


Artificial Indigenous Place Names in Brazil: a Classification of Tupi Origin Names Created in the 19th and 20th Centuries / *A toponímia indígena artificial no Brasil: uma classificação dos nomes de origem tupi criados nos séculos XIX e XX*

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ABSTRACT

On Brazilian territory there are place names of indigenous origin with over five hundred years of existence, given by Indians themselves in the past, perhaps even before the Discovery of Brazil, together with artificial indigenous names having few decades of existence. Such names appeared since the second half of the 19th century and they became very common until the 1950s. These artificial toponyms are often confused with spontaneous place names of indigenous origin, deriving from ancient Tupi and the general languages originated from it, i.e. the southern general language, the general Amazonian language and Nheengatu. The historical reasons for the occurrence of such phenomenon were the strengthening of political nationalisms in the last century, with reflections in Brazil, the advent of Modernism, with profound effects on Western culture in general and on Brazilian culture in particular. This paper analyzes such artificial place names, making an attempt to classify them.

KEYWORDS: Artificial Place Names; Old Tupi; General Languages.

RESUMO

No território brasileiro encontram-se topônimos de origem indígena de mais de quinhentos anos de existência, atribuídos pelos próprios índios do passado, talvez até antes do Descobrimento do Brasil, ao lado de nomes indígenas artificiais que têm poucas décadas de existência. Tais nomes surgiram a partir da segunda metade do século XIX e sua criação tornou-se muito comum até os anos 50 do século XX. Esses topônimos artificiais são, muitas vezes, confundidos com os topônimos espontâneos de origem indígena, que são principalmente provenientes do tupi antigo e das línguas gerais dele originadas, ou seja, a língua geral meridional (ou paulista), a língua geral amazônica e o nheengatu. As razões históricas para a ocorrência de tal fenômeno foram o fortalecimento dos nacionalismos políticos no século passado, com reflexos no Brasil, o advento do Modernismo,

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com profundos efeitos sobre a cultura ocidental em geral e sobre a cultura brasileira, em particular. Este artigo analisa tal toponímia artificial, fazendo uma tentativa de sua classificação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: *Toponímia Artificial; Tupi Antigo; Línguas Gerais.*

1 Introduction

Most of the place names that make up the Brazilian toponymic system originate from the Portuguese language. Portuguese, as the language of an overseas empire, would supplant the indigenous languages and the “Línguas Gerais” (General Languages) spoken throughout Brazil. The only region in Brazil where Portuguese was not dominant until the second half of the 19th century was Amazonia. As a result of the great migration from northeastern Brazil to Amazonia during the Rubber Cycle, Nheengatu lost its dominance to Portuguese. The year 1877 was, in fact, when this finally occurred. The famous “Drought of the Two Sevens,” in the northeastern Brazil, was the event that changed the linguistic profile of Amazonia, characterized by the migration of 500,000 people who were monolingual in Portuguese.

Nevertheless, the languages of aboriginal peoples would also play an important role in the Brazilian toponymic system. Among the indigenous languages and the general languages of indigenous origins, four were fundamental for the naming of places in Brazil: ancient Tupi of the coast, the General Language of Amazonia, the General Language of São Paulo, and Nheengatu. In fact, ancient Tupi was a matrix language of other supra-ethnic languages that developed historically from it starting in the 17th century, when the colonization of Brazil interior began. Such toponymy is one of the most visible documentations of the indigenous ancestry of Brazilian society.

When dealing with toponyms of indigenous origin, we are here considering only the name from the point of view of its form, as a lexeme. This is to avoid ambiguities, making one posit an indigenous “name giver” that often did not exist. Furthermore, it is necessary to consider that the names of indigenous origin that we are dealing with here follow Portuguese phonological processes. Thus, phonemes that do not exist in Portuguese are realized in various ways when toponyms are created to name the national territory. This is the case, for example, with the phoneme /i/ of ancient Tupi, which is realized in Portuguese as /i/ or /u/. The same occurs regarding the phoneme /β/, which is realized as /b/ or /v/. Concerning the glottal plosive /ʔ/, it disappears in Portuguese names of indigenous origin.

