

Kaingang's Kiki ritual: material culture of an indigenous religious ritual in Southern Brazil

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QUEIROZ, I. B; LINO, J. T. Kaingang's Kiki ritual: material culture of an indigenous religious ritual in Southern Brazil. *R. Museu Arq. Etn.*, 36 46-58, 2021.

Abstract: The Kiki ritual, aimed at giving the dead a good transition to numbê (the world of the dead), is how Kaingang worship their deceased. Natural to Southern and Southeastern Brazil, this community performed the ritual yearly in pre-colonial times, but following colonization and the catechism indigenous people were subject to, the Kaingang abandoned Kiki in Brazil. In the 1970s, this community readopted the ritual as a way for cultural and identity resistance to non-indigenous practices. The last Kiki ritual took place in the Condá Indigenous Reservation, in 2011, from which results the present archaeological ethnography analysis that aims to address the centrality and significance of the role played by the material culture in this ritual and in Kaingang's daily life.

Keywords: Archaeological ethnography; Material culture;

Introduction

Developed in 2017/2018, this research constitutes an archaeological ethnography analysis applied to the material culture of the Kiki, a traditional ritual for the Kaingang dead, last performed in 2011. This indigenous community belongs to the Jê linguistic matrix and has been living in Southern and Southeastern Brazil for 2500 years (Lino 2015; Noelli 1999/2000). Kaingang believe that death is not the end, but rather a pathway to numbê (the world of the dead); but such passage is not spontaneous: the community must perform the Kiki ritual so the dead can actually disconnect from the world of the living and go to the 'ideal place'. The Kiki

used to be performed yearly in pre-colonial times, usually in early winter, when there was plenty of food like pine nuts, corn and honey. Kiki is the name of a fermented drink made from honey and ingested during the ritual; the word comes from kikikoi, meaning "to eat the kiki" (Veiga 2004).

The Kaingang people had their lands reduced to indigenous posts created by the State in the 19th and 20th centuries to group and Christianize natives after the Luso-Brazilian colonization in Southern Brazil since the 18th century - the Catholic catechism appeased conflicts between this indigenous community and colonizers. This new type of indigenous village and policies aimed at integrating natives to the country's workforce jeopardized several Kaingang cultural aspects, since these strategies encouraged abandoning the native language, hindered practicing traditional religious rituals and encouraged marriage with non-natives (Cunha 1992; Souza 2016). This scenario

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fostered the prohibition of the Kiki ritual; thus, it was no longer performed.

The Kaingang living in the Xapecó Indigenous Land, located between Ipuacu and Entre Rios municipalities, Santa Catarina State, decided to readopt the Kiki ritual in the 1970s for political reasons. At that time, indigenous peoples living in this area suffered abusive exploitation by loggers, who advocated that “there were no longer real Indians” in an attempt to delegitimize their presence in the region (Nacke & Bloemer 2007). The Chapecó Diocese, in turn, decided to back Kaingang people and encourage their reclaiming of the Kiki ritual so they could ethnically assert themselves against non-native practices (Veiga 2000a). Despite being greatly influenced by external forces, the Kaingang in Xapecó Indigenous Land were indeed excited to reincorporate the ceremony and began organizing themselves and highlighting that its practice remained in their memory, although left aside for many years. The belief in the ritual never died and was passed on to new generations, regardless of its prohibition and the people’s conversion to Catholicism (Veiga 2000b).

Readopted in the 1970s, its practice lasted until late 1990s, when it was once again abandoned due to the death of some attendees in one of its editions; the Kaingang in Xapecó Indigenous Land opted for stopping practicing the ritual to avoid further deaths in the village (Veiga 2000a). The Kiki ritual would be reclaimed a second time in 2011, at Condá Indigenous Reservation, located in Chapecó municipality, Santa Catarina State. Back in 2011, the renewal of the Kiki ritual resulted from the Kaingang’s inner interests, who got the financial resources needed for its practice from a project approved by the Brazilian Ministry of Culture (Pinheiro 2013).

