand that growth comes with time. From the recordings of the meeting with Cármen Lúcia, it was clear that solidarities were not being extended meaningfully through her role as Chief Justice, and there seemed little room for shared accountabilities. Cármen Lúcia behaved awkwardly and repeatedly said “I will try my best,” when asked to actively support Indigenous women’s concerns in times of fascism. It was, nonetheless, an important encounter, considering the level of influence Cármen Lúcia holds within Brazilian democratic institutions. Even if incomplete, this listening moment might prove productive later, if not immediately for Lúcia herself, then for public audience members.

Educating Brazilian constituencies on critical mutual solidarities, accountabilities, and systems of mutual care requires them to learn to embody meaningful connections. In any society contaminated by capitalism, where well-being and spirituality are purchasable online and delivered at the doorstep, such an educational task is a vast, energy-draining undertaking. Returning from the European advocacy tour, Célia Xakriabá says:

*Nós voltamos fortalecidas. As pessoas nos perguntam se nós tamos cansadas, e Sônia bem disse que nós sentimos cansadas de assumir essa responsabilidade sozinhas. ... a gente acredita que é pelos movimentos sociais, é por essa potência da soma, que nós vamos derrubar o fascismo. **E derrubar o fascismo não basta apenas dizer que tá com os povos Indígenas. Precisa ser uma luta anticapitalista e contra o sistema.*** (We came back stronger. People ask us if we are tired, and Sônia said that we feel tired of taking on this responsibility alone. ... we believe that it is through social movements, it is through this power of sum, that we are going to overthrow fascism. **And to overthrow fascism is not enough just to say that one is with Indigenous peoples. The struggle must be anti-capitalist and against the system** [emphasis mine].) (Célia Xakriabá in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 50)

This explicit emphasis on anti-capitalist and systemic decolonization is grounded in the relational politics and connective skills of Indigenous peoples and the specific women activists examined here. Sônia Guajajara and Célia Xakriabá’s perspectives illuminate the devastating harms arising from the expectation that only those most affected by immediate harms must resist the future harms that will follow from such hierarchical modes of being, alone. The false separations of graduated targets of marginalization and violence will not protect those privileged by flawed human systems, when climate collapse penetrates consumerist delusions, wherever in the world human communities are located, as Shirley Krenak also reminded Cármen Lúcia.

During the *Jornada “Sangue Indígena,”* Indigenous women encountered many Brazilians who are part of the diaspora or just temporary students at foreign universities. Sônia Guajajara described such encounters as:

Muito acolhedor ... quando a gente chega nessas partes da Europa é sempre muito bom encontrar brasileiros. E os brasileiros, claro, se sentem também muito felizes de encontrar com a gente, né, encontrar outros brasileiros.

(It is very welcoming ... when we arrive at these parts of Europe, it is always great to meet Brazilians. And Brazilians, of course, are also very happy to meet with us, you know, to meet other Brazilians.) (Sônia Guajajara in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 17)

Although the colonialist nation state of Brazil is under critique, it also serves as a relational touch stone for the activists and national ex-pats. Accidentally crossing paths with Brazilians who are also part of European societies, often in academic institutions, creates a comforting feeling of recognition on both sides, through the use of shared languages and mutual recognition of the issues, however variable in degree. Especially in colder climates, finding some tropical warmth in those encounters meant for Célia Xakriabá that there was space for building meaningful connections and seeking more balanced solidarities in terms of refocusing human agency in more promising directions:

... com pessoas que tão na universidade, com pessoas que tão morando aqui por muito tempo na Bélgica. Todo esse momento pra pensar qual é a nossa potência e o que que nos une nesse momento da história.

(... with people who are in the university, with people who have been living here for a long time in Belgium. All this space to think about what our potency is and what unites us at this moment in history.) (Célia Xakriabá in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 34)

Diasporic students, seeking empowerment in prevailing systems, were provided intellectual and social opportunities to learn other meanings of potency and power, where they are invited to commit to decolonizing socio and biodiversities. Meanwhile, Indigenous women remain watchful and alert that the connections built are durable and accountable, because it is easy for the consumerist capitalist to be friendly in social contexts, while supporting prevailing fascisms at the ballot box. According to the state elections institution, Brazilians of the diaspora were responsible for 403,900 votes in the first-round of the 2018 Elections (approximately 0.35% of the total votes) (“Eleições 2018” 2018). Bolsonaro won the elections in countries like Sweden and Spain, which were visited by Indigenous women during the advocacy tour. Célia Xakriabá questions “*quantos corpos Indígenas esse voto segue matando?*” (how many Indigenous bodies does this vote continue to kill?) (Célia

Xakriabá in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 49). Once again, Célia Xakriabá frankly sets the tone for what types of solidarities Indigenous women are interested in, notably the ones seeking balanced accountabilities of the power each individual holds onto the making of realities that are shared by all Brazilian societies across the world.

6.5 “*Ererré!*”: Transforming Power

As often argued in this thesis, colonial technologies such as nation-states, smartphones, social media, racialization processes, or imperialist languages are insufficient vessels for carrying the knowledges emanating from Indigenous women’s activisms. Languages are not only about words, but the meanings behind them, which are influenced by contexts and cultures evolving in time and space. In colonialist societies like Brazil, definitions of power are tangled up in imperialist notions of conquest, domination, and hierarchy, all defined in binary terms. Indigenous women, by bringing their activisms online, are showing settler societies (social media publics, dominating languages, and nations) alternative meanings of power that open up the landscapes around which diverse groups may collaborate. Activists’ practices are transforming public understandings of power, revising, and resituating its meanings, and advancing alternative ways of experiencing life and relationships.

To unpack Indigenous uses of power, as outlined by the activists whose online strategies are examined in this thesis, I take a closer look at the interactions between Shirley Krenak and Chief Justice Cármen Lúcia:

Krenak: Não solte meu ombro. Ererré. Fala comigo: Ererré!

Lúcia: Eu quero saber o que que é.

*Krenak: Tudo o que a gente ensina é positivo. **Tudo o que a gente doa é de positivo.***

Então: Ererré!

Lúcia: Ererré.

(Krenak: Don’t let go of my shoulder. *Ererré*. Say with me: *Ererré!*)

Lúcia: I want to know what that is.

