

QUILOMBOLA ETHNIC TOURISM

balancing between ‘modernity’ and ‘tradition’

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Abstract

Based on the ethnography of Cambury, a small rural village situated within a nature-protected area in Ubatuba, São Paulo (Brazil), this article illustrates some tradeoffs associated with the use of the quilombola ethnic identity as both a legitimate weapon to pursuit human and constitution rights and a utilitarian development strategy. New and reinvented performances of blackness and quilombola identity combining elements of tradition and modernity are emerging, as demands for ethnic tourism in ‘traditional territories’ and nature-protected areas continue to expand. It is argued that despite undeniable improvements in the quilombolas’ self-esteem, income, and land ownership compared to individuals who did not self-ascribe as quilombolas (i.e. caiçaras), the application of this ethnic identity, specially within the context of nature conservation, can produce adverse consequences in the long-term as well as unknown tradeoffs between conservation and development. Multicultural, environmental and development policies need to be formulated in conjunction in light of these complex dynamics.

Keywords: Quilombolas, Nature-Protected Areas, Multicultural Policies.

TURISMO ÉTNICO QUILOMBOLA: EQUILIBRANDO-SE ENTRE “MODERNIDADE” E “TRADIÇÃO”

Resumo

Com base em pesquisa etnográfica realizada no Cambury, uma pequena vila rural situada dentro de uma unidade de conservação da natureza (UC), em Ubatuba, São Paulo (Brasil), este artigo ilustra algumas vantagens e desvantagens associadas ao uso da identidade étnica quilombola tanto como uma arma legítima para a busca dos direitos humanos e constitucionais e como uma estratégia de desenvolvimento utilitarista. Novos e renovados usos da ‘negritude urbana’ e da identidade quilombola rural, combinando elementos de tradição e modernidade, estão surgindo na medida em que demandas mercadológicas de turismo étnico em ‘territórios tradicionais’ e em UCs continuam a crescer. Em função desta nova geografia, argumenta-se que, apesar das melhorias inegáveis na autoestima dos quilombolas, da melhoria de renda e do acesso à propriedade da terra, em comparação com indivíduos que não se identificam como quilombolas, a utilização dessa identidade étnica híbrida, especialmente no contexto da

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conservação da natureza, pode produzir consequências positivas e negativas para essas pessoas a longo prazo, assim como sinergias e/ou retrocessos na compatibilização da conservação da natureza e do desenvolvimento humano. Nesse sentido, políticas multicultu-

rais, ambientais e de combate à pobreza precisam ser formuladas conjuntamente considerando-se essas dinâmicas.

Palavras-chave: Quilombolas, Unidades de Conservação da Natureza, Políticas Multiculturais.

In Brazil, since the Constitution of 1988 was enacted, many rural communities have been granted land rights based on ethnicity, settlement history, and Afro-Brazilian ancestry (ALMEIDA, 1997; FRENCH, 2009; GOMES, 2003). For some communities, the immediate result of these changes has been a complex process of internal rethinking of identity, values, and social practices to conform to the opportunities opened by a legally endowed quilombola identity, and thus, rights to land. Additionally, in 2001, the Brazilian Congress passed the National System of Conservation Units (SNUC) Law providing a framework for the establishment of protected areas that can include the presence of traditional populations, a category that can include quilombolas, caiçaras, and caboclos among others (MEDEIROS, 2006). The underlying assumption, however, is that both ecotourism, low-intensity subsistence practices, and management of non-timber forest products will create revenues and foster positive links between local communities and nature conservation (IGOE; NEVES; BROCKINGTON, 2010).

I contend that because of increasing nationalization and globalization of nature conservation and ecotourism, new forms of commodification of intangible goods such as performances of local and regional identities are emerging. Furthermore, this process sets the stage for communities to negotiate internal and external access to resources, economic opportunities, and land rights. I argue that the foremost challenge for these communities is to find balance between negotiating their own identities, economic aspirations, and the expectations created by legal, cultural, and environmental discourses. The same source of social capital built through the intersection of ethnic and environmental alliances might either threaten or empower them.

On one hand, quilombola communities have gained an opportunity as a traditional population to be associated with the environmental movement while subsuming their historical stigmas (e.g., black poor and rural poor) within an im-

age of indigeneity. On the other hand, this hybrid identity may imply that they are ecologically adapted, but culturally, economically, and demographically frozen in time: a repackaged version of the “noble savage” (REDFORD, 1990). As a result, while many quilombola communities living within parks of high conservation value might benefit from being transformed into traditional populations, they eminently risk being kept under economic constraints, since traditional populations are not expected to develop strong market links and high consumption rates; in other words, they are not expected to change the material conditions which attest, as cultural markers, to their identity. I call this paradox a commodification of poverty, given that the goal of nature protection schemes might contribute to maintaining traditional populations under limited capacity for adapting to and dealing with new economic demands and opportunities and intergenerational demographic changes.