From such context, we aim to conduct a study based on archaeological ethnography. Derived in part from ethnoarchaeology (Politis 2015), this research field has been offering, particularly from the 21st century, a new way of practicing and thinking about archaeology, especially in contexts of production of meaning in contemporary material culture. It

is thus an “alternative archaeology,” where the pre-modern corollaries of archaeology are not *sine qua non* conditions for developing studies based on the materiality of the past; it presents an open and democratic view of doing archaeology, where the study of things takes on meaning from the ethnographies of the present. When conceptualizing archaeological ethnography, Hamilakis & Anagnostopoulos (2009) state:

[...] we contend that archaeological ethnography is more than the reintroduction of ethnography into archaeological projects, and more than a mere *practice*. It is rather a trans-disciplinary or even a post-disciplinary and transcultural *space* for engagement, dialogue and critique, centred upon the material traces of various times and involving researchers as well as various other participants. It is a space that brings into sharp focus the poetics and politics of the present, being at the same time multi-temporal, rather than presentist. It does not so much aim at combining and mixing archaeological and ethnographic-anthropological practices, as at producing instead the ontological and epistemological possibilities for new practices – ethnographic, archaeological, ethnohistorical, educational, artistic or other – to emerge. In this attempt, it builds on the experience of not only social archaeology and social anthropology, but also social history, contemporary art, media and cultural studies, human geography or other disciplinary areas. Based on the broad definition of archaeology as discourses and practices on things from another time, it defines materiality and temporality as its two main concerns. It accepts that there are multiple archaeologies, some official modernist ones, and many other popular, unofficial, vernacular, alternative, indigenous ones. While all of them constitute social practices in the present, they often perceive time and temporality in distinctive and often radically different

ways, from the linear, sequential, chronometric and Cartesian time, to the time defined by the coexistence (rather than succession) of past and present, and often a combination of diverse modes. Central to these conceptions of time, however, are the material objects, things, artefacts, landscapes and seascapes, and their sensuous and sensory, embodied, mnemonic properties. Archaeological ethnography thus produces the space where these diverse archaeologies coexist, become visible (as well as audible and tangible), come into dialogue, engage with and often critique each other. (Hamilakis & Anagnostopoulos 2009: 73).

Thus, this study undertakes an epistemological effort to present aspects of the material culture of the Kiki ritual in an open, multisensory sense, emphasizing different sources, such as anthropological and historical literature, field research, interviews, video documentaries and photographs. From this palimpsest of sources, a non-linear description emerges, where past, present and socio-political implications intertwine in a "total" ethnography (Hamilakis & Anagnostopoulos 2009: 75). Time and space come together for one goal: to show the importance of things in the Kaingang religious ritual of southern Brazil.

Although inspired by ethnoarchaeology – and following Politis (2015) definitions –, this is not an ethnoarchaeological study, for the following reasons: (1) its purpose is not to obtain insights for the archaeological record; (2) it is not a strictly reflection on the archaeological past, but a sample of material culture relations in a historical and anthropological perspective; (3) its focus is not on properly archaeological operating chains, which involve production, use, disposal, reuse, etc. But it is archaeological, for it studies things; and it is presentist, because it deals with the contemporary.

Condá Indigenous Reservation

Currently living in Condá Indigenous Reservation (Fig. 1), the Kaingang people used to reside in the urban zone of Chapecó City until the 2000s. The downtown area, they recall, was their original territory – place where they lived, hunted, gathered and buried their dead in the past. The Kiki ritual used to be performed where today one finds the local Catholic Cathedral; yet there are four Kaingang cemeteries in its surroundings (Tommasino *et al.* 1999).

The non-indigenous systematic colonization in Chapecó started more than one hundred years ago, triggering local urbanization and destabilizing the Kaingang's traditional life, who ended up facing misery. Colonizers usurped the Kaingang territory, hindering their existence in the name of progress.

This calamity surrounding these indigenous people gained visibility and bothered the 'hygienist ideals' of the non-indigenous society back in the 1990s. Former FUNAI (National Indigenous Foundation) employee, Sebastião Fernandes, reported the dismal situation lived by the Kaingang in Chapecó: "They lived on the streets and were often caught looking for food in the city's dumpsters" (personal communication, our translation). Targets of criticism made by non-indigenous society, the Kaingang were accused of being dirty and lazy.