*Krenak: Everything we teach is positive. **Everything we gift is positive. So: Ererré!***

*Lúcia: Ererré. [emphasis mine] (Shirley Krenak in *Encantadas* 2019, 13:06.8)*

This scene takes place as Shirley Krenak prepares to sing the *Tepoh e o Sol* song, traditional to the Krenak people. She maintains direct eye contact and close proximity with the Chief Justice, who, after repeating *Ererré* with clear discomfort, limply drops her hand from Shirley Krenak’s shoulders, while Shirley Krenak continues to chant steadily as if the physical connection were unbroken.

What fascinates me about this interaction is the evident lack of trust from the white Brazilian woman in contrast with the sincere effort of the Indigenous Krenak woman to build

a connection between them. It is not my point to forsake Cármen Lúcia as incapable of building solidarities with Indigenous women. She is the second woman in Brazilian history to be appointed (by President Lula) as Chief Justice, has been a fierce advocate of women's rights and stood firm against Bolsonaro's attempts to place himself and his cronies above the law. Recently, Cármen Lúcia called for thorough investigations of violence against Indigenous women and girls after the case of a 12-year-old Yanomami child, raped and murdered by miners, instigated by Bolsonaro's Facebook live broadcasts to invade and explore Indigenous lands without lawful authorization (Patriolino 2022). During the same Supreme Court session, Chief Justice Cármen Lúcia went on to criticize Brazilian state complicity with the violence imposed on Brazilian women, among whom, Indigenous women are most vulnerable. Perhaps as a result of Indigenous activist efforts in 2019, Cármen Lúcia has proven herself to be an ally to be reckoned with, in this critical call for justice.

The Chief Justice represents Brazilian "democracy" by leading one of its most important institutions, which embodies definitions of power that are incompatible with Indigenous women's activisms. More than embodied distrust, there is an underlining practice of superiority emanating from settler societies' ways. Even if both women (Cármen and Shirley) occupy high positions of power in their respective nations (Brazil and Krenak), the framing understandings of what constitutes power and empowerment are fundamentally different. This tension is constant for Indigenous women who are working to build solidarities within Brazilian and other settler societies, particularly when dealing with the higher ranks of those "in power," who are usually in possession of more privileges, including "whiteness" in Brazil. Nevertheless, Indigenous women stand firm through their efforts to build substantive solidarities. In this case, Shirley Krenak maintains eye contact with the Chief Justice, who, even if dropping her hand, is unable to avoid the strong voice that fills the room. More than proof of settler societies' limited notions of power, this interaction reimagines what power might be according to Indigenous women: power to connect, support, and trust each other, a constructive gift.

Another lesson bubbling up from that important meeting is Shirley Krenak's refusal to translate. Pushing through the distrust, Shirley Krenak convinces the Chief Justice to repeat *Ererré* after her. Even if not 100% certain of engaging Indigenous women on terms other than via hierarchical settler lexicons, the Chief Justice does not receive clarification on what *Ererré* means (at least according to the recording); by repeating it, then, she performs an attempt to trust Shirley Krenak, at least for that small fraction of space and time. Language, and what one does with it, matters (Esplin 2016). I see Shirley Krenak's refusal to translate as

a strategy for delineating the kind of solidarities Indigenous women are interested in, which are bathed in mutual trust, care, accountability, and connectedness, all of which expose hierarchical colonialist practices as limited and limiting. On a separate occasion, during the *ATL 2020*, Krenak explains that *Ererré* in Krenak refers simultaneously to an enthusiastic greeting and celebration of all life. This translation intensified my feelings of grief when analysing the encounter with the Chief Justice. It not only proves Shirley Krenak's argument that "*tudo o que a gente doa é de positivo,*" but it further highlights, in this one example, the numerous opportunities thrown away by Brazilian settlers when engaging Indigenous models of power and, as a consequence, shifting away from principles and values by which better futures could be constructed.

Across selected events, all Indigenous women activists worked hard to open up possibilities (Cadena, Risør, and Feldman 2018) for reconsideration of several settler concepts related to power, including gender and race. Particularly during the *ATL 2020* roundtable, the conversation lasted almost two hours around the theme of the sacredness of all existence, the categories of gender and race, and thus of "Indigenous women," as understood by settler societies. These terms were repeatedly taken apart, only to be reconstructed in balance instead of in opposition, and to offer kinder and more expansive possibilities, rather than rigid limitations. Indigenous women, in their deeply respectful relation to nature – understanding the natural world as living in balance with humans, the more-than-humans, material and spiritual beings, because "*tudo se conecta.*" By debunking the idea that power can only be understood and achieved in binary terms via hierarchy and oppression, Indigenous women gift their publics with the idea that power operates through the mutual flourishing of everyone and everything. Cristiane Pankararu expresses this anti-capitalist, pro-potentials notion beautifully by stating: "*A gente não troca, porque quando troca a gente perde. A gente compartilha.*" (We don't exchange, because when we exchange we lose. **We share** [emphasis mine].) (Cristiane J. Pankararu in "Mulheres Indígenas" 2020, 1:26:57.7). By emphasizing sharing, Cristiane Pankararu defies the core of neoliberal markets, where everyone is taught to disconnect and consume each other and everything.

Expanding on transformative notions of power, Célia Xakriabá recalls the following childhood memory:

Me recordo quando tinha sete anos de idade, logo que eu tinha entrado na escola. Em uma das aulas a nossa professora nos perguntou o que queríamos ser e ter como profissão quando crescer. Toda a turma respondeu. Alguns disseram que queriam ser médicos, outros advogados, enfermeiros, dentre outros. Sentado discretamente no canto da sala estava presente uma liderança mais velha de nossa comunidade,

Valdemar Xakriabá. E a professora resolveu perguntar também para a liderança o que gostaria de ter como profissão se tivesse tido a oportunidade de ir à escola. Ele respondeu: “eu gostaria de ter uma enxada bem amolada, pra plantar pra esse tanto de doutores.”