Karl Offen (2003) provides an interesting explanation for the connection between ongoing ethnic-based land reforms and the expansion of nature-conservation territories (biological corridors in Colombia) and parks in Latin America initiated in the 1990s. He argues that the encounter between external, macroforces, represented by top-down pressures and demands from multi- and bilateral development organizations such as the World Bank (the major lender for the land demarcation and titling for black communities in Latin America) and bottom-up “new” social movements – movements based on indigenous rights, gender, ethnicity, and environmental justice rather than class (ALVAREZ; DAGINO; ESCOBAR, 1998) – are not a coincidence, but rather a remarkable strategy to control peoples and territories.

Offen (2003) asks why there is a convergence of interest around the issue of biodiversity protection and the rights of indigenous groups and black territories between policies and historically antagonistic entities. The short answer, he suggests, is that “various groups have mobilized to ensure that their interests receive attention within global environmental and indigenous agendas” (p. 48). The longer answer is related to three main elements. The first is the perception by global institutions that indigenous groups and local people possess crucial ecological and practical knowledge about the environments they inhabit. The second is the un-

derstanding that the protection of these people's environments without local participation is likely to fail. The third aspect is that the decentralization of state duties and its transfer to local-level administrations has been central to state reforms in Latin America.

Finally, Offen (2003, p. 51) contends, "the World Bank views collective titles as necessary to stabilize property regimes in developing countries, to remove biodiversity lands from the vagaries of market forces (by insuring that collective properties cannot be transferred), to foment foreign direct investments, and to attract appropriate technologies to biodiversity areas." In Brazil, some indigenous groups are starting to engage in carbon trade negotiations directly with international corporations outside state regulations and influence. To illustrate, the Irish company Celestial Green has bought all rights to carbon credits for US\$ 120 million, as well as other benefits to be achieved with the commercial exploration of biodiversity found in 2.3 million hectares of land from the indigenous community Munduruku in Pará.¹

Other critics have pointed out that the "territorial turn" (OFFEN, 2003) made on behalf of black communities in Latin America have been done under a climate of paternalism in which residents are provided with limited control of the resources and their territory in exchange for their commitment to conserve nature (HOEKEMA; ASSIES, 2000). I ask whether these arguments apply to the case of the quilombo of Cambury and other local and rural communities recognized as traditional people whose territories overlap and/or surround hot spots of biodiversity in Brazil. If so, what are the cultural, economic, and environmental effects?

The case of Cambury, explore in this article, further illustrates the local impacts of wider forces that have promoted territorial land titling of collective land to black communities in Latin America, along with a wave of multicultural policies that recognize ethnic-based rights, enacted through constitutional reforms in various countries in the region (ANDERSON, 2007; FRENCH, 2009; SÁNCHEZ, 2008; WADE, 1995). Ultimately, it also sheds light on the interplay between economic neoliberalism and nature conservation (LIVERMAN; VILAS, 2006).

¹ Cf. Ávila (2012).

The old ethnicity debate

Lifschitz (2008) argues that from an academic standpoint, there are two perspectives that have directly influenced the process of ethnic recognition of quilombos in Brazil. According to José Maurício Arruti (2006), the first influence stems from the work of the Norwegian social anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1969), which emphasizes that the identity of ethnic groups is not derived from their historical ancestry. Instead, ethnic identities are defined through the negotiations of political space, in permanent contrast with other ethnic identities, which are also in constant formation, in order to establish their own symbolic and material borders. The second perspective pointed out by Lifschitz (2008) is represented by the work of the anthropologist João Pacheco de Oliveira (1999). Oliveira (1998) explains that what is peculiar of ethnic identities is that the historical renovation does not destroy or override the historical sense of reference to its origin, but rather reinforces it. It is from the symbolic and collective resolution of this contradiction that follows the political and emotional power of ethnicity. For this reason, ethnic groups are defined in political-legal contexts (FRENCH, 2009), given that in most cases, their social insertion occurs in territories that are politically, legally, and administratively managed by the state (LIFSCHITZ, 2008). This author stresses that the first perspective has been fundamental in legitimizing self-definition as the main criterion for ethnic recognition by nation-states. The second perspective has contributed by emphasizing the governmental and prescriptive process of territorialization of maroon communities in Brazil. Lifschitz (2010, p. 21) argues that nowadays, “in order for communities to access public policies it is necessary to build ethnic markers.”