Such context demanded actions from public agencies (Nacke & Bloemer 2007). FUNAI tried to relocate this population to nearby indigenous villages as an attempt to mitigate these negative reflexes, but they always returned to Chapecó – their original territory. Such constant return to the original territory resulted from the conflicts between ethnically diverse groups, some enemies from pre-colonial times, enclosed on the same indigenous village and the terrible work conditions, which were imposed by State authorities in these territories (Lacerda 1998).

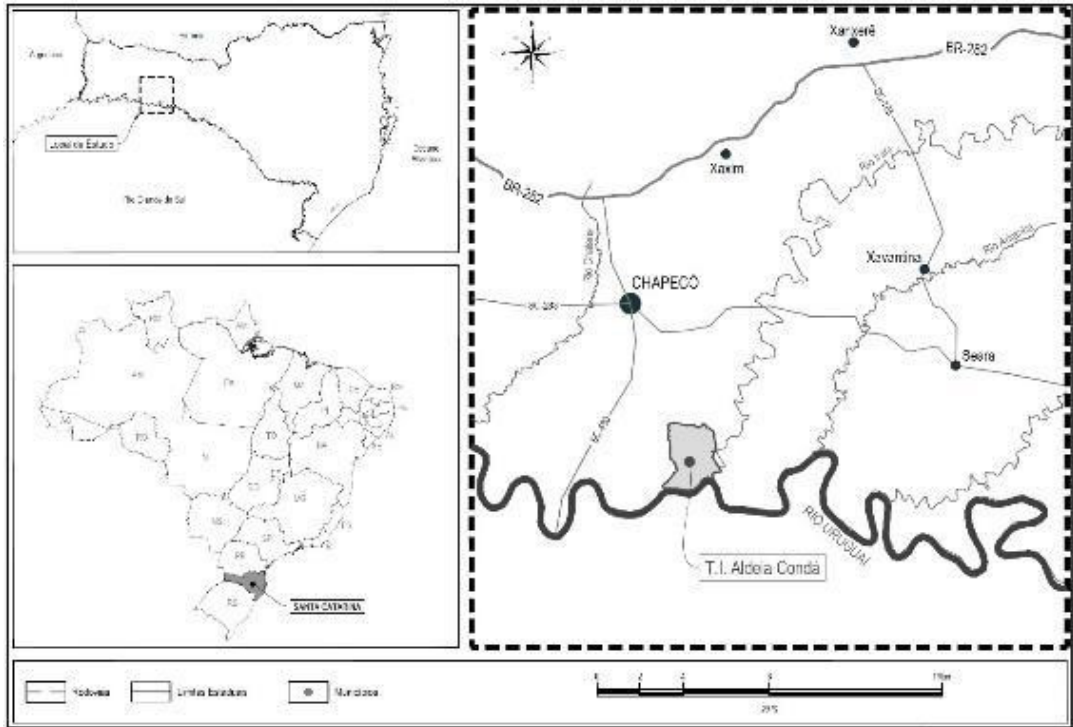


Fig. 1. Location of Condá Indigenous Reservation, in the west of Santa Catarina State, Brazil.

Source: Mauro Fusinato (2018).

After years of failed attempts to solve the “Kaingang problem” and pressured by the indigenous people’s demand for basic living conditions, FUNAI requested, in 1998, an anthropological study on the case. Anthropologists Wilson Cabral Junior, Kimiye Tommasino, Jussara Cappucci, Marcelo Rosa and Marco Dinhamé participated in the study, which aimed to analyze the situation of Kaingang families and choose the ideal area to build their indigenous village. The 212 Kaingang individuals living in downtown Chapecó at that time used to sell handicraft objects and some worked intermittent temporary jobs (Nacke & Bloemer 2007).

The anthropologists catalogued the ancient indigenous cemeteries and settlements in the city and collected oral testimonies to prove the Kaingang presence in the region since ancient times. The research advocated for compliance with the Brazilian legislation on indigenous peoples’ original right to lands they traditionally occupied, based

on the 1988 Brazilian Federal Constitution. But as the Kaingang’s traditional indigenous territory had been modernized and no longer provided the essential items to sustain their way of life, it was necessary to choose an area outside the urban zone for them to live in. The proposed location should allow them to live according to their customs, have the ideal extension, as well as forests, drinking water and fertile soil (Tommasino *et al.* 1999).

