

# The Quarup

The Quarup is the principal ceremony of the Indians of the Xingu. It is not necessarily an annual event but may be held in any year during which a chief or person of chiefly birth has died. Not that it is a funeral ceremony in any conventional Western sense of the term: for, apart from its social importance as a gathering together of all the neighbouring tribes, one of its central events is the bringing out of seclusion of the young girls who have menstruated for the first time since the previous Quarup who have been strictly confined since their menstruation, and who are now ready for marriage with their betrothed. This makes of the Quarup a celebration of rebirth as well as a lament for the dead a ceremonial of a richness and subtlety to which no brief account can do justice, a ritual drama of regeneration.

The host tribe spends weeks preparing for this — sending our messengers to invite all the neighbouring tribes, clearing camp-sites for them and gathering enough food to feed them when they arrive. The day before the Quarup is spent setting up and decorating the Quarup posts, which represent those who have died, and which are decorated until they actually resemble the human body, at which point they become those who are being mourned. In addition to this, there is dancing and flute-playing, and the members of the tribe decorate their own and each other's bodies.

During the night, as the mourners

sit watching and lamenting the dead, representatives from the tribes camped round the village, one by one, rush into the village to steal firebrands in order to light their own fires.

The next day, the main ceremony unfolds. The messengers go out and lead the chiefs of each tribe into the centre of the village—and when they have taken their places, their tribesmen rush into the village, and the wrestling tournament begins with the strongest members of the host tribe each challenging the champion of one of the visiting tribes. This leads into a more general, less formal series of wrestling bouts, and then, after an exchange of gifts, the girls are brought out of seclusion, walking behind a kinsman of the dead chief, carrying a gourd cup containing "pequi" nuts (a symbol of fertility), which they empty on the ground in front of the visiting chiefs. This is followed by general feasting and then by a dance in which pairs of flute-players (playing the special 10-footed Quarup flutes) followed by pairs of the now-released girls visit each hut in the village in turn. After further celebration, speeches and a final distribution of gifts by the host tribe, the visiting tribes depart, leaving the host tribe to take the Quarup posts down to the lagoon at dusk and float them out until they sink and join the spirit village at the bottom of the lagoon.

The next morning, the chief gives every member of his tribe a new name,

# Brazil

1500

First Indian contact with Europeans. Indian population unknown, but from this time on, the Indians begin to die out at the rate of an estimated one million per century. Brazil is discovered by Pedro Álvares Cabral and claimed by Portugal.

1565

Foundation of Rio de Janeiro.

1718

Decree of 1718 provides for the securing of the Indians as a labour force either peacefully (in the case of those tribes successfully converted by the Jesuits) or forcefully (in the case of savage tribes who go naked, recognize no form of government and indulge in unnatural vices).

1808

Portuguese royal court moves from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, which becomes the capital of the Portuguese empire.

1822

Brazilian declaration of independence.

1884-7

Expedition of Karl Von Den Steinen reaches numerous previously uncontacted tribes.

1889

Emperor deposed and Brazil proclaimed a republic.

1910

Indian Protection Service created under Marshal Candido Rondon

1960

Foundation of Brasilia as the new capital of Brazil.

1961

Foundation of the Xingu Indian Park under the supervision of the Villas-Boas brothers to protect the Indians in that area.

1964

President Joao Goulart deposed by military coup, after being denounced as a communist for trying to introduce legislation whereby 3% of privately owned land was to be redistributed. Marshal Castello Branco elected President by Congress.

1966

General Costa e Silva elected President by Congress.

1968

Investigation of Indian Protection Service reveals that Service officials are deeply involved in collaborating with those engaged in exterminating the Indians. More than 100 officials are implicated but never brought to trial.

The National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) is formed to replace the Indian Protection Service.

Surviving Indian population estimated at 70-80,000.

In response to an upsurge of armed opposition to the government, the Fifth Institutional Act is passed, proroguing Congress and suspending basic legal guarantees.

1969

Death of General Costa e Silva.

The U.S. Ambassador, Charles Burke Elbrick, is kidnapped on 3rd September and exchanged for 15 political prisoners.

General Garrastazu Medici is elected President by an electoral college of 107 generals. Carlos Marighela, leader of the "Action for National Liberation" is killed by the police on 4th November.

1970

Introduction of the "Indian Statute", whereby Indian peoples are deprived of any rights to land and resources in Brazil.

The Japanese Consul-General in Sao Paulo, Nobuo Okuchi, is kidnapped and exchanged for 5 prisoners.

The German Ambassador, Von Holleben, is kidnapped and exchanged for 70 prisoners.