It was engineer Theodoro Sampaio, author of *O Tupi na Geografia Nacional*, published in 1901, who first drew attention to the fact that there was an important toponymy of Tupi origin in regions that were never inhabited by ancient Tupi-speaking Indians. They are, in fact, names originated from the General Colonial Languages spoken in the missionary villages during expeditions by land and water (called “bandeiras” and “monções”, respectively), and among troopers, in short, by most members of the Brazilian colonial system. Indeed, names originating from such general languages are found in almost all parts of Brazil interior.

Concerning the other hundreds of indigenous languages spoken in the colonial period and in the two centuries after Brazil independence, their individual participation in the naming of Brazilian space was minor. Collectively, however, they played a considerable role in the toponymic system. Place names of these origins, however, are territorially circumscribed. Moreover, many of these names are untranslatable because they originate from languages that have disappeared and that had no written grammars, unlike ancient Tupi, General Amazonian Language, and Nheengatu.

Ancient Tupi was spoken until the end of the 17th century. By contrast, the loss of Nheengatu primacy to Portuguese in most of Amazonia occurred by the end of the 19th century, and it is spoken currently only on the Upper Negro River. The General Language of São Paulo disappeared together with the great European migratory flow to southern and southeastern Brazil from 1850 onwards. Thus, the hundreds of toponyms of indigenous origin appearing by the end of the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th century throughout Brazil are the results of artificial nomination. Artificial creation of place names in Tupi or in Tupi origin General Languages was greatly stimulated, in fact, by the publication of the above-mentioned work by Theodoro Sampaio, which helped to provide many names for pioneer fronts in Brazil during the 20th century, with the emergence of many settlements and transformation of old districts into municipalities. In its third edition, *O Tupi na Geografia Nacional* reads:

Brazilians' predilection for indigenous names in the denomination of places is today so accentuated that the primitive toponymy gradually restores itself and new localities are preferably given names taken from the language of the Tupi Amerindians (SAMPAIO, 1987, preface, our translate).¹

¹ “A predileção dos brasileiros pelos nomes indígenas na denominação dos lugares é hoje tão acentuada que a toponímia primitiva vai aos poucos se restaurando e às localidades novas dão-se, de preferência, nomes tirados da língua dos ameríndios tupis.”

2 The theoretical basis for the present classification of toponyms

The classification of place names is not a simple task, given their multiform nature. Such a classification can be done according to many criteria: etymological, sociolinguistic, ontological, cultural, and others. Stewart (1954) attempted to undertake such a classification. Another more recent attempt to make a comprehensive classification of place names was undertaken by Urazmetova et al. (2017). According to these authors, "it is obvious that it is impossible to create a unified classification of place names which would reflect the entire multidimensional nature of the toponymic vocabulary" (URAZMETOVA et al., 2017, p. 28). These authors presented eleven principles or criteria for classifying toponyms and, according to them, they should consider the parametric and ontological characteristics of an object, the type of toponymic base, the etymological, motivational, chronological, and structural characteristics of place names, polysemy, degree, and variety of toponymic naming and, finally, the location of an object (URAZMETOVA et al., 2017).

Such principles mentioned above by Urazmetova et al. (2017) are intralinguistic and extralinguistic, and this contributes to their multiplicity.

According to the criteria of origin of place names, presented in the above-mentioned classification, one can classify them as spontaneous or artificial, although these authors do not mention these categories. We define here the place name assigned by speakers of the language in which it was created as spontaneous, anonymously. Spontaneous names are usually those of physical and natural elements such as waterways, mountains, hills, mountains, beaches, etc. Artificial toponyms are those with planned assignment, whose creators are known. Examples of artificial place names are those assigned by official initiatives, such as the names of streets, squares, districts, cities, municipalities, etc. These usually replace older toponyms. Artificial place names are also those given to private properties, both rural and urban, without the stability, permanence, and anonymity that characterize the spontaneous names given to physical and natural elements.