Mark Anderson (2007), studying Afro-Indian politics in Honduras, argues that imagined communities can take the form of ethnic groups. Groups promoted by law have to devise cultural markers that work as imagined boundaries. In the case of quilombos, these markers have to set them apart from other traditional groups in Brazil (e.g., *caiçaras*). Following Jacques Lacan (2001), it is apparent that individuals engaged in the process of developing new ethnic identities will face

some internal obstacles. In other words, identities based on self-lies cannot resist long-term inner-personality conflicts.

It has been argued that ethnic consciousness is potentially a universal, which is only realized and objectified under specific conditions (COMAROFF; COMAROFF, 2009). These authors argue that these specific conditions may include reactions to threats to the community, threats against its integrity and/or interests. In that sense, identity is instrumental and situational in coping with changing environments. Stuart Hall (2008, p. 17, our translation) claims that

because identities are constructed within, not outside discourse, one needs to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within discursive formation and practice, by specific enumerative strategies. Moreover, they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than the sing of an identical, naturally constituted unit – an identity in its traditional meaning, that is an all-inclusive sameness without internal differentiation.

Identities are constructed and maintained through the creation of otherness. Although identities' boundaries are maintained with diverse degrees of permeability, they function as points of identification and attachment only because of their capacity to include and exclude (ROYCE, 1982).

The exclusionary nature of ethnic identities creates a basic dilemma that has been reinforced by multicultural policies in Latin America. Shane Greene (2007) claims that recognition of some always means the non-recognition of others. Political and economic opportunities for some translate into non-opportunities for others. Paraphrasing him, politics of guilt, such as reparation for quilombolas, although generally positive for these groups, often redraw the lines of exclusion instead of erasing them.

Beyond this inherent contradiction, the advancement of multicultural policies signals a gradual dismantling of class consciousness into smaller ideologies based on ethnicity, gender, and race. Despite the benefits ethnic and social recognition may bring to people, at large, multiculturalism fragments society into many smaller and therefore less powerful groups. Multicultural policies overshadow materialistic, class-based perspectives that once provided a unifying framework to connect disparate social movements and social groups. Other critics have said that “proponents of the neoliberal doctrine proactively endorse a substantive version of

indigenous cultural rights, as means to resolve their own problems and advance their own agendas” (HALE, 2002, p. 2).

Study Site, Methodology and Research Goals

Since 2001, I have maintained frequent contact with some of local *caiçara* and quilombola communities in the coastal region between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, along the coastline of the Brazilian Biome known as Mata Atlântica (MMA, 2000; MORELLATO; HADDAD, 2000; MYERS et al., 2000). I spent part of the summer of 2006 and 2007 doing feasibility among these groups. These communities include, Cambury, Campinho da Independência, Fazenda-da-Caixa and Caçandoca. This time allowed me to figure out that Cambury and Campinho da Independência would become central to the next steps of the research.

In 2008-2009, with the support of an Inter-American Foundation doctoral dissertation fellowship, I spent eleven months conducting fieldwork in these communities. Initially, I stayed for four months at Campinho da Independência near Rio de Janeiro, a quilombola community titled in 1999. Then, I spent the next seven months at Cambury in the state of São Paulo collecting household and community socioeconomic, environmental, and cultural data through a combination of participant observation, interviews, and a household survey. This article is primarily based on data collected through participant observation at Cambury (Ubatuba, São Paulo) and Campinho da Independência (Paraty, Rio de Janeiro).

These two communities are 15 km apart, connected by the federal highway BR-101. Cambury has been reported as a *caiçara* community (HANAZAKI et al., 2000; ITESP, 2003). The situation changed in 2003, when the government of São Paulo through ITESP (Fundação Instituto de Terras do Estado de São Paulo) officially recognized the existence of a reminiscent of quilombo in Cambury. Since then, approximately half of its households ($n=35$) decided to remain associated exclusively with a *caiçara* or non-quilombola identity. The other half decided to become officially identified as quilombolas, although most of them have not attempted to “erase” their *caiçara* identity. One of the hallmarks of this community is its relative degree of isolation, even today, 30 years after construction of the Rio-

Santos highway (BR-101) that connects Cambury to other neighboring cities in the state of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

In this article, I present ethnographic data on the performances of ethnic identity related to the growth of tourism and discuss some of the implications (benefits and limitations) of this phenomenon to land tenure, local livelihoods, and environmental conservation. This study illustrates potential tradeoffs associated with the use of ethnicity as a development strategy and some of its particular cultural and material effects.

