Ethnographic museums: object, cosmology and ritual

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Laércio Fidelis Dias
Doutor em Antropologia Social
Institution: Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP)
Address: Av. Hygino Muzzi Filho, 737, Mirante, Marília - SP
E-mail: fidelis.dias@unesp.br

ABSTRACT
The reflections presented below deal with the topic involving museums, Amerindian populations and researchers (museologists, archaeologists and anthropologists), and take as a reference the Kuahí Museum, located in the municipality of Oiapoque, state of Amapá, and the Historical and Pedagogical India Vanuire, located in Tupã, a municipality in the state of São Paulo. What is the problem with reflection? The construction of participatory museums, in their formulation, management and organization of exhibitions and the expansion of the concept and processes of heritage. In other words, museums that present a transversality between museums about Indians, museums with Indians and museums of Indians. In the field of anthropology, such discussions have been theoretically held based on questions about the ethical dimension of the anthropologist's work. The so-called “anthropology of action”, which serves to think about the ethical responsibilities of anthropological work, is central to the reflection presented here. This responsibility, as suggested by the transversality between the three types of museums, implies doing anthropology in a dialogical way, a communicative action. In other words, carrying out ethnographic work, from this perspective, requires opening up to the (ethical) questions that this work proposes. Therefore, the objective of the article is to take the objects of material culture, exhibited in the two museums, linked to rituals and cosmology, to think about how the organization of the exhibitions express what is understood by participatory museums. Methodologically, the data were collected according to classic anthropological procedures: ethnography, that is, data collection in locus through coexistence with the subjects involved. And also bibliographic reference.

Keywords: museum, cosmology, ritual, objects, south american indians.

1 INTRODUCTION
A preliminary version of this text was presented by Laércio Fidelis Dias at the 2nd PAULISTA MEETING INDIGENOUS QUESTIONS AND MUSEUMS, Debate - Research and Reflection session 1, in the Historical and Pedagogical Museum India Vanuire, in Tupã/SP, in 2014. The current version for this journal is an expanded version of that first text presented and published in the Annals of the "XI REUNIÓN DE ANTROPOGÍA DEL MERCOSUR", in the year 2015, in Montevideo/URY. The objective of the Bureau "Debate - Research and Reflection" was to raise points to be known, debated and discussed from recent or ongoing research on indigenous issues that could be reflected in their relations with the museum, considering different points of view. I was not present at the 2012 Meeting, but as the presentations were recorded it was possible to watch almost all the talks, communications and debates.
From the magistral conference, "The indigenous issues and the museums", by José Bessa Freire from Unirio, stands out and the typology that the speaker proposes for us to think about museums: museums about the Indians; museums with the Indians; and museums of the Indians.

From the talk by Márcia Rosato, the director of the Archeology and Ethnology Museum of the Federal University of Paraná — UFPR, attention is drawn to the reading that she proposes for the typology of Bessa Freire, that is, to think of it from the point of view of Max Weber, as ideal types. This is because the kind of museum that the lecturer ran, a university museum, proposes precisely a cross-section between the museums about, with and of the Indians.

The lectures by Renata Vieira Motta of the São Paulo State System of Museums - SISEMSEC/SP, "Ethnographic collections in museums in São Paulo", and, by Regina Abreu of the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro - Unirio, "Heritage: expansion of the concept and processes of patrimonialization" were also instigating. The first is the X-ray presented from the São Paulo museums and the possibilities for research that one can glimpse. And the second by the characterization of the patrimony, material or immaterial, as a public good that documents a national history. Patrimonialism is seen as a policy of distinction, as a process that reconstructs the past and the notion of beautiful nationalism.

One possible interpretation that can be made is that the organizers had the intention of transforming the Historical and Pedagogical Museum India Vanuíre into a space to give visibility and appreciation to the regional indigenous culture and, at the same time, to be a center of reference, memory, documentation and research for the indigenous. But a center sensitive to the contemporary demands of the Brazilian Amerindian populations, or that is to say, that research, the production of knowledge, memory and documentation take place in a dialog between the segments and interests involved.

The first contact with the Vanuíre Museum and village took place in April 2013, on the week of Indian Day. At the time, together with a group of just over 10 students, a visit monitored by the Museum was held and, in addition, we were for two whole days in the village Vanuíre to follow the activities of that commemorative week. Therefore, the center-west of São Paulo is, relatively speaking, a new and little known ethnographic area for this researcher.