(I remember when I was seven years old, I had just started school. In one of the classes our teacher asked us what we wanted to be and have as a profession when we grow up. The whole class answered. Some said they wanted to be doctors, others said lawyers, nurses, among others. Sitting discreetly in the corner of the room was an Elder, leader of our community, Valdemar Xakriabá. And the teacher also decided to ask the Elder what he would like to have as a profession if he had had the opportunity to go to school. He replied: “I would like to have a well sharpened farming hoe, to plant food for all these doctors.”) (Célia Xakriabá in “Maracá” 2020, 0:07.3)

Much like the interaction between Shirley Krenak and the Chief Justice, the interpretive tension here illustrates another shock emanating from Indigenous understandings of relational, shared, liberating power in contrast to the hierarchical, oppressive power modes of settler societies. This memory of Elder Valdemar Xakriabá shapes Célia Xakriabá’s values, which she carries and shares through her activism. Thus, her relational approaches continue to take place in relation to ancestral connections. Further, the assumption made by the teacher that Elder Valdemar might have preferred a “better life” than the one he lived, based on neoliberal capitalist notions of a “successful life” might be, attempts to erase other knowledges than what is approved by the colonialist school systems. This deeper understanding represents another moment of looming grief for settler societies, a missed opportunity to connect with Elder Valdemar’s ancestral Xakriabá knowledge, of sharing care and solidarities. On the other hand, 9-year-old Célia Xakriabá understood quickly in the Elder’s humble reply that, even if temporarily limited by those classroom walls, the power to develop a rich and meaningful life that unfolds in relation to community, ancestors, and the land is within her reach. Like Shirley Krenak, Célia Xakriabá takes on the hard work of building solidarities by occupying and transforming settler terms of reference and associated meanings of power, along with assumptions about gender, well-being, the primacy of prevailing knowledges, and so on.

6.6 “Um Grande Genocídio”: Expanding Definitions of Genocide

One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, Brazil reached one of the world’s highest infection rates and death tolls, causing members of multiple civil society sectors to describe Bolsonaro’s neglectful health politics as “genocidal.” Caught up in technical definitions of the word, non-Indigenous Brazilians got stuck in a lengthy debate (that often took place over social media) on whether or not calling Bolsonaro a genocidal authoritarian leader was accurate. The debate reached the field of law, when Bolsonaro started suing and imprisoning

people who publicly identified him as genocidal (Rangel 2021; Virissimo 2021). Finally turning to some official (and limited) definitions, like the one provided by the United Nations (United Nations 2022), some political commentators, news channels, social media influencers, and social movements consented that the word “genocide” could not apply to Bolsonaro’s neglect, even when at a loss to find another more accurate word for it.

Responses to this debate by Indigenous women activists and their peoples help to expand on the definitions of genocide circulating in these abstract intellectual discussions, while bringing light to the depths of the problems that Indigenous peoples are facing. Coming unstuck from such polarizing debates requires engaging in the sophisticated hermeneutic conversations that Indigenous women are leading. This is another example of how Indigenous women, when dealing with concepts and technologies that are limited and limiting, decide to occupy and transform it for more productive use in respectful, relational dialogues.

To engage the ways that Indigenous women activists complicated prevailing denials of colonialist genocide starts with understanding the individual subject, who, in Indigenous frameworks, is much more than a situated body. M-boy Jegua of the Guarani-Kaiowá people explains:

*Eu acredito que em todos os lugares, todos os cantos do país onde tem os parentes, não é só você matar as pessoas com a arma de fogo, com a arma branca, é com tudo. Primeiro você começar pela cultura, pelo idioma da pessoa, pelo modo de ser. Então, tudo isso é **um grande genocídio** que a gente tá passando hoje aqui no Brasil.*

(I believe that everywhere, all the corners of the country where there are relatives, it’s not only about killing people with firearms, with a cold weapon, it’s with everything. First you start with the culture, the language of that person, their way of being. So, all this is **a massive genocide** that we are going through here in Brazil [emphasis mine].)
(M-boy Jegua in *Encantadas* 2019, 09:35)

M-boy Jegua’s definition of a person affirms that a human subject cannot be disconnected from their cultural, linguistic, social, and land-based contexts. Because Indigenous women and peoples exist in mutual accountable relations with all life, there is no hierarchy determining whose life matters more or less, because all life exists in a balance of individuals operating within intersecting collectivities. When rivers and mountains are recognized as entities, and they are killed or made sick by capitalist enterprises, Indigenous women also get sick and unsettled. For example, when a river dies due to mining companies dumping mercury into the clean water, Indigenous peoples get sick because the river is a close friend who has been in their collective families for centuries, providing guidance and medicine. But also, Indigenous peoples get sick because even the official “scientific” knowledge

understands that drinking mercury causes irreversible long-term effects on children's health, especially when ingested through mothers breastfeeding newborns. The neoliberal solution to this problem (created by neoliberal capitalists themselves¹³) might be to sell huge amounts of baby formula to the Yanomami people, such that the human connection with the river, as the connection of a parent with their child, is rebranded as a marketed relation. Of course, where the water would come from to mix with the formula powder, a critical issue the world over, remains an acute problem.

Indigenous women's definitions of genocide include, and are not limited to, death and sickness by water and soil contamination, by loss of medicine from the land, death by harmful encounters with health care systems and by the absence of culturally appropriate health care, death by the loss of one's language, by loss of culture, death by the loss of landscapes, the loss of human and more-than-human lives. Célia Xakriabá adds:

A pandemia [de COVID-19] mata, o racismo mata, a necropolítica mata, a fome mata, arma de fogo mata, a violência mata, colonização mata, o desmatamento mata, as queimadas matam, o veneno mata, a mineração mata, o garimpo mata, o capitalismo mata, a ausência do Estado brasileiro mata e acelera o genocídio Indígena no Brasil.

(The [COVID-19] pandemic kills, racism kills, necropolitics kills, hunger kills, firearms kills, violence kills, colonization kills, deforestation kills, fires kill, poison kills, mining kills, capitalism kills, the absence of the Brazilian State kills and accelerates the Indigenous genocide in Brazil) (Célia Xakriabá in "Maracá" 2020, 11:49.0)

Célia Xakriabá reminds her publics that genocide is an attempt and not a fact, as both Indigenous peoples and the lands have been enduring such abusive politics for centuries. Proof that attempted genocides of Indigenous peoples are unsuccessful in endeavoring to completely erase their cultures and lands, resides in the perseverance of Indigenous women's activisms. In making this distinction, between attempted and achieved genocide, Indigenous women call upon non-Indigenous societies to take responsibility for engaging with Indigenous struggles. Genocides are not something of the past but ongoing political expediencies that affect all peoples across the world. Indigenous women's activisms work hard to reconnect non-Indigenous societies to the dangerous realities of, for example, river system extinctions. Last time I checked, every life on Earth needed clean and healthy water to

¹³ Here I name neoliberal capitalism as "them" in an effort to make it more human, instead of an omnipresent "natural" state of life; neoliberal capitalism always has names and addresses, like Eduardo Bartolomeo, who recently developed his career in mining in Canada (*Revista Brasil Mineral* 2021), before becoming the current Vale CEO.

survive, and yet Indigenous women and peoples are carrying most of the weight of mourning for and protecting rivers.