Ethnogenesis and the Territorial Claim in Cambury

Although Cambury's history dates back at least 150 years, the most significant ethnogenesis begins in 2003 with the quilombola recognition. The 2003 *Relatório técnico do Cambury* (RTC do Cambury) prepared by the Fundação Instituto de Terras do Estado de São Paulo (ITESP) clearly states that based on this community's territorial, kinship, and ethnic formation it is unquestionably reminiscent of a quilombo. However, this document alone does not give any guarantee that the community will ever receive the final land title. According to the *RTC* and my own conversations with locals, the first step was made in 1996, when government representatives of the Ubatuba municipality, in contact with community leaders, introduced the formal concept of quilombolas, initially found in Article 68 of Brasil's Constitution of 1988 (BRASIL, 2001) – Ato das Disposições Constitucionais Transitórias (the transitory constitutional act) .

However, at that time, the law provided few instruments to regulate land tenure issues or criteria to define quilombos. The scenario changed drastically when Federal Decree 4887/2003 was passed in 2003, making self-recognition the main criteria for the identification of quilombos and the starting point for territorial demarcation. The government-hired anthropologist who conducted research for the *RTC* admits that basing the report mostly on oral history (with few supporting documents) to identify quilombola ethnic identity and communities' ties to territory through self-identification is circumstantial and highly subjective.

In this document, one can find two main historical accounts of the ethnic and territorial formation of Cambury. According to oral narratives from current residents, runaway slaves fleeing from Paraty (Rio de Janeiro state) arrived in Cambury around 1870. Archival research in the Arquivo Histórico de São Paulo revealed that a farm named Cambury existed for over fifty years (1798-1855) in the region where Cambury is located. Despite the lack of archival support, some locals claim that, after its abandonment, few slaves took possession of it allowing for other people seeking refuge to join the community.

Cambury's history, as well as the trajectory of many quilombola communities, should be understood in light of the larger nineteenth-century socioeconomic context of colonialism (ARRUTI, 2006). At that time, vast areas along the coast were occupied by landlords producing sugar cane and later by coffee plantations, all powered by slave labor until 1888. After the second half of the nineteenth century, with the formal prohibition of transatlantic slave trade and the abolition of slavery in 1888, large farms in the region followed a period of economic depression, which oftentimes led its owners to give their land away, to sell it below market price or to simply abandon it.

In sum, the ITESP report concludes that the presence of slaves' descendants during the initial occupation phase of Cambury is indisputable. According to the author, there is a paradox in that, regardless of any historical confirmation of the presence of slaves in Cambury in the nineteenth century (based primarily on a large, branched out family tree), it has not prompted all members to self-identify the community as a quilombo.

Tourism: Performing a Quilombola Ethnic Identity

In this section, I describe recent events that illustrate how a quilombola identity is being constructed in Cambury vis-à-vis the development of ethnic tourism. I contrast this process with the case of another quilombola community (Campinho da Independência) situated in the region of study (PENNA-FIRME; BRONDÍZIO, 2007) as well as two other recently recognized quilombola communities in Brazil, Mocambo de Porto da Folha in the state of Sergipe (FRENCH, 2009)

and the other in the northern part of the state of Rio de Janeiro (LIFSCHITZ, 2008). The analysis highlights important similarities and connections among “independent” processes of legalization of quilombola identities of rural communities in Brazil. The comparative analysis also indicates that as local people perform cultural practices associated with an Afro-Brazilian heritage, the discourse and outlook of rural poverty of these communities is improved while some aspects of local development remain overshadowed. It indicates the growing role of ethnic identity as a development strategy in rural Brazil.

Since 2003, the Brazilian Ministry of Culture has been running a large program – Pontos de Cultura (Hotspots of Culture) – intended to identify and financially support local cultural initiatives relevant to maintaining cultural diversity in the country. It is a joint venture between the ministry and Petrobras, the state-owned Brazilian oil company that sponsors this program. As of 2004, the community of Campinho da Independência was granted approximately R\$ 6,000 (about US\$ 2,900) to initiate a local ethnic tourism project. Although Cambury has never received financial aid through this government program, the current displays of quilombola ethnic identity in Campinho have directly influenced local and public performances of identity in Cambury.