The Historical and Pedagogical Museum India Vanuíre (MHPIV) is an institution of the Secretariat of Culture of the State of São Paulo and was founded in 1966 in the city of Tupã/SP, in a period in which anthropological research and museums were already separated. With around 38,000 pieces, the museum's ethnographic collections represent different indigenous Brazilian peoples, among them Kayapó, Yanomami, Kaingang, Terena, Fulni-ó, Atikum, Kaingang-Krenak and Krenak; with the exception of

1 Created through Decree Law No. 5,540, of June 2, 1943, by the then President of the Republic Getúlio Vargas.
Kayapó and Yanomami, all the aforementioned peoples inhabit the central-western region of the state of São Paulo, in the Indian Land India Vanuíre\(^2\). In the museum's collection are instruments of hunting, work, domestic use and other daily activities, as well as feather art, ceramics and objects used in shamanic rituals.

Thus, the reflections presented in this article fundamentally start from the experience of another ethnographic area: the indigenous populations of the Uaçá, located in the Oiapoque, state of Amapá. However, when one considers the objectives of the Bureau and the Meeting, the points raised are those that may be relevant to the problem that involves museums, the indigenous populations of the region, teachers, researchers (museologists, archeologists and anthropologists).

And what would this problem be? It is precisely the construction of participatory museums, in their formulation, management and organization of exhibitions, as well as the broadening of the understanding of heritage processes. Museums that present the transversality, proposed by Rosato (2012), among the museums about the Indians, museums with the Indians and museums of the Indians.

More specifically, within the field of anthropology, these discussions have been conducted starting from questions about the ethical dimension of the anthropologist's work. In 2004, the Brazilian Association of Anthropology (ABA in the Portuguese acronym) and the editor of the Fluminense Federal University published Anthropology and Ethics: the current debate in Brazil, which represents a type of state of the art of the theme. It is not a question of presenting or analyzing the issues raised by the publication here and now. I would just like to draw attention to the concept of "anthropology of action", which Cardoso de Oliveira (2004, p.21) borrows from Sol Tax (2020 [1952])\(^3\), to think about the ethical responsibilities of anthropological work. Responsibility that, as the cross-section between the three types of museums suggests, implies a communicative anthropology, a "communicative action", in the words of Habermas (1986). That is, to carry out the ethnographic work, from this perspective, requires opening oneself to the (ethical) questions that the work sees itself ahead.

2 OBJECT AND OBJECTIVES

The objects investigated in this article are two museums, the Kuahí Museum, located in the municipality of Oiapoque, state of Amapá, and, the Historical and Pedagogical Museum India Vanuíre,

\(^2\) The Vanuíre Indigenous Land has 708.9304 hectares, is approved, registered with the District Property Registry Office (CRI) and the Union Heritage Secretariat (SPU), by virtue of Decree No. 289/1991. And the population totals 177 people, in 2023, according to the National Indian Foundation (Funai), Southeast Coast region.

\(^3\) “This work was presented in lecture format, given at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA, on March 20, 1958. Originally titled Action Anthropology in English, it was printed in the Journal of Social Research (Billiards, Ranchi, India ) in March-September 1959 and was reproduced in the academic journal Current Anthropology (Chicago, Illinois, USA) in December 1975.”
located in Tupã, municipality of the state of São Paulo, notably, the objects of material culture linked to the rituals and the cosmology, displayed in them.

The general objective is to take the exhibited material cultural objects to analyze how participatory these museums are.

The specific objectives are to define: 1) museums about the Indians; 2) museums with the Indians; 3) and museums of the Indians.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - ANTHROPOLOGY AND MUSEUMS

The relationship between anthropology and museums dates back to the 19th century, a relationship marked by moments of approximation, rupture and rapprochement, with different perspectives of dialogs. From the second half of the 19th century onwards, the formation of anthropology was strongly linked to museums, even before the discipline entered the academic world with the status of science. Up until then, the ethnographic collections present in the museums had turned them into centers par excellence for the production of anthropological knowledge (Balée 2009, p. 06). It would not be an exaggeration to state that anthropology was born and developed within museums as the ethnographic collections increased the collections and served as the basis for the production of anthropological theories, at the time, strongly marked by sociocultural evolutionism and diffusionism (Gonçalves 1995, p. 56).