3 The artificial name-giving of places in the world and in Brazil, and some of its causes

The creation of artificial toponyms can have several causes and motivations, among which we list the following:



- a) The need to incorporate a geographical object into a given toponymic system. As Urazmetova et al. (2017, p. 26) have observed, unnamed geographical objects decrease progressively as mankind expands its horizons over the earth's surface.
- b) The purpose of establishing the beginning of a new historical moment (such as the name *Leningrad*, which replaced *St. Petersburg* for decades after the Russian Revolution). With the decolonization of Africa and Asia, in the post-war period, for example, the elimination of colonial inheritance was often sought, as was the case with the replacement of the names Burma, Ceylon, Calcutta and Lourenço Marques by Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Kolkata, and Maputo, respectively.
- c) The project of valuing national roots and cultural identities as a consequence of strengthening political nationalism. This was what happened in Brazil in the first half of the 20th century, when there was intense nomination in Amerindian languages spoken in the past, as we will see below.
- d) The search for a geopolitical strategy of dominating a territory by eliminating cultural elements of a people living there. This has happened in Palestinian territories occupied by Israel. According to Nur Masalha, apud Moore et al. (2015, p. 17), there was a “toponymicide”, that is, “...the ‘de-Arabization’ of the land, the elimination of former Palestinian toponyms and their replacement by recently created Hebrew Zionist toponymy.”

In the specific case of Brazil, the artificial nomination in indigenous languages is explained by certain cultural and sociological phenomena observed in the western world since the 19th century. One of them was Romanticism, which valued the historical and national tradition over the aesthetic models of antiquity. One turns to the past in search of models and representations of the new nations emerging since then. In the case of Brazil, such models were the Indians of other centuries and the indigenous language spoken in the early days of conquest. The Tupi Indian, who inhabited the coast, was mythologized. This term was a generic one used to designate the indigenous groups that spoke the Brazilian language described by Anchieta and Figueira in their grammars. These were the Tupiniquins, the Tupinambás, the Potiguaras, the Caetés, the Temiminós, the Tupis of São Vicente, etc. Meanwhile, the many Indians still living in the 19th century in Brazil were socially undervalued and discriminated against, and their languages were ignored.

With the advent of Modernism in Brazil, which began with the Week of Modern Art in 1922, the Indians of the past once again became a basic cultural reference for the aesthetic and cultural renewal that was intended. An environment was formed that was propitious to the studies of the Brazilian indigenous languages of historical importance, mainly ancient Tupi and Nheengatu. This was also explained by the emergence of nationalist ideologies in the West. In Brazil, Getúlio Vargas' rise to power in 1930 was the beginning of a historical phase marked by great political and economic nationalism. The Vargas Era was, in fact, a time when toponyms of indigenous origin were abundantly created in the country. In fact, Decree-Law N. 5,901 of 21 October 1943 established norms for the "elimination in the country of the repetition of toponyms of cities and towns". Article 7 III of this decree-law stated the following:

As new toponyms, date designations, foreign words, names of living persons, expressions composed of more than two words should be avoided, but the adoption of indigenous or other locally owned names is recommended. (DIÁRIO OFICIAL DA UNIÃO, 1943, p. 15750, our translate)²

Thus, in compliance with such a decree, many municipalities had their names replaced in the following year, many of them with Tupi names.