This program in Campinho allocated money for teaching young people about their past and traditions as African slave descendants, which was done through the development of activities such as handcrafting and dance performances. While mostly directed toward education of young people, performances of Afro-Brazilian dances and music such as jongo² represents a major source of pride, an important aspect of the quilombola identity for the entire community as well as a potential source of income associated with ethnic tourism. Examining the process of law making and its impacts on cultural practices, and its transformative effects

² Jongo is the precursor or the ancestor of samba, which is one of the most popular music genres of Brazil. Jongo is also a dance performed during a variety of festivities related to the celebration of African heritage and identity, or simply for the pleasure of playing and dancing. Jongo has its origins among slave descendants, who brought African rhythms to Brazil, and is a symbol of resistance and black consciousness that has been considered a vanishing element of the immaterial culture of Brazil (cultural patrimony). Therefore, it has been subjected to increasing legal protection and attention from government programs, NGOs, and local communities, where jongo is being revitalized and/or implemented.

on culture and identity in northeastern Brazil, Jan Hoffman French (2002, 2006, 2009) argues that the meaning of Mocambo's cultural practice³ has dramatically changed to comply with the law. Mocambo residents have "publicly asserted their recently discovered identity as descendants of fugitive slaves, through cultural performances such as processions, plays, and most often, through a dance called *samba de coco*" (FRENCH, 2002, p. 19). She explains that "performances of *samba de coco* have reconfigured for the legal recognition process as evidence of a fugitive slave history, which has become a vehicle both for expressing identity in relation to the law and for addressing deeper yearning for recognition as a delineated community with ties to the land on which its members have lived and worked for generations" (FRENCH, 2002, p. 20). According to her, "Mocambo residents did not talk about slavery at all before the quilombo clause entered the picture" (FRENCH, 2006, p.344).

Campinho leaders have successfully attracted many teenagers to partake in a systematic process of regaining as well as building a quilombola identity through a series of activities, which include but are not limited to *jongo*. Performances of *jongo* have been emphasized because it represents African ancestry, enabling participants to embody a rural and quilombola blackness.

As of 2007, during fieldwork in Campinho, I observed the creation of the *Jongo do Campinho*. From the beginning, the group has been recruiting dancers and performers exclusively among young local residents. Twice a week around 15-20 teenagers gathered to observe, learn, as well as rehearse *jongo* steps and percussion beats taught by one professional hired by the community through the program *Pontos de Cultura*. Similarly, French (2002, 2006, 2009) mentions that during the second anniversary of Mocambo's recognition in 1997, a black activist from the state capital involved in the original decision to pursue the quilombo status gave a workshop in Mocambo on black culture. Lifschitz (2008, 2010) mentions that one NGO contracted by a municipality in northern Rio de Janeiro was hiring dance experts to help form a *jongo* group, which is already performing in public events and

³ Mocambo de Porto da Folha is a village situated on the São Francisco River in the state of Sergipe, Brazil. Mocambo was one of the first quilombola communities to be recognized in Brazil (FRENCH, 2002, 2006).

theaters. He argues that the spectacle of the “ethnic difference” and the “anthropological tourism” are becoming widespread across all regions of Brazil, which constitute a contemporary phenomenon of the reconstruction of ethnic communities involving modern agents through a “mounting” process in which linking local memories and modern devices leads to the formation of neocommunities.

Jongo has become an important element of quilombolism and blackness beyond Campinho. This community has been able to export itself, its blackness and cultural heritage and revitalization and development strategy to other communities in the region as well as across Brazil. In Cambury, performances of jongo displayed at Campinho have been reappropriated and reshaped to fit local needs to perform ‘Africanness’ for tourists as well as to inspire the formation of a quilombola ethnic identity among its youth. The cultural borrowing from Jongo do Campinho is a remarkable phenomenon led by local Cambury leaders. In 2009, toward the end of fieldwork, I came across a black-and-white flyer posted on the wall of a local Cambury bar. The flyer was an invitation for visitors/tourists to come for the first quilombola festivity in this community. It contained the date and time of the event, logos of the quilombola association of Cambury and other regional government agencies and NGOs. What intrigued me was the explicit use of the photo of the Jongo do Campinho performing during the Black Conscious Day a few weeks before. The same photo was used to advertise the Festa do Azul Marinho (the Blue Fish Festival) at the Fazenda-da-Caixa quilombola community. As we have seen, Cambury’s history lacked the presence of jongo and other Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestations prior to these events.