Sociocultural evolutionism provided an explanatory model of the differences between societies in terms of stages: human societies were distinct because they possessed different "degrees of evolution", termed savagery, barbarism, and civilization (Tylor 1871). The concept of culture implicit in this concept was in line with the European neo-colonialist expansion projects aimed at the colonies of Africa and Asia. So there was a conception of history characterized by the linearity of progress, and an explanation for the cultural difference marked by the different degrees of evolution shown by cultures, always taking Europe as a reference.

Diffusionism, for its part, was concerned with "the processes of diffusion of objects and cultural traits from one to another society, and therefore saw these objects as means of reconstituting" the same evolutionary processes pointed out previously (Gonçalves, 1995, p.57). The main goal of the diffusionist approach was to identify a unique center from which all significant human cultural inventions would have departed and thus to narrate the history of humanity from its remotest origins to the most advanced stage of the evolutionary process represented by modern Western societies. The 19th century encyclopedic museums (Louvre and British), for example, had their ethnographic collections organized according to this logic (Vasconcelos 2012, p.130).

From the last decade of the 19th century, sociocultural evolutionism and diffusionism began to receive harsh criticism, with The Limitations of the Comparative Method in Anthropology, 1896, by Boas
(2004), a crucial landmark of these criticisms and starting point for formulation of his method: Historical Particularism. "Their main challenge was directed at evolutionists and diffusionists who did not articulate the objects in the context in which they were produced and used, but presented them in isolation from a Eurocentric perspective" (Kersten; Bonin 2007, p.120).

Stocking Jr. (1982) points out that from the 1920s and 1930s onwards, anthropological research began to be produced by the Departments of Social and Cultural Anthropology of universities. The separation between anthropology and museums is undoubtedly one of the reasons for the ostracism in which museums fell, even if they continued to exist, from the 1930s onwards (Vasconcelos 2012, p.131).

4 METHODOLOGY

From the point of view of the basic model, or that is to say, of the techniques of research employed, one is dealing with qualitative research, since the article aims at understanding, exploring and specifying a phenomenon, in this case, two Brazilian museums, by means of inductive reasoning: a comparative analysis of a small sample of objects of carefully selected material culture.

In relation to the type of investigation, it is a descriptive research, mainly through bibliographical references, in which one tries to observe, record, analyze and correlate the phenomena, in this case the disposition of objects of material culture exposed in the museum spaces.

Finally, with regard to the research technique, the article availed itself of the participant observation, which records facts, behaviors and situations, in practice and in the real context. It presupposes proximity between researcher and members of the group, so that reported facts, responses provided, behaviors, reactions and attitudes are obtained in the context of this proximity.

5 DISCUSSION - KUAHÍ, AN INDIAN MUSEUM

The Kuahí Museum was requested by the indigenous people of the Uaçá, in 1998, during the government of João Alberto Capiberibe, state of Amapá (AP). The governor had been elected in 1994 and in 1998 was campaigning for re-election. The indigenous request was accepted and included in the government program.

Since its inception, the Museum has been thought to be managed by the indigenous peoples of the Uaçá. Because of this, it was constituted as an indigenous institution, similar to what had happened with the Indigenous Associations4 and the local National Foundation of Indians (Funai).

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The Kuahí Museum is part of a broader context of the rapprochement of anthropological museums and anthropological theories, starting in the 1980s (Duarte 2007 apud Vasconcellos 2012: p.131; Castro 2001). After that decade, "a fundamental approach occurs in explaining societies and their objects in a historical, temporal perspective, and museums come to be valued as spaces of cultural and political representation of the various social groups and categories existing in their collections" (Vasconcellos 2012: p.131).

The key question that arises from this moment is to know who controls the representation of the meaning of others (Stocking Jr. 1985 apud Vasconcellos 2012: p.131). The museum institution is now seen as an exercise in classifying the other, that is, a space of exercise and experience of alterity. Not only do exposed objects communicate meanings, but also how they are sorted and arranged. The museum becomes a cultural institution, and its practices expose historical constructions; narratives that, far from being neutral, express the political and ideological contexts in which they are inserted (Duarte 2007: p.13 apud Vasconcellos 2012: p.131).