All these causes of death are also related to each other, according to Indigenous women's worldviews. Genocide operates in relation to all life, so targets more-than-human life as well. Therefore, "*é o ecocídio, onde a barragem de Mariana ela matou um rio inteiro. ... nós estamos de olhos abertos, nós somos os maiores fiscalizadores*" (it is ecocide, where the Mariana dam killed an entire river. ... our eyes are open, we are the ultimate inspectors), according to Nara Baré (*Jornada "Sangue Indígena" 2019, 27*), who cites the failed environmental inspections that permitted this abuse of living systems. In response to COVID-19, both Jaqueline Guarani and Shirley Krenak maintain that not having access to water means that Indigenous peoples are not able to follow the most basic World Health Organization recommendations of washing one's hands to prevent the spread of disease. To return to the trivializing debates about whether Bolsonaro engages in genocide, his role in ecocidal policy development deserves consideration as well. In response to this uber-violence, Indigenous activists practice a simple, but effective strategy, in establishing resistant publics.

Because Indigenous women have thorough knowledge of how social media algorithms work against their cause (Gasparotto 2016; Werbin, Lipton, and Bowman 2017; Etter and Albu 2021), their refusal to call Bolsonaro by his name is a tactic that prevents him and his followers from developing even more visibility online. Over the two years represented in the data archive I have assembled, Indigenous women were able to denounce the Brazilian State for its role in promoting the genocide of Indigenous peoples and lands, clearly identifying the current government as fascist, because of its vicious denials of the sacred connections among all beings, times, places, and possibilities for profit. From this data sample, activists are unanimous in identifying the Brazilian State and current government as the main promoter of violence towards Indigenous women and people's rights and lands.

Speaking to the crowd at the 2019 *Primeira Marcha*, Célia Xakriabá offers an interesting frame for analyzing the current government:

Pelo governo brasileiro, nós temos sido mortos não apenas pela arma do calibre 38, nós temos sido mortos pela arma do calibre 17, esse governo que tem assassinado com sua política genocida. Mas nós mulheres Indígenas, nós iremos fazer resistência. (By the Brazilian government, we have been murdered not only by the 38-caliber gun; we have been murdered by the 17-caliber gun; this government that has been murdering with its genocidal politics. But we, Indigenous women, we will form resistance.) (Mídia Índia and Xakriabá 2019)

In this speech, Célia Xakriabá references Bolsonaro's 2018 presidential campaign with the ballot number, 17,¹⁴ and the finger-gun gesture that marked his public appearances. I appreciate their linkage between the flagrant violence (*calibre 38*) and the threat of violence (*calibre 17*), as the latter enables the former in Brazil. During the pandemic, Célia Xakriabá broadened the concept by adding that “*o que está em curso hoje no Brasil é um **genocídio legislado**, é o próprio estado brasileiro autorizando a matar os Indígenas.*” (what is currently ongoing in Brazil is a **legislated genocide** [emphasis mine]; it is the very Brazilian State authorizing the murder of Indigenous peoples.) (Célia Xakriabá in “Maracá” 2020, 21:22.8). The activists who focus on protecting other Indigenous women, their peoples and lands, face firsthand all forms of violence authorized by the Brazilian government through the manipulation of “democratic” institutions, including the role of Chief Justice.

Such manipulation of so-called public institutions, for the promotion of violence against Indigenous peoples and lands serves a purpose, as Sônia Guajajara points out:

No Brasil é bem mesmo a cara desse governo truculento de querer ... autorizar a entrega desses territórios para a exploração, porque não pensa na vida, só pensa no dinheiro, só pensa no lucro. É uma ganância para atender ao capitalismo. Nós não. (In Brazil, it is very like this truculent government to want to ... authorize the exploitation of Indigenous lands, because they don't think about life; they only think about money, about profit. It is greed that caters to capitalism. Not us.) (Sônia Guajajara in “Maracá” 2020, 10:18.0)

Sônia Guajajara emphasizes the complicity of social institutions, conscripted to the service of genocidal capitalisms. Therefore, the very mechanisms meant to serve the Brazilian people are being redirected to serve neoliberal capitalisms, as is true all over the world. At the end of Sônia Guajajara's communication, she added a “*nós não*” (not us), which carries some ambiguity in both written and spoken languages. She may have used the phrase as a continuation of the sentence, as in the Brazilian government caters to profit instead of tending to Indigenous populations rights; or she may have meant that Indigenous women do not cater to capitalism, but to other forms of social organizations that are about life. Likely, both meanings apply. This clever play on words emphasizes the stark differences between relational forms of power that value everyone and everything as equal and sacred, and those that separate, target, discard and marginalize in an effort to mobilize aggression as power.

¹⁴ Brazilian elections have used electronic voting technologies since 1996. On the electronic voting machine, voters type the candidate's number and then confirm their choice after reviewing the candidate's name, picture, and affiliated party.

In contrast with the current Brazilian government's attempts at serving genocidal capitalisms, Indigenous women and peoples' resistance is deeply ancestral, spiritual, and constructed in kinship with all living beings and natural systems and processes. Zenilda Araújo of the Xukuru do Ororubá people explains:

Assassinaram por ser livre. Mas não pense que eles morreram. Eles tão correndo livre dentro das nossas terras, da natureza sagrada. Todos esses mártires que estão aqui hoje, eles nos dão força para lutar. Porque é deles que vem essa força para a nossa resistência de luta. Assassinaram o cacique Xicão, o meu esposo há vinte anos. Mas o nosso povo não desistiu da luta. Continuamos lutando e preparando a nossa juventude para a luta. Que a nossa luta nunca vai parar.
(Murdered for being free. But don't think that they died. They are running free within our lands, within the sacred nature. All these martyrs that are here today, they give us strength to fight. Because the strength for our fighting resistance comes from them. They tried to murder Chief Xicão, my husband for over twenty years. But our people did not give up the fight. We keep fighting and preparing our youth for the fight. Because our fight will never stop.) (Zenilda Araújo in *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* 2019, 4)

This recording of Zenilda Araújo, who at the time had just recently lost her husband Chief Xicão, involves teaching the European societies visited on the *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* about the types of resistance emanating from Indigenous peoples. Because that resistance is ancestral and spiritual, the Indigenous lives that the Brazilian government works to execute, cannot accomplish Bolsonaro's goal of complete erasure, precisely due to the expertise of Indigenous peoples in creating and maintaining many levels of connections, including sacred ones through all time and space. The local police in Pernambuco State recently tried to pin the murder of Chief Xicão on Indigenous peoples in order to undermine their struggle (K. Oliveira 2018), instead of investigating the real killer, who was never found, another attempted genocidal erasure, this time of both the aspirations of Indigenous peoples and the denial of their own culpabilities