The organizers of the event sought to raise local and outsider awareness of the existence of another quilombo in the region (i.e., Cambury) while boosting the idea of a commonly shared quilombola identity among camburienses. The festivity was also meant to attract outsiders, visitors and potential tourism to Cambury. One of the goals was to raise funds for the quilombola association and a few locals who put on display locally made handcrafts as well as local quilombola food items, such as grilled corn, boiled manioc roots, and blue fish with rice. On one hand, this event worked as a positive set of sociocultural, psychological, and economic incentives for the development of the quilombola identity and tourism in Cambury. On

the other hand, it illustrates important aspects of the politics of culture and identity building on the ground. More specifically, it shows how identities and symbols of quilombolism and blackness have been blended, reshaped, and reappropriated to revitalize authentic ‘Africanness’ in Campinho and make the case of the presence of quilombos in Cambury and elsewhere.

The case of Cambury is seemingly unique because locals have performed a hybrid traditional population identity, as stewards of nature through demonstrations of sustainable agriculture under community-based management for tourism, and a quilombola identity as authentic African slave descendants through performances of jongo and the display of ‘typical’ quilombola food. However, even in contexts where the purposes of nature conservation are not present, “connecting quilombos to a romantic notion of agricultural practices in Africa creates a special distancing of blackness, relegating it to communities that are different, often through an attempt to document the prevalence of African cultural traits or survival” (FRENCH, 2006, p. 343).

Tradeoffs between ‘Modernity’ and ‘Tradition’

Since the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, multicultural and conservation policies that promote the image of rural groups as stewards of nature while granting titles to communal territories have surfaced in countries such as Brazil (CASTRO et al., 2006; FRENCH, 2009; LITTLE, 2002; PENNA-FIRME; BRONDÍZIO, 2007), Belize (HOLMES, 2010), Colombia (ESCOBAR; PAULSON, 2005), Ecuador (SÁNCHEZ, 2008), Peru (VAN DEN BERGHE AND FLORES-OCHOA, 2000), and Honduras (ANDERSON, 2007). The case of Cambury is emblematic to illustrate the impacts of these policies in Brazil along with the problem of conciliating people within nature-protected areas. This study suggests that legally endowed ethnic identities may promote local-level conflicts and divisions even within small communities, potentially reinforcing already skewed distribution of benefits among these groups. For groups such as caçaras, who are invisible before legal frameworks, multicultural and reparation policies will have little effect in terms of new development opportunities.

On one hand, multicultural policies tend to overemphasize sociocultural differences while overlooking socioeconomic similarities and common agendas of allegedly distinct social groups. In other terms, these policies might be promoting cultural diversity where there might be very little. The major risk, however, is that while empowering local groups, multiculturalism may help essentialize traditional communities and perhaps further crystalize people's cultural and economic identities. On the other hand, ethnicity has become a major development alternative for the rural poor and the unassisted to secure land rights, access public policies of health, education, and transportation and citizenship more broadly. In neoliberal times, "going ethnic" seems to be progressively replacing class-based claims that once attempted to challenge the pillars and functioning of capitalism and socio-environmental injustice. Despite unknown tradeoffs and future outcomes, perhaps, rural groups officially turned into traditional communities will stand a better chance of securing rights as "ethnic citizens" (HOLMES, 2010). So far, in Cambury, this trend has favored quilombolas.

Finally, in the case of quilombola communities in Brazil, and more specifically in the case of Cambury, there are series of risks and benefits embedded in the pursuit of "alternative modernities" (FRENCH, 2009; LIFSCHITZ, 2008, 2010). I have identified some of the potential perils and rewards involved in legally transforming rural groups into quilombolas and traditional communities. Figure 1 summarizes existing and eventual tradeoffs between 'modernity' and 'tradition', or more specifically, between development and conservation. In this figure, one can see potential outcomes of these interactions. The tradeoffs are discussed below.