Currently known as Aldeia Condá, original name of the Kaingang from Chapecó, the chosen area covers 2,300 hectares and is located north of the Uruguay River, approximately 15 kilometers from downtown Chapecó. Opposing the urban ethnic cleansing requested by the non-indigenous society, the anthropologists sought to create a reservation that would afford better living conditions for the indigenous population and assure their right to visit their traditional spaces, whenever they wanted to (Tommasino *et al.* 1999).

Despite the demarcated area, the Kaingang in Condá Indigenous Reservation still have a

hard time acquiring resources, sanitation and transportation means. Handicrafts remain the community's main economic activity; not to mention the prejudice they continue to face, one century after the non-indigenous colonization.

Pinheiro (2013) states that, despite their intense coexistence with urbanization, Kaingang in Chapecó managed to maintain their traditional beliefs and customs. Visits to Condá Indigenous Reservation corroborates such statement, as the community's concern with preserving their ancestral knowledge is visible. Everyone speaks the Kaingang language, acknowledges the sense of belonging to clan halves and knows the meaning of ritual paintings.

The Kiki ritual

Baldus (1979) considers the Kiki ritual one of the strongest expressions of the Kaingang culture:

The worship of the dead should be seen as the basis and the strongest expression of the Kaingang spiritual culture because the supernatural power of the dead becomes, for these natives, more than anything else, a mystical event and, therefore, an object of belief.
(Baldus 1979: 22, our translation).

The Kaingang social organization stems from its creation myth, which is clearly reflected on the Kiki ritual. Kaingang societies are structured and divided according to the exogenic halves *Kamé* and *Kaĩru*, whose mythology is substantiated by the twin creators of the Kaingang world. All individuals in their society belong to one of these patrilineal halves, which are related to complementarity, reciprocity and subordination. The objects and elements of nature are also divided among the Kaingang clans (Veiga 2004).

As several historical documents describe the worship of the dead and its stages, albeit with slight variations, we chose to outline those registered by anthropologist Juracilda Veiga, and published in 2004 (Veiga 2004).

The Kiki Ritual lasts approximately ten days, being divided into three main stages: the first, second and third fires. The first fire begins when the Kaingang lit a fire in the village's central square, followed by cutting and carving a pine tree (*pinus sp.*), tree species chosen for *kiki* production and fermentation. The second fire, dedicated to dances and prayers, takes place on the same day, just after the drink is prepared.

A few days later, when the *kiki* fermentation is over, the third fire starts. At this stage, people from other communities are supposed to join and participate in the ritual, by dancing and drinking *kiki*. Spirits of the dead also take part at this stage, but are not allowed to drink; partaking of *kiki* would cause their spirits to get stuck on earth and wander in the world of the living. The crosses of the dead – for whom Kiki is being performed – are collected in the following day. Relatives of the opposite half of the dead must previously make a cross bearing paintings of the deceased's clan half. First, *Kamé* passes by the houses of the *Kaĩru* to collect the crosses; then, *Kaĩru* passes by the houses of the *Kamé* half. People form a procession and go to the village's cemetery, where all crosses are assembled.

Kamé enters the cemetery first and prays over the graves of the dead. Then, *Kaĩru* enters the cemetery and prays over the *Kamé* graves. The graves must have been previously marked: *Kamé*, with pine branches (*Pinus sp.*); and *Kaĩru*, with 'sete-sangrias' (*Cuphea carthagenensis*) branches. After the new crosses are placed on the graves, the branches are discarded and the Kaingang return to the central square, where they drink and feast until *kiki* is over.

Material culture of the Kiki ritual

Our archaeological ethnography study of the material culture of the Kiki ritual, performed in 2011, used different complementary sources, including bibliographic, museological and ethnographic research. The literature review consisted of a systematic bibliographical research of articles about the material culture of a particular group. The museological part focused

on analyzing the inventory of collected objects. The ethnographic research concerned acquiring information about the Kaingang and their intra-group dynamics. According to Fabíola Silva (2009), this last research stage is a participatory archaeologically-oriented observation seeking experiences and the contextualization of objects in the group's cultural system.