Still in the Vargas Era, in 1935, the Tupi language began to be taught in the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of the University of São Paulo. In that year, Tupi and Toponymy became part of the curriculum of the Geography course. The first regent of such subjects was Plínio Ayrosa, an engineer and independent researcher who had been giving lectures at the Centro do Professorado Paulista for some time and who, by virtue of the appointment he had achieved, was invited by the rector of the new university to create the aforementioned courses. In the 1940s, new initiatives similar to this one would appear in Brazil. Old Tupi courses were created at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (under the regency of Father Antônio Lemos Barbosa), at the University of Bahia (with Frederico Edelweiss as its first professor) and at the University of Paraná (with Mansur Guérios).

Thus, for two decades, tupinological studies dominated in universities that began to maintain courses in indigenous languages. Such was the vogue of such studies that, during Getúlio Vargas' second government, from 1950 to 1954, a bill was passed in the National Congress that made the Tupi language a compulsory subject in all the faculties of Letters in

² "Como novos topônimos, deverão ser evitadas designações de datas, vocábulos estrangeiros, nomes de pessoas vivas, expressões compostas de mais de duas palavras, sendo, no entanto, recomendável a adoção de nomes indígenas ou outros com propriedade local."

Brazil. On September 3 of that year, a few days after Vargas' suicide, President Café Filho, his replacement, signed law n. 2.311, instituting, as a subject, Brazilian Ethnography and Tupi Language in all Faculties of Philosophy and Letters in Brazil.

Such a law had an evident nationalist meaning. It was the consequence of a strong statist tendency that the second Vargas government represented, one of the last echoes of the populist pacts that international capitalism would cause to collapse throughout the Third World in the 50s and 60s. This phenomenon was exemplified by the military coup of 1964 in Brazil, the fall of Perón in Argentina, and the deposition of Ahmed Sukarno in Indonesia. In that moment of economic de-nationalization and political alignment of Brazil with the United States, Structuralism began to take root in Brazilian university and intelligentsia. Thus, from the 60s onwards, artificial toponymic creation in indigenous languages was greatly weakened.

4 Methodology and data used

The source of the data used and all the information presented in this study was the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), which, at www.cidades.ibge.gov.br, publishes information about Brazilian municipalities in their economic, political, social, demographic, and historical aspects. The IBGE provides tables and graphs with its research on all cities and states in the country, offering information on the history of the 5570 Brazilian municipalities and even their names since their early days. After analyzing hundreds of artificial toponyms of Tupi origin of all the Brazilian states, we chose twenty names that adequately exemplify the categories in which all those can be classified.

The names on which this study was focused were only those having Tupi origins, which are the most numerous, and are fundamentally those of human settlements that became municipalities as their basic administrative units. Therein one can find great onomastic variability, which does not occur with the names of physical and natural aspects of space. In fact, as Dauzat (1937) reminds us, such names tend to be maintained throughout the centuries.

Thus, through a survey of place names in indigenous language, we carried out a survey of their antiquity, seeking to determine when such names came to exist. Considering that the ancient Tupi and the General Languages derived from it (not including Nheengatu) were no longer spoken starting in the second half of the 19th century, we believe that all the toponyms of this origin that appeared since then, outside the areas of use of Nheengatu, were artificial.

We do not deal here with hybrid toponyms of non-indigenous origin such as Itainópolis (State of Piauí) or Cotriguaçu (MT). We will not regard the "pseudo-Tupi" place names, i.e., those that are compositions and are only apparently of indigenous origin, such as Jussara (BA), which is a *mélange* of Juscelino and Sara, first names of a former president of Brazil and his wife, respectively.

5 Results and discussion

5.1 Analysis of the categories of artificial toponyms under consideration

We were thus able to classify the artificial place names of Tupi origin in Brazil in two main categories:

A. *Appropriate place names:*

These are correctly formed toponyms assigned to places where the languages from which they originated were effectively spoken in the past. Or, they are names of Tupi origin already incorporated in the Portuguese lexicon. If composed, they obey the composition rules of the Tupi origin languages in which they were created.