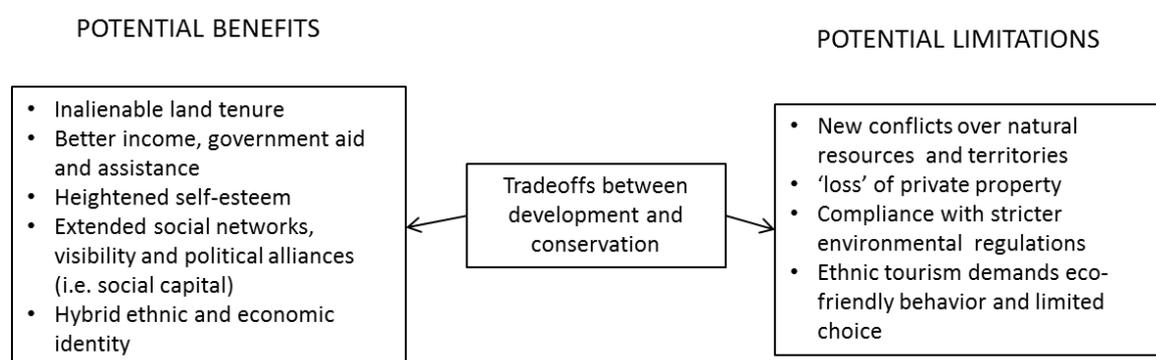


Figure 1. Tradeoffs between development and conservation.

1) *Land tenure*

Potential Benefits – Devolution and guarantees of inalienable land tenure to the local residents has been crucial in preventing the last stretches of nature from being privatized and controlled by land grabbers, corporations, and governments. Paradoxically, the injustices created by granting land exclusively to quilombolas have represented a step to promote agrarian land reform. Assuring communal land ownership for quilombolas could protect some people from eventual eviction from the park as well as from further land speculation. The formation of a quilombola communal territory is unlikely to dismantle long-lasting internal community dynamics based on a private-property regime. However, it might boost a sense of unity within these groups, which in turn may foster internal cooperation toward community-based management initiatives.

Potential Limitations – a major setback could be the impossibility for locals to negotiate land parcels and tenure statuses due to limits to private property. Giving up private property, even for those who lack formal property titles, could be problematic as nobody knows who will control and draft eventual new rules of access to local resources. In addition, private and government aid/investments that reach the community will have to be officially channeled through the local quilombola association and, therefore, supposedly redistributed to benefit the entire community. It is expected to generate new conflicts over scarce external resources and may promote internal corruption. The poorest households and the powerless individuals of the community are likely to be further excluded from new economic opportunities.

2) *Income and government aid*

Potential benefits – Quilombolism has brought with it new opportunities to earn income from rising ethnic tourism markets and accompanying trends (certification of organic and ethnic-labeled produce, commercialization of handcrafts and ethnic souvenirs). Many individuals and households are progressively participating in these activities because it is generally cost effective. Ethnic tourism is likely to play a growing role in quilombola households and community economies. More

income means more access to consumer goods, which, given a certain threshold, can be positively associated with increased well-being. In addition, tourism and public performances of ethnicity are positively altering quilombolas' pride and self-esteem by transforming the once invisible, poor black and slum dwellers into quilombola and traditional communities.

Along with the recognition comes the promise of better access to public services as well as development aid. Despite the fact that the general socioeconomic conditions of quilombolas are still precarious, these new sources of income and the arrival of technical assistance and development aid will likely continue to positively affect household income relative to caiçaras' households income (non-quilombolas at Cambury) and total absence of government support.

Potential limitations – Besides being a seasonal and unpredictable source of income, tourism can either empower local communities or exclude them altogether from its socioeconomic and non-economic benefits. These benefits include new skills, managerial experience with people and projects, strengthening abilities to negotiate with outsiders, self-esteem, organizational capacity, internal cooperation and trust, expanded circle of contacts, and the formation of new political alliances. However, depending on local institutional arrangements, internal distribution of power (i.e., decision making), negotiations with the park as well as with other private entrepreneurs, economic and non-economic benefits might not benefit the community. In addition, constant flow of aid and technical assistance may reinforce historical dependence and a paternalistic relationship between local groups and the state. Being trapped in the ruling power of a “nanny state” could slow down the formation of more robust, adaptive, and resilient local institutions.

3) *Environmental conservation*

Potential benefits – The development of tourism associated with the recognition of the quilombola ethnic identity may operate as an incentive to conservation. As quilombolas and other traditional groups engage in eco- and ethnotourism, their livelihoods are expected to gradually depend less on activities that pressure/demand local natural resources. In addition, maintaining forests within their territories is a fundamental symbolic capital to further legitimize claims of tradi-

tional communities. Despite social impacts, conservation schemes are more likely to succeed with the formation of these material and symbolic alliances with local groups.

Potential limitations – The more quilombolas and other traditional groups engage in tourism within their territories, the least dependent on the direct use of natural resources they will become. This development path is unlikely to allow an eventual return to livelihoods based on the local extraction of natural resources. Quilombolas' livelihoods and well-being will increasingly depend on people's purchasing power (which is still very low) obtained through wage labor and the access to consumer goods obtained outside the community. This may risk their food security as they stay at the mercy of fluctuating market prices and inflation.