We also included written bibliographic sources about the Kiki ritual performed in other places and periods, as well as oral and ethnographic sources recorded during visits made to Condá Indigenous Reservation, between 2017 and 2018; photographic sources of the 2011 ritual taken by the authors; and the documentary *Kaingang resistance ritual* by Cassemiro Vitorino and Ilka Goldschmidt (2011). The following discussion address the main material-culture elements often found in the Kiki ritual.

The pine tree

Place designed for *kiki* preparation, the pine tree configures one of the main ritual elements (Fig. 2). Prayers and rituals performed before the tree is cut reveal relevant aspects of the relationship between the Kaingang and nature itself. The *kuiã* (Kaingang *shaman*) explains to the spirit of this tree that they need it to prepare *kiki* and that its death will not be in vain. This narrative to the pine tree is the same addressed to the dead, showing no radical difference between the universe of culture – proper to humans – and the universe of nature (Veiga 2000b). Reports collected during the visits to the Condá Indigenous Reservation explain that pine trees must be chosen to the ritual because they belong to the *Kamé* half, more closely related to spirituality.



Fig. 2. Kaingang *kuiãs* dancing and singing around the pine tree with the *kikikoi* drink, during the 2011 Kiki ritual at Condá Indigenous Reservation.

Source: Taken by the authors (2011).

The kiki drink

The cut pine tree is taken to the village's central square and turned into a trough for *kiki* production and fermentation. After praying for the spirit of honey, sugar and water, the Kaingang mix these ingredients to the tree sap and leave the mixture to ferment for a few days (Pinheiro 2013). According to a village resident, the drink physically and socially strengthens the group. A person cannot pour themselves a drink in the ritual: *Kamé* must serve *Kaïru*, and vice-versa, due to the reciprocity contained in the clan's halves creation myth.

The crosses

According to Juracilda Veiga (2000b), Kaingang used to place an obelisk with the clan paintings on the grave of each dead. Over time, the obelisk was replaced by the Christian cross, revealing a religious syncretism. Each family must make a cross for the Kiki marking the deceased entity and place it in the cemetery (Fig. 3) on the last day of the ritual (Veiga 2000b). According to ethnographic sources, the crosses are made of *Cedrus* (*Cedrus sp.*), for this tree is capable of regenerating itself.



Fig. 3. Crosses placed at the Condá Indigenous Reservation Cemetery, 2011.
Source: Taken by the authors (2011).

The branches

Branches take part in several ritual stages: in the graveyard, they mark the deceased's grave until being replaced by a cross – branches in *Kaĩru* graves are thrown out of the graveyard westward, whereas branches in *Kamé* graves are thrown eastward; on the way back to the square, Kaingang cross the woods collecting leaves, vines and tree branches to adorn themselves for the end of the ritual (Pinheiro 2013).

Body ornaments

Three types of body ornament were worn in the 2011 Kiki (Fig. 4): necklaces, feathers and paintings. According to Darcy Ribeiro (1986: 46, our translation), “*the human body is the most frequent physical basis of indians’ artistic activities*”. They aim to highlight the

body's beauty, distinguish man from animals and other ethnicities, and to resemble the image of Kaingang mythical heroes. Most people in the 2011 ritual used necklaces and headaddresses, mainly for ethnic affirmation and differentiation from surrounding societies.

The paintings mark the Kaingang descendants and separate the living from the dead, since dead spirits attend the third fire of the ritual. As the *kuiã* see the living and the dead, the paintings help them distinguishing the living from the dead and avoid any dead from taking living ones to their plan. According to the Kaingang, the dead miss the living (Veiga 2000b). The village teacher mentioned that the paintings, back in 2011, were important because they helped divide group tasks, such as serving and offering the *kiki* to the people in the opposite halves. Additionally, paintings are a sign of respect, mainly for the elderly and the ancestral mythical twins.



Fig. 4. Body ornaments used during the 2011 Kiki ritual at Condá Indigenous Reservation.

Source: Taken by the authors (2011).

Musical instruments

According to Darcy Ribeiro (1986), indigenous instrumental music or songs have religious meaning, rather than being just a mere form of amusement. Based on Indigenous culture, festivals and ceremonies are inconceivable without musical expressions. Indians compose solo songs, or choruses, that are often accompanied by musical instruments, such as *maracas*, rattles, sticks and drums to mark the rhythm, or wind instruments such as trumpets and flutes. The 2011 Kiki featured three musical instruments: rattles, flutes and *varapaus*.