B. *Inappropriate place names:*

a. *Geographically inadequate* – They are formed correctly from a grammatical point of view, but are unduly attributed to places where the languages from which they originated were never spoken.

b. *Linguistically inadequate* – They are formed incorrectly, without respect to the rules of composition of the languages in which they were created or with wrong spelling, semantics, etc. They can also be hybrid names, formed by words from more than one indigenous language, a fact caused by the ignorance on the part of their creator of the differences between them. Nevertheless, such toponyms name places where the languages used in their creation were spoken in the past.

c. *Geographically and linguistically inadequate* – These are names unduly attributed to places where the languages from which they originated were never spoken and which were poorly formed linguistically, without respect for the rules of composition of the languages in which they were created, or with incorrect spelling, semantics, etc. They can also be hybrid names, formed with words from more than one indigenous language of a Tupi origin.

5.2. Toponyms representing the categories defined above

We will analyze below the paradigmatic place names of each of the categories described above. The etymologies presented are based on information from the *Diccionario Portuguez e Brasileiro* (ANONYMOUS, 1795), *Vocabulário Português-Nheengatu, Nheengatu-Português* (Stradelli, 2014) and the *Dicionário de Tupi Antigo (Old Tupi Dictionary)* (NAVARRO, 2019).

5.2.1. Suitable place names: examples of some modalities

5.2.1.1 Calque, free translation or periphrasis of a pre-existing name in Portuguese

Aiquara (State of Bahia) and *Abaiara* (State of Ceará) – A very common kind of artificial toponym in Brazil is that by replacing a Portuguese origin name with its corresponding translation in ancient Tupi, sometimes quite literal, sometimes less, and sometimes consisting of a periphrasis. This is what happened with the municipality of *Aiquara* (de a'y + kûara, "den of sloths"). In fact, until 1915, this locality was called *Preguiça* (*Sloth*), the name of a mammal of the *Bradipodidae* family, found in the tropical and equatorial rainforests of America. According to IBGE, the name was chosen through a plebiscite in 1924. It is a correct composition in ancient Tupi and, of course, is adapted to the phonology of Portuguese.

Another name in this category is that of the municipality of *Abaiara* in Ceará. It was first called *São Pedro* (St. Peter), by the provincial act of 1837, as a district of the municipality of *Milagres*. In 1938, the district of *São Pedro* was renamed *Pedro Segundo* (Peter Second), in honor of the former emperor of Brazil. The name was again changed by state law in 1943. A periphrasis of *Pedro Segundo* was created, namely, *Abaiara*, that is, *the lord of men*.

Paratinga (State of Bahia) – Sometimes a name of indigenous origin constitutes a calque of a name in Portuguese that replaced another toponym of indigenous origin considered derogatory. An example of a name of indigenous origin of this nature was *Xiririca*, on the *Ribeira Valley*, in *São Paulo*. In fact, the name *Xiririca*, certainly from the *Paulista General Language*, became synonymous with a remote place, difficult to access, primitive, and sparsely inhabited. It was common in the first decades of the 20th century the expression "*That place is beyond Xiririca*". In the year 1948, that name was then changed. This was also the case of a municipality in *Bahia* called *Urubu* (*Vulture*), a name that was changed in 1912 by a bill, and then became known as *Rio Branco* (*White River*). In 1943, by another state decree, this place name was

replaced by the calque *Paratinga*, from *pará* - river + *ting* - white + *-a* - nominating suffix: white river.

5.2.1.2 *Tupi origin place names, already incorporated in the lexicon of Brazilian Portuguese, which replace pre-existing Portuguese names, with different meanings from them*

Ubatã (State of Bahia) and *Sapiranga* (State of Rio Grande do Sul) – Many times, a place name of Tupi origin already incorporated in the Portuguese lexicon and replacing another place name designates a plant, an animal, an indigenous artifact, or an ethnic group. The district of *Dois Irmãos*, after being called Alfredo Martins, had its name changed to *Ubatã*, which designates various trees of the genus *Astronium* (from 'yba-atã - hard tree).