4) *Ethnicity and poverty*

Potential benefits – In sum, quilombola communities have gained an opportunity as a traditional community to be associated with the environmental movement while subsuming their historical stigmas as rural, black within an image “alternative modernity” and stewards of nature. Adopting a quilombola identity has been, for most people, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to benefit from government aid and tourism, beyond the incommensurable and positive effects of altering one's pride and self-esteem.

Potential limitations – Policies and ideas about environmental sustainability have increasingly depended on the reinvention of the pristine and the wilderness allied with new myths of conservation, such as repackaged versions of the noble ecological savage, or the rural poor dressed in traditional clothes mainly for tourism consumption and expected positive environmental outcomes (CASTRO et al. 2006; PENNA-FIRME; BRONDÍZIO, 2007). The term *traditional* has been used as a mantra in policy and conservation circles to conciliate people and nature. The interplay between multicultural and conservation policies has created new vocabularies that are being contested, transformed, and incorporated by local people. Discursively transforming local groups into traditional communities seems to have become a necessity of conservation, but the concept is still exotic to quilombolas, caiçaras, and other traditional groups. In sum, the need for people to gain access to

modernity by adopting a quilombola category traps them into an imagined, pre-modern past (FRENCH, 2009).

Final Remarks

Decision makers should be aware of the complex and multilevel positive and negative outcomes of the interplay between multicultural and environmental policies, especially when designing institutions and enforcing laws. Better and fair social, economic, and environmental outcomes would be achieved if universal socioeconomic and land regularization and distribution policies replaced and/or complemented current and fragmented policies targeted to benefit one or two specific ethnic groups in Brazil. Neither multiculturalism nor nature protection alone seems to be able to address poverty and conservation simultaneously. The unplanned overlapping of these policies may create many unforeseeable and undesirable outcomes. Integrated policies are urged to better balance tradeoffs, outcomes and distribution of benefits.

Far from essentializing identities, I have tried to point out the flexibility that new identities must have, as local people reinterpret modernity, development, and tradition. As Escobar (1995) once said, Latin America is a place where traditions have not yet left and modernity has not settled in. While anthropologists from the developed world seem to be progressively abandoning fixed categories and essentialist ways of portraying local communities, some scholars, environmental advocates, and the very traditional communities appear to be doing exactly the contrary in Brazil. That is, some of these groups, governments, NGOs, and university experts are adopting traditional identities as fixed languages and categories, as if they were not dynamic and situational. Oftentimes multicultural and environmental policies take for granted that these categories are cultural and social givens, when in reality the very same policies profoundly shape how these identities are created, contested, and used by these groups. As foreseen by Escobar (1995), it seems that the growth of quilombolism is a sign that, rather than being eliminated by modernity and economic neoliberalism, local groups, ethnic identities, and traditionality

will survive and resurface through their transformative engagements with modernity.

Despite its problems and limitations the quilombola movement as a whole should also be perceived as a genuine and legitimate form of resistance to development, as well as a struggle for autonomy and the fulfillment of constitutional and universal rights. A major paradox is that the desires of members of quilombo communities may not necessarily reflect particular images that link their present existence with the past (VERAN, 2002). As French (2006, p. 343) put it, 'Government recognition brings the promise of modernization – electricity, running water, better roads, technical assistance for agricultural production, and health care – all of which are part of the implicit promise that comes with recognition and land.' In order to benefit from such improvements, locals have been asked to identify themselves with a pre-modern sensibility, a slave category, and a racial category that had been reviled since the moment their ancestors arrived in Brazil (FRENCH, 2006; CREADO et al., 2008). Ethnic community, a category that had apparently vanished from modernity has reappeared within Brazilian and Latin American cultures and politics (MEDINA, 2003; LIFSCHITZ, 2010).

Major research questions remain. For instance, will the intersection between multiculturalism and nature conservation overshadow widespread injustices, inequalities, and poverty among traditional groups, for the sake of promoting cultural diversity as well as the expansion and consolidation of tourist territories? Humanity seems to lack models of synchronized development and conservation alternatives/solutions outside the logic of neoliberal capitalism and its main paradigm of the commoditization of nature, people's identities and livelihoods. Regardless of where these models will come from, they should avoid the risks of freezing traditions/livelihoods into a nostalgic and romanticized past by making room for hybrid/flexible identities within new development possibilities.

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