6.7 "Articulações Futuras": Cultivating Solidarities Abroad

This section outlines Indigenous women's efforts in building solidarities abroad, and the strategies employed along the way. For the scope of this thesis, "abroad" is largely represented by European societies, where during the *Jornada "Sangue Indígena": Nenhuma Gota a Mais"* ("Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More" Advocacy Tour) Indigenous women sought to raise awareness about Brazilian fascism. Of course, the composition of European societies is as diverse as Brazil's. For the purposes of the movement, European societies are the home of the CEOs of large companies and conglomerates, national and European Union politicians, religious leaders, environmental activists, and so forth. Diasporic

Brazilians were named by Indigenous women as part of European societies, even as the familiarities around Brazilian identities also invoked cultural connections that exceeded the immediate geographical location of encounter.

The *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* articulated an optimistic confidence that engagements initiated by Indigenous women and peoples in Europe could produce positive results in shifting attitudes and actions. Indigenous women focused their advocacy tour on efforts to manoeuvre whatever visibility might be available to them in exposing the genocidal relations foundational to Brazil's current regime, often coming from the horrors resulting from Bolsonaro's first year in office. But their goals were not limited by the tragic headlines, as noted by Nara Baré:

*Todos os olhos pra Amazonia, mas vendo outras **articulações futuras** de como tá expandindo, como a gente tá **potencializando** e fortalecendo a luta dos povos [Indígenas] em defesa de seus territórios.*

(All eyes in the Amazon are but looking at other **future articulações** in considering how to expand, how we can **potentiate** and strengthen the [Indigenous] peoples' fight to defend their lands [emphasis mine].) (Nara Baré in *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* 2019, 30)

This report is key as Nara Baré is the leader of the *Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira* (COIAB) (Coordination of the Brazilian Amazon Indigenous Organizations), and in the words of her ally Sônia Guajajara: "*A Amazônia brasileira hoje é comandada por uma mulher Indígena.*" (The Brazilian Amazon is today led by an Indigenous woman.) (Sônia Guajajara in "Cura Da Terra" 2020, 1:16:09.5). This claim of a pluralist woman leader is special because it reiterates the meaningful connections Indigenous women sustain across the diverse needs of their peoples in Brazil, while making sure that building solidarities and teaching accountabilities abroad will support Indigenous peoples' goals in the long run, without neglecting the urgency of rapid deforestation and corporate invasions of Indigenous lands in the Brazilian North.

On a similar note, several Canadian companies are leading businesses in Indigenous territories where there is ongoing conflict in Brazil, such as the Belo Sun Mining Corporation and Brazil Potash (Bispo 2022). Another pointed example is found with the Akroá-Gamella people, fighting for decades to have their traditional lands recognized by the Brazilian nation-state. In 2017, an attack today known as the Gamella Massacre mutilated the hands of the people who were protecting their lands from invasion. Later, it became public how the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board is directly financing the local companies leading such attacks to Indigenous peoples in Brazil (Wenzel and Papini 2020). This one bloody fact of

both Brazilian and Canadian histories demonstrates that not only large multinational corporations are directly responsible for violence against Indigenous peoples; the everyday Canadian worker helped finance a massacre in the Brazilian State of Maranhão. There is no escaping that everyone and everything is connected, and so Indigenous women are investing their time in developing such accountabilities so that we may all move on to sharing solidarities and resisting the crimes of neoliberal capitalisms.

Potencializar (or to potentiate) like *articulações* (or articulation, as outlined earlier in this study), is a translation that does not carry the full meaning Indigenous women intend, even if there is some equivalent in the English language. For the Anglophone context, the word “potentiate” is more common in health and chemistry jargon, to indicate when different substances meet and increase effectiveness by making each other significantly more powerful. As a kind reminder, *articulação* is a political method employed by Indigenous women activists to unify and connect what is in conflict, bringing light to underlying common ground in order to accomplish shared goals. I would argue that Nara Baré’s wording, and that used by Célia Xakriabá, as outlined earlier, *potencializar* adds a component of futurity, of possibilities, and brings an edge to the practice of *articular*, especially when it takes place in Europe, because it implies that all parties involved will benefit from extending their solidarities to one another, as correctives to ongoing imperialisms.

Before gathering the fruits of their efforts toward better futures, Indigenous women spend copious amounts of energy to cultivate productive solidarities. According to the organizers of the *Jornada "Sangue Indígena,"* this is the first time in contemporary Brazilian history that such a large Indigenous group traveled to Europe to discuss their own agendas and contexts. European societies are historically used to interacting with Indigenous peoples under hierarchical terms, notably through the countless 17th through 19th centuries cultural world fairs, museums, and markets, where Indigenous peoples and cultures were objectified as entertainment. Therefore, as expressed by Célia Xakriabá, “*Uma coisa é eles escutarem sobre os povos Indígenas, outra coisa é eles ouvirem os povos Indígenas falando sobre nós mesmos.*” (One thing is to hear about Indigenous peoples, another is for them to listen to Indigenous peoples talking about ourselves.) (Célia Xakriabá in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 33). Indigenous women’s main work, as a result of these misrepresentative and misappropriative histories, consists of teaching Europeans how to listen, how to offer meaningful solidarities, and thus, how to support Indigenous women and peoples’ agendas for improved futures for everyone.

The toughest nuts to crack, as might be expected, are the large companies and conglomerates. Although most of them are based in Europe, these corporations have a very limited sense of responsibilities toward any nation they may be technically affiliated with, and even less toward any Indigenous lands and rainforests they are bent on turning into capital, whatever the social, political, environmental, or intergenerational consequences. Unshakable in their self-serving sense of privilege and righteousness, they are forced to respond to consumers who, thanks to activists all over the world, have begun questioning their methods, sources, and general transparency. From companies buying Brazilian soy and meat, to those providing parts to the same hydroelectric plants causing immense environmental damage, CEOs and directors will have to – sooner or later – sit down and listen to Indigenous women’s calls for wider accountabilities. One meeting where companies were planning their “social responsibility” action plans, a.k.a. public relations crisis management, Ângela Kaxuyana shares an experience that represents several other encounters with this sector:

Tentamos adentrar na reunião pra poder levar essa verdade ... que tem que ser dita e mostrada a esses empresários, sobre os produtos que eles importam ... principalmente produtos provenientes de áreas de conflitos em territórios Indígenas. O sentido do nosso diálogo, era de que trazer a situação real ... [d]o que tem acontecido sobre violação dos nossos direitos no Brasil. Mas, infelizmente, eles se fecharam a isso quando eles fecham a porta para que a gente não adentre ... Eles tão se fechando pra escutar a verdade de que eles têm uma responsabilidade muito importante sobre as nossas vidas. Que é a violação dos nossos direitos, ... [em] regar os produtos deles, como soja, milho, de sangue Indígena.