The same thing happened with the name *Sapiranga*, from a southern Brazilian municipality. In fact, the southern states had a strong influence of the Guarani culture, both because of its proximity to Paraguay and for the incursions of expeditions called “*bandeiras*” to the Jesuit missions established there. Guarani was even a language that influenced the general language of São Paulo. The term *congonha*, the name of a kind of *chimarrão* (sugarless tea made with bitter maté of the ancient São Paulo inhabitants, derives from this language and appears in the dictionary of Ancient Guarani by Montoya. The name *Sapiranga*, however, is not of Guarani origin, but it must derive from that General Language. This toponym was attributed to a district in the municipality of São Leopoldo in 1890 and it derives from *arasá piranga*, whose meaning is *araçá vermelho* (red arassá), a plant of the Mirtaceae family, that is, a name incorporated in the Brazilian Portuguese lexicon before that place name existed.

All these artificial toponyms, which are considered to be adequate, were attributed to places where the languages used in their creation were effectively spoken in the past.

5.2.1.3 *Replacement of hybrid name in Portuguese and Tupi with another name of exclusive Tupi origin*

Acajutiba (State of Bahia) – A less common way of creating artificial toponyms in Tupi consists in the substitution of hybrid names, incorporated to the Brazilian Portuguese lexicon, by a name completely Tupi in its origin. This happened with the village of *Cajueiro* (*Cashew Tree*; -eiro is a Portuguese suffix), which in 1937 became a district of Esplanada and had its name changed to *Acajutiba*, from Tupi words *akaïu* + *tyba*: gathering of cashews.

5.2.1.4 Replacement of a Tupi origin name with another name of that same origin

Andirá (State of Paraná) and *Abaetetuba* (State of Pará) – Such names are examples of another modality of formation of appropriate artificial toponyms, in which a name of Tupi origin was substituted by another name in that language, both already incorporated in the Portuguese lexicon.

The municipality of *Andirá*, formerly called *Ingá*, was a district of *Cambará*, PR. When it was elevated to the category of municipality, in 1943, it had to change its name because there was already another municipality with the same name in the state of Paraná, which was forbidden by the above mentioned Decree-Law n. 5.901 of president Getúlio Vargas.

The place name *Abaetetuba* (composition of *abaeté* - very good man, a term incorporated into the Portuguese lexicon + *tyba* - assemblage, existence: *assemblage of very good men*) replaced a previous name, *Abaeté*, of a municipality in Pará, by virtue of the same Decree-Law n. 5,901 of 1943.

5.2.1.5 Original onomastic creation:

Itajá (State of Rio Grande do Norte) – This toponym is an example of an original name, not inspired by a previous name nor taken from Portuguese dictionaries. It was artificially attributed to the village of Lopes, elevated to the status of a municipality in 1992. It is a correct composition: *itá* - stone + *îá*: crowding, fullness: *full of stones*.

5.2.2. Inappropriate place names: examples of some modalities

5.2.2.1. Geographically inadequate toponyms

Miracatu (State of São Paulo) – This name is a correct composition in *Nheengatu*, spoken in Northern Brazil. Nevertheless, it was attributed to a place situated in Southeastern Brazil, where that Amazonian language was never spoken. It was attributed by state law in 1944.

Itaocara (State of Rio de Janeiro) – This is a correct composition in old Tupi, but it is a name given to the old *Aldeia da Pedra*, of the Puris and Coroados Indians, of the trunk Macro-Jê. The name of that city situated in state of Rio de Janeiro was given in 1850 and it is older than other artificial place names having Ancient Tupi origin.

Itaporanga (State of Paraíba) – It is a correct composition in old Tupi: *itá* - stone + *porang* - beautiful + -a - nominating suffix: beautiful stone. The name, however, was attributed by a 1938 state law to a place traditionally inhabited by Indians of the Corema group, from the Macro-Jê trunk, already extinct.