Widely used in South America, the rattle is a musical instrument closely related to

indigenous shamanism (Veiga 2000b). Almost all prayers in the 2011 Kiki were accompanied by the sound of chants and rattles (Fig. 5). According to ethnographic sources, the rattle must always show the clan marks of the one who made it. The flutes used in the 2011 Kiki, made of 'taquara' (*Bambusodeaie sp.*), could produce two kinds of sound: one loud and a bass sound.

According to Mabilde (1983), the stick was the Kaingang's favorite weapon in the past, because – in some circumstances – arrows did not allow an accurate shot. Although used as a weapon in the past, this object was repurposed as a musical instrument in the 2011 Kiki: beating it on the ground, the Kaingang marked the rhythm of the songs and dance.



Fig. 5. Kaingang rattle used in the 2011 Kiki ritual at Condá Indigenous Reservation.

Source: Taken by the authors (2011).

Bow and arrows

Some Kaingang artifacts no longer exist, and many others have lost their purpose, such as weapons used to fish, hunt and fight wars in the past. According to Borba (1908), Kaingang bows, arrows and spears were

carefully produced, using hard and strong timber. Arrowheads were made of monkey bone (*Macaca sp.*), howler monkey (*Alouatta sp.*) or iron¹. The author states that the Kaingang

¹ Arrow tips were made after contact with the European colonizers.

were excellent shooters, rarely missing their target (Borba 1908). Replaced by modern weapons, bow and arrows are currently used by the Kaingang for ethnic affirmation and differentiation against the surrounding society. In the 2011 Kiki ritual, the arrow ritual constituted part of the death of the pine tree (Pinheiro 2013): guided by auxiliary spirits, part of the *kuiās* shot arrows to the East, while the others shot arrows to the West.

The basketwork

Kaingang baskets are mostly made of ‘taquara’, since Kaingang see all material culture within the *Kamé* and *Kaĩru* division. Basket making follows this logic: “All rounded and low forms closed upon themselves are related to KAIRU, and all long, open, light, endless forms are KAMÉ.” (Pohl & Milder 2008: 4).

Although the literature places basketry as a strictly female activity in the past, today men and women from Condá Indigenous Reservation carry baskets, suggesting that the once rigid sexual divisions of activities among the Kaingang has been transformed. This process results from changes brought by colonization, which turned handicrafts into the village’s main source of income.

Baskets have spiritual meaning for *kuiās* João and Maria. Before, *Kamé* people could only manufacture and use *Kamé* artifacts, whereas *Kaĩru* could only manufacture and use *Kaĩru* artifacts; today most artifacts carry the symbols of both clan halves. According to the *kuiās*, every time they take something out of nature, they must ask permission to it by praying. Baskets can be used in dances, rituals and at home².

Other objects (iron pots and troughs for baking)

Pots used by Kaingang today replace the ceramic pottery formerly used by the group,

which dates back to archaeological settlements 2,500 years ago (Lino 2015; Noelli 1999-2000). Iron pots were used to make body paints and to shred herbs added to *kiki* in the 2011 Kiki. A small wooden trough was used to make a typical Kaingang food, which resembles a cake: women made the dough in the wooden trough and put it under the embers of the bonfire for baking. The 2011 Kiki also had *pisé*, a flour made of roasted corn that is added to *chimarrão*³.

Final considerations

European colonization in Brazil meant a repressive and coercive process applied against the indigenous population: it usurped their territories, lives and traditional practices. Under colonialism, the Kaingang were forced to assimilate new practices and abandon their main rituals, mainly the Kiki, due to stigmatization and repression by non-indigenous society.

From enactment of the 1988 Federal Constitution (Brasil 2016), indigenous peoples saw some of their rights guaranteed, such as the acknowledgement of their culture, customs, language, beliefs and the right to their original land. But as these rights were enforced, society began to delegitimize indigenous peoples by advocating a lack of “real indigenous culture,” since these individuals used modern material culture.