(We tried to enter the meeting to bring this truth ... that has to be told and shown to these businessmen, about the products they import ... mainly products coming from Indigenous territories where there are land conflicts. Our intention of dialogue was to bring forward the real situation ... [of] what has been happening about the violation of our rights in Brazil. But, unfortunately, they closed themselves to that when they closed the door so that we don't enter... They are closing themselves away from the truth that they have a very important responsibility over our lives. Which is the violation of our rights ... to water their products, such as soy, corn, with Indigenous blood.) (Ângela Kaxuyana in *Jornada “Sangue Indígena”* 2019, 8)

Ângela Kaxuyana, along with her group, manages to protest this farce of a meeting by unmasking the non-participating companies as incapable of engaging in a transparent dialogue with the people who have the most at stake on the subject of the very meeting. Even though they were not able to openly bring the realities of Brazil to that particular table, Indigenous women still uncovered the truth of how the lack of real responsibility runs deep when it comes to European companies who are stamping their products with “green”

certifications. The image of the literal closed doors as representing closeness to engaging in dialogue creates a clear view of the companies' positions.

When some meetings do open the door, however, they are not necessarily open to dialogue. Indigenous women experienced exhausting levels of dismissive arrogance with company leaders who would unabashedly declare that their goal is profit and not to protect Indigenous lives. These encounters are particularly emotionally draining, and Indigenous women took time to care for each other and the group. For an advocacy tour seeking meaningful connections across the European continent, such a cold response is not a surprise, but rather, a profound disappointment. Yet, thanks to activists' high levels of resilience, adaptability, and caring for each other when interactions become too strenuous, even such encounters are not without productive outcomes. One example is occupying their rightful space to directly respond:

A gente pôde falar claramente e olho no olho com setor da empresa, ... a gente trouxe posicionamento muito forte que se continuarem com essa posição de não considerar a presença dos povos indígenas, ... eles são responsáveis diretos pelo massacre dos povos indígenas. ... podemos reafirmar que estamos vigilantes, estamos aqui pra defesa de nossos direitos, e não vamos recuar nenhum momento.

(We were able to say clearly and face to face with the business sector, ... we brought a very strong stance that if they continue with this position of not considering Indigenous peoples' presence, ... **they are directly responsible for the massacre of Indigenous peoples.** ... we can reiterate that we are watchful, we are here to defend our rights, and we'll not retreat for a second [emphasis mine].) (Ângela Kaxuyana in *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* 2019, 13)

Businessmen may try to be dismissive towards Indigenous women, but even the most successful capitalist might be confronted in their cruelties with Ângela Kaxuyana maintaining eye contact while teaching them the basics of how the real world works. Here is a victory that Indigenous women celebrate, because the spaces from which to respond have been fought for and are reclaimed, not given.

A second productive moment observed in the selected data, is when Indigenous women met with an engineering company present at the above-mentioned closed-doors meeting, in Berlin. After witnessing Indigenous women's protests, this company invited the group of activists to join them in Belgium, so they could continue to learn from Indigenous women how to listen, how to practice accountabilities, and how their business directly affects Indigenous lives. This opportunity arose from the activists' fierce, and oftentimes taxing work to create *articulações* that can *potencializar* dialogues and propose and identify mutual goals. Between the Episode 3 (Berlin) to the Episode 7 (Belgium) podcasts, Indigenous

women were already gathering possibilities for meaningful partnerships, as consequence of the earlier cultivation of solidarities.

Repeatedly, education is the largest goal in Indigenous women's engagements with settler and European societies. This means closing the distance between realities that are constructed to remain separate in public consciousness. Indigenous women talk about the Brazilian reality, particularly pertaining to Indigenous peoples, while emphasizing possibilities for solidarities based on the connections of dependence that all peoples and individuals have to the land.

In this respect, Nara Baré reports on a meeting with the Norwegian parliament:

... duas opções de escolha: ou continuam de braços cruzados vendo todo esse genocídio, e ver a história passando, ou eles descruzam os braços, se juntam à força e à garra dos povos indígenas do Brasil e venham conosco fazer acontecer essa história, dar um novo rumo a essa história.

(... two options to choose from: either they keep their arms crossed, watching all this genocide, and seeing history pass by, or they uncross their arms, join in the strength of Indigenous peoples of Brazil and come with us to make history happen, give history a new direction) (Nara Baré in *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* 2019, 22)

Linked to Indigenous-centered education, then, are the activists' attempts to bring forward the exercise of accountabilities, which are often carried with kindness, while laying out the clear rules and expectations for what it means to engage in mutual solidarities with Indigenous women. This excerpt is part of a conversation about the free trade agreement between the Nordic countries and Mercosul, which differs very little from the norms of the European Union in its lack of direct consultation with Indigenous peoples on matters that affect Indigenous lands. Since negotiations for these agreements were taking place when Indigenous women were in this European advocacy tour, Nara Baré gets straight to the point in advising Norwegian authorities of the core urgencies.

Central to Indigenous women's proposition of building solidarities across movements and societies is nourishing balanced and mutual supports. Beyond educating European societies, Indigenous women activists are modeling ways to decolonize and care with one another for other social movements. Throughout the data sample, several examples show that Indigenous women are always practicing and modeling accountability, themselves, evidence of their reliabilities as solidarities partners. For example, when in Switzerland, Célia Xakriabá learned a few of the local words while communicating the realities of Brazil under Bolsonaro's regime in civil society meetings. This shows that Indigenous women are offering what they are asking for, particularly when talking about languages and cultures. Earlier in

Berlin, Célia Xakriabá had also reported on the group's intense involvement with *Fridays for Future*. They supported youth in decolonizing schools and elevating their contributions to the climate movement as part of the present, refusing to place them in restricted roles attached to imagined futurities, a capitalist sales strategy where one only becomes a recognized protagonist if/when participating in market economies.