5.2.2.2. Linguistically inappropriate toponyms

Ibateguara (State of Alagoas) – Until 1959, the municipality of Ibateguara was called *Horizon*. It is said that the current toponym was suggested by the Archbishop of Maceió, D. Ranulfo de Farias, who wanted to create a name of Tupi origin meaning "high place." The name *Ibateguara*, however, appears to derive from the junction of the Tupi noun *ybaté* (heights) with the suffix -*ygûara* (he who inhabits) (which forms gentilic nouns such as *paraibyguara*, inhabitant of Paraíba). *Ybateygûara* thus means "the inhabitants of heights". That place name is thus badly formed, being semantically inadequate and having a different meaning from that it was sought, although it has a legitimate Tupi appearance.

Ecoporanga (State of Espírito Santo) – This toponym carries lexemes of ancient Tupi, lacking, however, the relation prefix T- to be a correct name in that language. Therefore it should be written *Tecoporanga*. That locality in the state of Espírito Santo received such a name when it was elevated, by state law, to the category of municipality in 1955.

Buritama (State of São Paulo) – It is an incorrect variant of *buriti retama*, land of buritis (name of a palm tree, *Mauritia flexuosa*), violating grammatical composition rules of ancient Tupi. That name was created in 1948, when the district of Palmeiras (palm trees), called *Buriti* in 1919, became a municipality.

Unai (State of Minas Gerais) – This is a compound noun intended to mean black (*una*) river (*y*) by its creators; however, it violates the rules of composition of ancient Tupi and General Languages. *Unai* was a district created with the denomination of *Rio Preto* by provincial law of 1873. By state law of 1923, the district of Rio Preto took its current name. However, in those above-mentioned indigenous languages, attributive adjectives never precede a noun. *Rio Preto* (black river) should thus be translated as *'yúna*, resulting in *lúna*, in Portuguese.

Jaguariúna (State of São Paulo) – The same thing occurred with the name of São Paulo municipality of *Jaguariúna*. In 1896, the district of Jaguari was created by state law and was

subordinated to the municipality of Mogi-Mirim. By state law of 1944, the district of Jaguari took the name *Jaguariúna*, which it retained when it became a municipality in 1953.

We see in Jaguariúna's coat of arms (Fig. 1), the motivation of the creator of its name: a black jaguar on the edge of a blue river. Notwithstanding the fact that "black jaguar river", in ancient Tupi, should be translated as *îaguaruny*, resulting in the name *Jaguaruni*, the form Jaguariúna violates the rules of composition of ancient Tupi, from which the roots of such a word were taken.

Figure 1 - Coat of Arms of the municipality of Jaguariúna (SP)



5.2.2.3 Geographically and linguistically inadequate toponyms

Umuarama (State of Paraná) – In 1927, Silveira Bueno, who would later become a professor of Portuguese at the University of São Paulo, created the name *Umuarama* to name a Mackenzie College summer camp at the request of its director. As he himself states, *Umuarama* was

[...] neologism made by us, with Tupi elements and means sunny place to meet friends. The first form was *Emuarama*, of *embu*; place; *ara*, full of light, of clarities, good climate. Then we softened it for *Umuarama*. The term *ama* is a collective, equivalent to many, meeting etc.³ (BUENO, 1984, p. 601, our translate).

Where is there such a composition meaning "to meet friends", which would be part, according to Silveira Bueno, of *Umuarama* etymology? In which dictionary of ancient Tupi, Guarani, or Nheengatu do we see that *embu* means *place*?

³ “[...] neologismo feito por nós, com elementos tupis e significa: lugar ensolarado para encontro de amigos. A primeira forma foi *Emuarama*, de *embu*; lugar; *ara*, cheio de luz, de claridades, bom clima. Depois suavizamos para *Umuarama*. A terminação *ama* é um coletivo, equivalendo a muitos, reunião etc.”