It is worth emphasizing that from the 1980s onwards, in anthropological theory, the importance and central position of the historical dimension and historicity in the investigation of the social processes experienced by the indigenous peoples is resumed; after a long period of strong influence of structuralism, in which formal analyzes predominate. The recovery of historicity is a way of seeing the indigenous peoples as agents of the social processes in which they are inserted. Societies whose ethnic background is quite heterogeneous and which are built in the flow of "the totality of the processes by which individuals experience, interpret and create changes within their social orders" (Hill 1988: p.135), go on to awaken anthropological interest, and anthropology takes on the challenge of understanding them. In the more specific context of anthropological museums, each piece, artifact, trait and event present in the exhibitions go on to reveal values, beliefs and affirmations of ethnic identity, constructing a feeling of belonging that evidences the symbolic organization of the social, natural and supernatural worlds.

An excellent example of this role of artifacts is in the publication Artifacts and raw materials of the indigenous peoples of the Oiapoque organized by Castro (2013) with the support of Iepé - Institute of Indigenous Training and Training and the Kuahí Museum - Museum of Indigenous Peoples of the Oiapoque Arts, Science and Technology. The publication brings to the public a process of learning and research and registration of information developed by the indigenous employees of the Museum together with the artisans of their indigenous communities. It is a research whose theme is the raw materials used by the indigenous peoples of the Oiapoque to make their objects, often called "handicrafts" in contexts outside the villages. The publication reveals all the wealth of knowledge about the environmental resources present in the indigenous territories of the region, as well as the variety of practices associated with the manufacture of artifacts for both daily and ritual use (Castro 2013: p.09).
Thus, to resume the brief history of the Kuahí Museum, since 1998, when the indigenous peoples of the Oiapoque asked for its construction, until the inauguration, in 2007, there were some actions along with the villages linked to the cultural rescue and valorization (Vidal 2013: pp. 397-99). This made the Museum have a very close and intense relationship with the villages of the Indigenous Lands of the region. In this sense, the choice of objects and intangible property displayed in the museum, as well as their ordinances and arrangement, is in fact an activity assumed by the indigenous.

During the process of the Museum's implementation, two projects were developed in order to subsidize the involvement of indigenous with the Museum: 1) "Rescue and Cultural Strengthening, developed by the Association of Indigenous Peoples of Oiapoque - APIO, in partnership with the Demonstrative Program for Indigenous Populations of the Ministry of Environment - PDPI / MMA; 2) and "Training of Managers of Cultural Heritage", developed together with indigenous teachers working in the villages of BR - 156, carried out by the Institute of Indigenous Research and Training - Iepé, in partnership with Petrobras Cultural (Vidal 2011113 97).

The first project was important to boost indigenous artisanal production in the villages of the region and strengthen the bonds of solidarity between the generations, since its objective was precisely to encourage older artisans to transmit knowledge, knowledge and techniques, linked to artistic, artisanal, material and immaterial expressions, to the younger generations.

The productions of this pioneering project are featured in the exhibition The Art and Knowledge of Masters⁵, which opened in April 2013, and figures 1-4 reveal a bit of this exhibition. They are hammocks, basketwork, wood sculpture, ceramics, indigenous jewelry, musical instruments, cuias, collection of litanies in Latin, corners of the Tour that bring to the public the wealth of material and immaterial productions of the socio-cultural repertoire of Karipna, Galibi-Marworno, Palikur and Galibi Kali'na.

The second project had as its objective the formation of indigenous researchers who, afterwards, would act as managers of their material and immaterial cultural heritage. The training of the agents took place through the learning of procedures for selection, preservation, research, registration and internal and external dissemination of cultural goods (Vidal 2013: p. 400).

The Museum currently has two exhibition halls, auditorium, bibliographic and audiovisual research rooms, pedagogical activities room and shop of indigenous articles (Vidal 2013: p. 403). For the first inaugural exhibition the Indians said they wanted to "expose everything" (Vidal 2013). From the museological point of view it is not a recommended attitude, but as they wanted everything to be exposed, then everything would have to be exposed and all the spaces of the museum were occupied (idem).