When the tour reached Spain as its last destination, Sônia Guajajara reported:

Logo na chegada teve o ato antirracista que estava acontecendo em Madrid e ... participamos ali com vários outros movimentos, debaixo de chuva, de frio, mas a gente estava ali sentindo esse calor humano.... Muito boa essa conexão ... com todos esses movimentos que se juntam pra fazer essa luta contra o neoliberalismo, contra esse colonialismo que insiste em tá impondo sobre nossas vidas.

(Right upon arrival, the anti-racist act was taking place in Madrid and ... we participated with several other movements, under the rain, in the cold, but we were there feeling the human warmth A very good connection ... with all these movements coming together, uniting against neoliberalism, against this colonialism which insists on imposing on our lives.) (Sônia Guajajara in *Jornada "Sangue Indígena"* 2019, 45)

Later in the Cataluña region, Indigenous women were received with even more enthusiasm and attention by the local activists and politicians. Indigenous women explained the change of atmosphere in terms of their regions' decades-long struggles to protect cultures and languages, and to local politicians being more engaged in protecting the environment and ocean shores against the pressing resort economy. Both reports are further evidence of productive, mutual, and meaningful solidarities emanating from Indigenous women's activism. Ready to add their efforts to anti-racist, anti-neoliberal social movements with very different goals, participants are still recognized as productive to each other. Once again, Indigenous women ask for European societies' solidarities, and are ready to give as much in return, not as a marketed exchange, but as a shared responsibility for each other's well being and for all life on Earth.

6.8 Concluding Remarks

The engagements of relational networks nourished by Indigenous women are based in practices of solidarities that are ancestral, interspecies, and land-based, which frames the strategic uses of social media for their activisms. Indigenous women's solidarities are practiced and modeled within their group, but also expanded and sought for in other social movements and societies within Brazilian borders, as well as abroad. In the processes of gathering solidarities discussed in this chapter, activists are teaching potential supporters about Indigenous knowledges, in which theory and practice are mutually constituting.

Educating settlers at home about the realities Indigenous peoples are facing in Brazil, while affirming relational accountabilities attaching to the globalization of capital demonstrates how national and transnational policies and practices are enmeshed in systems that impact Indigenous women's daily lives, and will ultimately affect the lives and wellbeing of all inhabitants of the earth.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: “*É Plano de Vida*”

7.1 Summary of Findings

The intent of this research has been to create a respectful dialogue with the messaging of Indigenous women in Brazil who have led the resistance against fascism there, taking seriously their calls to decolonize settler societies. A parallel goal has been to help bridge the knowledge gap between Indigenous women’s activisms and Brazilian settlers, while amplifying their concerns into the Canadian context. Indigenous women’s enduring resistance to colonialisms, means they bring valuable knowledge and deep understandings of Brazilian realities to the table of transnational diplomacies for justice. Coming from multiple backgrounds, Indigenous women rely on difference as their strength in fighting colonialist, turned neoliberalist forces, identifying Indigenous land sovereignty rights as one of the key elements for a more stable democracy in Brazil.

The main research questions guiding this study were: How have Indigenous women used mainstream social media to oppose the first two years of Bolsonaro’s regime in Brazil? How might their uses of social media prove to be subversive and revolutionary? What specific strategies are Indigenous women employing in this setting of online activisms? When and how have their strategies been formulated? What are the knowledges emanating from the specific uses of social media platforms led by Indigenous women in order to resist the current fascist regime? How are their interactions with other Indigenous women and peoples, and with non-Indigenous supporters, producing new strategies for resistance?

There are several key findings springing from this research, reflecting that Indigenous women activisms are working on a “*plano de vida*” (plan of life) (Célia Xakriabá in “Maracá” 2020, 08:06). First, I have learned from Indigenous activists who are *ocupando a telinha* (occupying the little screen) that they are transforming social media and digital technologies, just by taking their conversations, concerns, epistemologies and resulting reports online. Following Indigenous women’s words, I have named this transformation process *ocupação online Indígena* (online Indigenous camp), where activists recruited colonialist technologies to serve their agendas, a practice related to their occupation of the

Brazilian Portuguese language and reclaiming spaces for their ways of knowing in academia and in politics.

The second major finding was that Indigenous women's online and offline activisms operate under the overarching strategy of creating mutual, relational, boundless connections, a key specialization in their collaborative ways of knowing. Activists forge and model solidarities across movements, cultures, state borders, and among themselves. Grounded in the land and in ancestral spiritual connections that inform their diverse epistemological investments, Indigenous women extend their solidarities to all life, past, present, and future, human, more-than-human, waterways, mountains, as in "*tudo se conecta*." In this worldview, solidarities and partnerships are accountable and enmeshed in each other, celebrating "*uma relação de vida*" (a relationship operating in support of all living systems). Such solidarities might be found, for example, in Indigenous peoples and Brazilian societies collaborating to repair the project of democracy, or between the Sateré Mawé people and the Tucandeira ants, or even in joining in the mourning for the Doce River by the Krenak people.

I was surprised by how these particular ancestral practices and epistemologies cascaded and flooded into all other strategies employed by Indigenous women. Once grasped, Indigenous women's relational connections, as a threshold concept, transformed the entire analysis, showing how all of their strategies are interrelated. Another finding shows that, to interact with settler societies, Indigenous women must invest much time and energy in educating future supporters on the realities faced by Indigenous peoples and, consequently, Brazil and its international allies.

While Indigenous women's work seeks to forge connections, they often set the tone about what type of solidarities they are looking for. While touring Europe, for example, Indigenous women educated European and Brazilian audiences on how daily decisions coming from each continent directly affects Indigenous women, who are fighting to protect forests and rivers for the sake of all lives. Further, when gathering online with Indigenous women from across the globe, participants modeled accountabilities among themselves in relation to those unable to be present.

I initially presented the Brazilian word *articulação* (articulation) as a relational practice for negotiating everyday politics. Because Indigenous women's activisms operate on multiple levels of negotiation, *articular* (to articulate) is a political method that unifies what is assumed to be in opposition by celebrating common ground, acknowledging differences as a site of strength in establishing accurate accountabilities from which to accomplish shared goals. The analysis brought forward an extra layer to definitions of *articular* as Indigenous

women use *potencializar* (to potentiate), adding a component of future possibilities opening up from practicing solidarities, which entail that all parties benefit from engaging in reciprocal relational connections.

The concepts of power and genocide were expanded, through this analysis, using concrete examples of how Indigenous women transform settler societies via their social media activisms. More comprehensively, they expose how limited understandings of these concepts impinge upon their legitimate and compelling goals to protect Indigenous lands and peoples, and how members of other cultures choose to relate to them and to one another.