1971

A branch of the Trans-Amazon Highway is diverted to cross Xingu Indian Park

1972

Amnesty International Report lists 1,081 political prisoners subjected to torture in the previous two years.

1973

Resignation of the Villas-Boas brothers as the government announces: "We must not let an isolated minority impede Brazil's progress"



# Amazon children 'killed in despair'

RIO DE JANEIRO, Wednesday  
 A REMOTE Amazon tribe is killing its own children as a final act of despair at the white man's encroachment on its lands, according to reports reaching Rio de Janeiro.

The reports said the Mayuruna Indians, once responsible for several massacres of white rubber tappers, had been driven back from the Javari-Curuca region of the Amazon to a valley near the Peruvian border.

Some had fled into Peru, while others had died of diseases contracted from the white man.

The reports, based on a

study by research scholar Paulo Lucena and published in O Globo newspaper, said the number of Mayurunas had dropped in three years from 2000 to 400.

"Desperate and feeling they have nowhere to go, they have decided to die in order not to surrender and to escape from hunger," Lucena was quoted as saying.

The Mayurunas had sometimes killed young girls in the past to ensure an even balance of the sexes, Lucena said. "But now they are summarily executing male children as well."

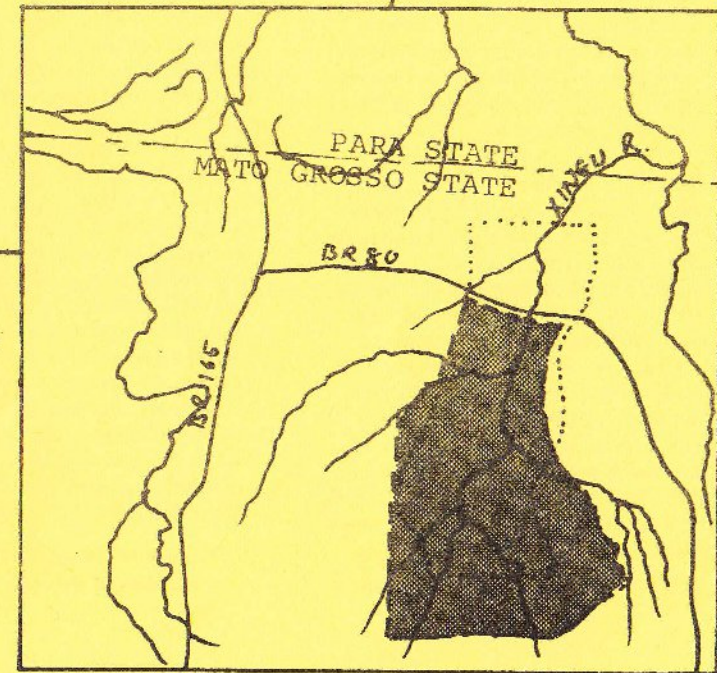
The Mayurunas, once considered the scourge of the Javari-Curuca valley, killed many rubber tappers and

lumberjacks and abducted their women in the 1950s.

Prospectors of the state oil monopoly Petrobras, who made contact with the tribe in 1972, found some of these women living in total integration with the Mayurunas. The plight of the Mayurunas is symptomatic of the fate of

Brazil's Stone Age Indians who are now estimated to total between 50,000 and 100,000.

The tribes, caught up in the country's efforts to develop the resources of the jungle, now find themselves in frequent contact and conflict with settlers and prospectors. (Reuter.)



----- XINGO NATIONAL PARK

..... FORMER BOUNDARY

Total area of park 8,500 sq.miles

Home to 16 tribes.

Question: How should a Space Age nation deal with Indians so innocent of the outside world that many have never in their lives used a piece of metal? In this and the following article, explorer von Puttkamer documents the work of the Brazilian Government's National Foundation for the Indian (FUNAI) as it tries to answer that question in its dealings with the Kreen-Akarores and their old enemies, the Txukahameis.

FUNAI's successes are legion: Under its sympathetic guidance, tribe after Stone Age tribe has been introduced to the modern world, and at the same time has been shielded from its inevitable dangers. Each mission is a gamble, though, and sometimes—despite every precaution—there are losers. So it is with the Kreen-Akarores, whose first extended contact with non-Indians is described here. Sadly, we learn as this issue of the magazine goes to press that

FUNAI's greatest fear has been realized: Influenza is sweeping the tribe. Of the estimated 130 Kreen-Akarores, a score are reported dead, and the fate of the others remains in doubt. Thus yet another of a dwindling handful of Indian tribes may succumb—not only to disease but to change, to civilization, to the relentless juggernaut called progress.

— THE EDITOR

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE



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