The caxiri pot was placed in a very high position, as if it were an entity; which it is indeed. And beside the supernatural animals: the vulture, the three-headed snake, the constellations and many mythological birds (Vidal 2013: p. 408).

The aspect of the representation was cosmological. And in fact indigenous art has its inspiration in the cosmos and in its beings, and its vehicle of expression are the shamans. In this sense, artistic creation has a broader inspiration that refers to the cosmological universe.

It would not be too much to highlight that among the indigenous populations of the North-Amazon, the boundaries between the visible world and the invisible world are tenuous and, consequently, the cosmological universe is very present in daily life. The relationship between cosmology, ritual, supernatural, and decoration of objects in the Uaçá is easily perceived, a relationship that is evident in the way the first exhibition was assembled. Vidal (2007, 2016) characterizes this relationship as a continuous dynamic between the visible and the invisible, a dynamic that produces the aesthetics of ritual objects such as the benches and clarinets used in the ritual of the Turé, the adornments that adorn the ceremonial space where the ritual takes place and the pot used to prepare the caxiri. The drink itself also maintains a relationship with the dynamic between visible and invisible, since the caxiri is considered a living being, endowed with agency, that comes to honor the party (Days 2006).

In the same year that the Kuahí Museum was inaugurated, in 2007, in the Indian Museum, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, the great exhibition "The Presence of the Invisible - daily life and ritual of the Indigenous Peoples of Oiapoque" was mounted. The exhibition, organized in partnership with Iepé - Indigenous Research and Training Institute, was sponsored by the BNDES and curated by Lux Vidal. The exhibition deals precisely with the fluidity between the visible and invisible, the material and the immaterial. The transitivity between these different domains is addressed from the etiology, nosology and therapeutics of shamanic activity, that is, the way the shamans in the region explain the origin of the diseases, their different types and the therapy that each one of them requires (Days 2001). The exhibition explores all the work of the shaman, from diagnosis to cure, when possible, revealing the shamanic devices and instruments used, such as smoke, maraca, drink, burrow (in patuá, tocai) where the shaman takes refuge to evoke supernatural beings, called karuãna, in the indigenous language. It also explores the ritual of Touré.

Rituals can be defined as prescribed, formal, and repetitive behaviors, endowed with symbolic values that systematically reaffirm values and principles of a society, as well as the normative way of its members acting before other individuals, or before supernatural beings and the natural world (Loudon 1966 apud Helman 2009: pp. 203-204).

The rituals have two aspects: one creative and the other expressive. The creative refers to the categories through which human beings perceive reality, i.e. the axioms underlying the structure of society.
and the laws of the natural and moral orders. The expressive, dramatic way of expressing values and principles, that is, refers to the way of communicating creative content to participants and viewers.

The realization of expressive and creative functions can take place through symbols that include standardized objects, clothing, paintings, ornaments, movements, gestures, words, sounds, songs, aromas and beverages (Leach 1968 apud Helman idem).

All these elements are present in the exhibition "The Presence of the Invisible...": the objects with their shapes, ornamentations, marks. That is, large hats, ceramic pots, carved benches, engraved cuisines, baskets. The musical instruments: horns and clarinets, respectively, named in patuá de cutxi and turé, and the maracás.

6 CONCLUSION

In view of the above, what conclusions can be drawn from the two museums - Kuahí, and the Historical and Pedagogical Museum India Vaniuê -, from their historical contexts of emergence, from the exhibitions, from the objects of material culture, from the various themes they deal with?

With regard to the objects of material culture exposed, there are those linked to the preparation of caxiri⁶ (pot), the processing of cassava (graters, presses, oven), shamanic rituals like Turé (zoomorphic banks, mast, pyrorô [bamboo sticks that outline in the form of a circle the ritual space where the Turé is performed], vestments, body paintings), healing sessions (songs and maracá) etc.

In the case of the Historical and Pedagogical Museum India Vaniuê, although objects of material cultural of the same nature are also on display, they are from indigenous peoples of the central-western region of São Paulo, and not from the Uaçá.