7.2 Strengths of the Study

This thesis engages the voices of Indigenous women from Brazil in an effort to invite ongoing conversations on how settler societies can meaningfully and respectfully support Indigenous women and peoples. The life lessons offered by these activists go beyond the merely academic or the planned chaos orchestrated by fascists. To understand and celebrate the knowledges emanating from Indigenous women's online activisms illuminates new ways to seek connections and successes that are based in mutual care, accountability, respect, and balance in relation to all human and more-than-human lives. Of course, this is about protecting Indigenous lands and rights, which leads to 1) struggles to secure sustainable futures, and 2) making sure those futures are meaningful.

Critical Discourse Analysis has proven to be an effective way to engage with Indigenous women's online strategies during the first two years of Bolsonaro's regime because it allows for a study of context and oppressive power relations present in Brazilian societies, while centering Indigenous women's readings of their own realities. Further, it enables me to support the goal of keeping Indigenous women in control of the narrative during the analysis processes by quoting activists, using their original phrases and words. Indigenous women's calls to engage in processes of mutual decolonization through strategies balance and reciprocity can *potencializa* our shared strength,

7.3 Limitations of the Study

The main limitations of this study are related to its limited archive of materials available on social media. The restricted scope and timeline of this thesis reflect my position as an international student and immigrant researcher in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic. Having to collect data from social media platforms automatically framed which voices were most "visible" online, leading me to access narratives that were filtered by the very racist algorithms I have criticized. Thus, being limited to geographical, financial, and pandemic constraints, this study lacks direct personal interactions of Indigenous women in

the research process, a significant pre-requisite for decolonization and reconciliation practices in academia (Tuhiwai Smith 2012). For example, although Indigenous women are taking their activism to social media, the best way to weave relational connections remains to share research activities in-person, or meeting Indigenous women where they are at, in whatever format they may choose.

As discussed in the literature review and theoretical framework chapters, this thesis is further limited by my own context and circumstances in my ongoing efforts to engage more authentic decolonial feminist practices. Without Indigenous women's direct responses to or impressions of my interpretations and translation of their words, without their general advice in methodologies and methods, or which research questions would be more productive for Indigenous women's goals of protecting their lands and peoples, I face the risk of reproducing the same colonialist logics of oppression that I aim to criticize. My hope is that I have been able to attenuate some of these risks by being accountable for my positionality and through the reflexivity exercised throughout the study.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Future studies that wish to engage in conversations with Indigenous women's activism and knowledges will benefit from applying a community-led framework to the research process. This approach requires the researcher to have regular meetings with, for example, an advisory committee, which in this case would be composed of Indigenous women involved in the resistance to the current fascist regime. However, Indigenous women activists' are often extremely busy in attempting to balance personal, professional, and activist lives, so participating in an advisory committee might not be the most productive model, and is certainly not the only way of conducting a community-led research project. Including activists during the initial moments when framing decisions are made is key in collaboratively shaping the research process. It is part of why I took considerable time to contextualize my research in relation to the situation in Brazil, the contexts of Indigenous activism there, the affordances and limitations of mediated environments, and the unique uses that Indigenous women are making of them. More than key interviews and focus groups, substantive consultation with those most affected permits them to shape research question formulations, the literature review, choices of methodologies, methods, and which deliverables would be more productive for Indigenous women's activism. A collaborative realization of the entire research process in such a participatory model would serve Indigenous women's goals and be more appropriate in centering Indigenous women's voices, as well as in accounting for and accommodating prior commitments of their time and energy.

7.5 Final Remarks

*Me diz: pelo que você luta? Que ar você respira, senão o meu fôlego? Que comida você come, senão a que eu dou? ... Tô renascendo das cinzas do fogo em que queimaram meus ancestrais.*¹⁵

- *Kaê Guajajara, Mãos Vermelhas*

*Me querem apagada, mas eu vou brilhar. O bicho da mata virou popstar. Nossa terra é vip e eles não vão entrar.*¹⁶

- *Katú Mirim, Indígena Futurista*

When I started this research in 2019, I felt hopeless about how the current administration would derail and interrupt many lives in my home country. Following the 2018 Elections, daily news chronicled more and more crimes committed against Indigenous, Black, Quilombola, LGBTQIA+, Ribeirinhos, and other minoritized communities, as well as against the Amazon Forest, the Cerrado, Caatinga and Pantanal, all authorized by the present government. However, in this thesis I learned with Indigenous women that such crimes were only possible because they belong to a much larger project of attempted genocide of Indigenous peoples, and of the land, forests, and rivers in all their biodiversities.

Acknowledging Indigenous women's ways of knowing and resisting fascisms are necessary to reinventing Brazilian futures, and to developing more nuanced understandings about the persistent operations of fascisms within institutions and structures that perform greater inclusion than they actually deliver. Without denying the ongoing gravity of their situations, and ultimately the dangers that are facing all futures, Indigenous women remained strong and steady as their projects stay rooted in ancestral knowledges and spiritualities, vested in shared solidarities that are everlasting. On the other hand, Bolsonaro's hold over Brazilians is temporary. He and his fascisms are finite and futile against the forces of life with which the Indigenous women activists whose work I have explored here are aligned.

Thankfully, Sônia Guajajara, Célia Xakriabá, Kerexu Yxapyry, Telma Taurepang, Simone Karipuna, Val Eloy, among many others, recently announced their pre-candidacy for Congress at Federal and State levels in Brazil, following on the big steps of Joênia Wapichana. Organized under the *Chamado da Terra* (Call of the Earth) campaign (2022), the goal of these pluralizing leaders for the upcoming 2022 Elections is to have Indigenous women in power at the tables where decisions are made, in a movement to reclaim and decolonize Brazilian politics. As a Brazilian member of the diaspora, I feel confident in my

¹⁵ "Tell me: what do you fight for? What air do you breathe if not my breath? What food do you eat, if not the one I give you? ... I'm being reborn from the ashes of the fire in which my ancestors burned" (Kaê Guajajara 2020)

¹⁶ "They want my light off, but I will shine. The wild animal became a popstar. Our land is V.I.P., and they will not enter." (Katú Mirim 2021)

alignment with the values and projects that Indigenous women and peoples lead for constructing more meaningful futures for Brazil. As an academic and researcher, I am striving to document how Bolsonaro will ultimately be written into infamous history, while Indigenous women are forging stronger futures, through each set of accountable relationships they build and reclaim.

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