To reassert their identity and guarantee the rights addressed in the Federal Constitution, indigenous societies adopted symbolic behaviors, such as using stereotypical Indigenous artifacts, based on Western imaginary and on the exotic concept of what it means to be an Indian. The indigenous people in Xapecó Indigenous Land reclamation of the Kiki ritual integrates this process of identity acknowledgement and land demarcation. Rather than just a cultural practice, Kiki is today a political act used by indigenous people

² Information obtained by one of the authors during a visit to Condá Indigenous Reservation on September 21st, 2017.

³ Traditional drink consumed by indigenous peoples (Kaingang and Guarani) since prehistoric times, produced by processing herb-mate (*Illex paraguayensis*) leaves.

in their daily struggle for access to land, culture and basic living conditions.

Although these practices have been, and are still used, as symbolic force, they may maintain their cosmological sense, as with the Kiki ritual in Xaçepó Indigenous Land and Condá Indigenous Reservation. Ritual discontinuity in Xaçepó Indigenous Land resulted from deaths attributed to mistakes in the ritual, which led to fear of conducting new rituals in Condá; thus, much of the ritual stopped being practiced for many years. But Kaingang beliefs remained strong and their knowledge was passed from generation to generation. The Condá Indigenous Reservation not only revealed the fear factor, but also the relationship Kaingang people in the village have with their material culture, as seen in the analysis of artifacts used in the Kiki ritual.

Source comparisons showed little changes in ritual conduction over the years and between emerging contexts, pointing towards Kaingang respect and devotion to their ancestry and belief that the group should safeguard the right performance of the ritual. In other words, ancestors feared that the ritual efficacy could be lost. Conversion to Catholic and Evangelical churches did not mean abandoning traditional beliefs, since most of the community practice these religions but supported readopting the Kiki. Kaingang in the village understand the strong political sense of Kiki, related to cultural and ethnic resistance in contemporary times; they understand that performing the ritual is the way to harmonize the Kaingang people and the outside world.

The present study aimed to show how objects of material culture act as important information and meaning vectors, being essential elements for Kiki ritual attainment. More than inanimate things, these objects are put into circulation in the ritual as pieces of human connection to supernatural relationships; in many cases, they serve as means of communication between the material and the spiritual worlds, between nature and culture.

Nature (taquara, cedar, pine, monkey, howler, honey, among others) is transformed by Kaingang into culture in the ritualistic context, gaining meanings and joining human relationships, i.e., gaining cultural life. According to Pedro Paulo Funari (2003: 33, our translation), the role played by artifacts in human life is “based on its human meaning, the object is the ‘relationship medium’ between individuals living in society as a peculiar form of interrelationship, because all of people’s relationships with the world they live in are bound to artifacts.”

Finally, to some extent, this study also contributes to a postcolonial critique, as it seeks to give voice and historicity to some material culture aspects of the Kaingang, in particular those objects involved in the Kiki ritual. According to González-Ruibal (2003), postcolonial theory in archaeology and anthropology attempts to change the assumptions of Western science, impregnated with ethnocentric values and power inequality, by bringing into light multiple versions of culture and the past, especially of traditional non-Western societies.

QUEIROZ, I. B; LINO, J. T. O Ritual do Kiki do povo Kaingang: cultura material de um ritual religioso indígena no Brasil Meridional. *R. Museu Arq. Etn.*, 36: 46-58, 2021.

Resumo: O Ritual do Kiki é o ritual de culto aos mortos dos Kaingang, etnia indígena do sul e sudeste do Brasil. No período pré-colonial, o ritual era performedo anualmente com o objetivo de fornecer aos mortos uma boa transição ao *numbé* (o mundo dos mortos). Entretanto, com o processo de colonização do Brasil e a consequente catequização imposta aos indígenas, o Kiki parou de ser realizado. Na década de 1970, os Kaingang readotaram o ritual como forma de resistência cultural e identitária aos não indígenas. O último ritual até então realizado aconteceu na Aldeia Condá em 2011, gerando a presente análise de

etnografia arqueológica que visa apontar a centralidade e o significado que a cultura material apresenta no ritual e na vida cotidiana do povo Kaingang.

Palavras-chave: Etnografia arqueológica; Cultura material; História indígena; ritual do Kiki; Povo Kaingang.

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