As Vidal (2013: p. 02) points out, as anthropological studies on indigenous societies advanced, from the 1980s onwards, evidence grew of the important role of "intangible expressions" - body painting, ornaments (the plumaria, the masks, the musical instruments), chants and narratives - to understand the dynamics and reproduction of Native American societies. In this sense, objects of material culture and intangible artistic manifestations are considered as a promising way to get to know indigenous societies (Vidal 2013); and they are tangible and intangible cultural expressions notably present in the exhibitions of the two museums.

In relation to the areas of knowledge, there are several of them represented in the exhibitions. Ethnoknowledges, for example, are put to very good use in the exhibitions of the Kuahí and Historical

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⁶ Fermented prepared from cassava (Manihot esculenta), other roots, such as sweet potato (Ipomoea potatoes), and sugar cane (Ipomoea potatoes).

⁷ Indigenous Graphism, launched in 1992, is a reference on the theme and synthesis of this process of building the field of an anthropology of Amerindian art.
and Pedagogical India Vauíre museums, notably ethnoscientific, which seeks to understand how the world is perceived, known and classified by diverse human cultures.

Ethnobiology, the scientific study of the dynamics of relationships between people and their cultural groups, biota, and the environment, from the distant past to the immediate present (Society of Ethnobiology 2008), is very well represented in museum exhibitions. For example: ethnozoology (a multidisciplinary study of the relations between human cultures and animals. This includes the classification and naming of zoological forms through popular knowledge ethnotaxonomy and the use of domestic and wild animals (Johnson 2002: p. 71); ethnoornithology ("term indicating how a particular 'nation' or ethnic group sees, perceives, classifies, names, and generally relates to birds" (Maxwell 1969); and ethnoichthyology (branch of science that studies the way the knowledge, uses, and meanings of fish occur in different societies (Marques 1995a) are more widespread.

Regarding ethno-ornithology, Vidal (2001: pp. 311-15), in an article written with post-graduate biologists from USP's Department of Zoology, Luís Silveira and Renato Lima, starting from a broad survey, from a zoological point of view, about the avifauna of the Uaçá basin, researched and analyzed the anthropological and symbolic aspects relating to birds, highlighting the notable presence and importance of birds for the regional indigenous culture, especially Karipuna and Galibi-Marworno. And as it could not fail to be, knowledge about avifauna also has an outstanding presence in the exhibitions of the Kuahí museum.

Also present in the museum exhibitions are the knowledge linked to ethnopharmacology; interdisciplinary scientific research of biologically active agents, traditionally employed or observed by man (Bruhn, J. G. and Holmstedt 1982). Undoubtedly, one of the most widespread fields of ethnopharmacology is folk remedies, generally based on medicinal plants (Etkin 1988 apud Bergossi 1993: p. 131), and, in substances of animal and plant origin (Days 2001). The "usefulness" is likely to explain the greater existence of studies in these areas (Bergossi idem). That is, there are more studies where there is more detailed folk classification (Bergossi idem). For example, medicinal plants are used in all human cultures, birds are useful as food and ornament for many populations, and fish are useful for food and trade (Bergossi idem).

Still on ethnopharmacology, there is an article entitled “Uses of Medicinal Plants in health care among the indigenous populations of Uaçá” (Dias 2013), which is part of the organized collection Ethnobiology and Health of Indigenous Peoples, organized by Moacir Harverroth, from Empresa Brasileira of Agricultural Research - Embrapa. The objectives of this article are the presentation and analysis of therapeutic specialists who work in the Uaçá region, the treatments used, the relationships between these different treatments, with emphasis on the use of medicinal plants, as it addresses the way in which different specialists operate. therapeutics represents a privileged access route to understanding the uses and meanings of these plants. The article analyzes the meanings that guide the construction of the therapeutic itinerary between Karipuna, Galibi-Marworno, Palikur and Galibi Kali´na, considering the different constituent elements of their healing practices. Through approximations, separations and even confrontations between this knowledge, we sought to understand the ways in which specific conceptions about health and illness are developed. This is intangible knowledge abundantly present in museum exhibitions, especially at the Kuahí museum.
Finally, it can be concluded that the Museums Kuahí and Historical and Pedagogical India Vanuíre are expressions of participatory museums, in their formulation, management and organization of the exhibitions, as well as in the broadening of the understanding about the processes of heritage. Museums that present the rich and desired cross-section between the museums about the Indians, museums with the Indians and museums of the Indians.

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