From these words, we can see how great was the unpreparedness of the author to deal with the Tupi language, ancient or modern. His *Portuguese Tupi-Guarani Vocabulary* contributed substantially to the disorientation of people interested in Tupinology. His ignorance of the grammar of these languages was amply demonstrated in the words above.

For the formation of the place name Umuarama, Silveira Bueno took the Nheengatu term *sumuara*, "friend", unduly removed its prefix S- and added the form *rama*, a variant of *retama*. Sumuararama, in fact, would be a Nheengatu name. Removing the prefix S-, however, the composition becomes meaningless. Moreover, the fact of assigning a name in Nheengatu (an Amazonian language) to a locality of southern state of Paraná is geographical nonsense.

Mairiporã (State of São Paulo) – The name of that city of São Paulo state is a hybridism, formed by the composition of a word taken from General Amazonian Language (*mairi*, city) and from a Guarani word (*porã*, beautiful). It was artificially created by state law in 1948 and replaced the old and spontaneous name *Juqueri*. The substitution of such Tupi origin name was due to the depreciative sense that this toponym assumed with the installation of a great psychiatric colony in that locality, founded in 1898 by Doctor Francisco Franco da Rocha. Thus, a toponym emerged from languages that were never spoken in that region of Brazil.

Itacajá (State of Tocantins) – The territory of that municipality in Tocantins state was traditionally inhabited by Craós Indians, who were ministered to by Francisco Colares. A settlement originated that became a district in 1938 and a municipality in 1953. That toponym derives from the name of a waterfall called *Cajá* (name of a tree, a species of flowering plant in the family Anacardiaceae), in the Manoel Alves River, which runs through that locality. *Cajá* was a spontaneous, simple name, motivated by the existence of that plant, also called *cajazeira* (*cajá tree*). The name *Itacajá*, artificially created with ancient Tupi roots, has an inadequate meaning, because it means *stone cajá* and furthermore, it was attributed to a place where ancient Tupi and General Languages were never spoken.

Conclusion

The artificial place naming in ancient Tupi and in General Languages co-exists in Brazil with spontaneous toponymy, and this fact goes unnoticed by many. This phenomenon hypertrophied the Tupi cultural influence, which indeed was considerable, in the formation of Brazilian civilization. It did not affect, as seen before, the nomination of physical and natural

elements, such as rivers, streams, hills, mountains, etc., that are impervious to easy changes. Such toponyms have great importance as chronicles of the geographic space, revealing their past features.

Although adequate and compatible names were created, meaningless and erroneously formed names also appeared, revealing nothing but the ignorance on the part of their creators of historical indigenous languages of Brazil.

There is, however, a positive aspect to this artificial naming: it ennobled indigenous languages in a century characterized by great technological modernization, as was the case during the 20th century, when Indians often represented the past, as well as social and economic backwardness. Though having been mythicized, the indigenous man was, in a certain way, valued in a country that had its eyes more focused on Europe and the United States. It was a way for Brazil to honor the losers of its history. Such a phenomenon also meant a nostalgic tribute to a traditional Brazil that was beginning to be transformed, modernizing itself. It represented the voices of a past that did not want to die. Theodoro Sampaio nicely expressed this sociocultural phenomenon of the 20th century in the preface to the third edition of *O Tupi na Geografia Nacional*:

There is a nationalist feeling here that wants to be integrated and vivid, as if to say that, of the American race, defeated, not everything has been lost, and though in the blood of the descendants, the Indian portion decreases until it disappears, the memory of the primitive inhabitants will endure with the names of the places where civilization boasts of its triumphs. (SAMPAIO, 1987, p. 41, our translate).⁴

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⁴ “Há aqui um sentimento nacionalista que se quer integrado e vívido, como que a dizer que, da raça americana, vencida, nem tudo se perdeu e que se, no sangue dos descendentes, a dosagem diminui a se apagar, a memória dos primitivos íncolas perdurará com os nomes dos lugares onde a civilização ostenta seus triunfos.”

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