

Why Amazonian Utopias?



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ABSTRACT

This article reimagines the Amazon through the ancestral knowledge of its Indigenous peoples, positioning the Forest as a living, biocultural system essential to planetary life. Its ethnic and linguistic diversity is inseparable from environmental integrity. The Amazonian utopias advocated here challenge extractivist capitalism by proposing alternatives grounded in Indigenous cosmologies, autonomy, and genuine sustainability. They confront the violence of land concentration, forced displacement, and ecological destruction, calling for a transformation not only in policy but in worldview. I propose a semantic reconfiguration of the concept of utopia, arguing that these visions are both ecological and epistemological, asserting that knowledge about the Amazon must emerge from within rather than be imposed from outside. Reimagining the world begins in the forest: Amazonian utopias are the future we cannot afford to ignore.

Keywords: Amazon; utopia; Indigenous; forest destruction; Nature.

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In *As Palavras Andantes*, Eduardo Galeano says that when his friend Fernando Birri was giving an interview once, the journalist asked him what the purpose of utopia was. Birri replied, “It’s on the horizon. I move two steps closer to it, it moves two steps away. I walk ten steps, and the horizon moves ten steps farther away. No matter how much I walk, I’ll never reach it. What’s the purpose of utopia? This is its purpose: to make us walk.”²

The word “utopia” comes from Greek: *ou* (no or not) + *topos* (place). In my view, Amazonian u-topias change the negative prefix *u* to the Portuguese definite article *o*, transforming *no+place* into *the+place*—as visible as Edgar Allan Poe’s letter, hidden in plain sight, tremendously naked, like a blinding light. This utopia lies outside precisely because it has always been present, but clouded by the disarray we paradoxically call progress (like the Trans-Amazonian highway), whose chief implication has always been to expunge the eternity of the rainforest. The future is ancestral because utopia has always been a place within reach, its existence enmeshed with its very own destruction and the end of everything as we know it. Utopia no longer as a non-place but as the whole-place, the place we need to walk toward—and where Brazil’s original peoples have always been. Then we come upon the words of Bruno Malheiro: “the notion of utopia” can only be sustained “by the radical existence of the Amazon”—with the explanatory addendum that the reverse side of something is the inside.

Since we cannot simply wish away the colonizing white or undo the violence done long ago by the first encounter, the Amazon’s radically realized utopia is waiting for the rainforest to cannibalistically become part of this “being between,” fruit of Olavo Bilac’s three sad races, predestined for joy and Carnival, as predicted by Darcy Ribeiro. A *mestiço*-being who travels the world—therefore on the outside, wherever there is no Amazon, because without the Amazon there is no-where, no-being. Outside the Amazon, in the future, lies the empire of no-things, home to this being who, like a tardy Prometheus, realized it lay outside Nature when, young and arrogant, it managed to steal the gods’ bottle rockets and invented positivist science.

² Eduardo Galeano, *As palavras andantes* (Porto Alegre, Brazil: L&PM, 1994). English translation: *Walking Words*, trans. Mark Fried (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).

While we must walk toward a possible, and better, future, we must ask ourselves something from where we stand, on this bridge, endeavoring to ensure our permanence, looking at it from the perspective of the Indigenous and other peoples of the Amazon: What is utopia? Let us explore a tentative answer.

In the narrative of Amazonian Utopias you will see that we engage in dialogue with the thoughts of Indigenous writer, philosopher, and environmental activist Ailton Krenak. In his books, Krenak offers a civilizational critique that transcends regional boundaries and connects with the fate of the Earth as a whole, with the universal. In *Ideas to Postpone the End of the World*, he calls for an urgent reflection on humanity, nature, and spirituality, in deep dialogue with the knowledge and struggles of Amazonian peoples. Although he belongs to the Krenak people, from southeastern Brazil, his critique of the modern project of humanity and ecological collapse mobilizes an Indigenous worldview that resonates with Amazonian lifeways. His ideas serve as a powerful lens through which to rethink Amazonian utopias, not as futuristic projections, but as ancestral modes of existence already practiced and embodied by forest peoples.

Just as Indigenous leaders in the Amazon have long defended ways of life in which humans, rivers, trees, and animals share agency, care, and reciprocity, Krenak advocates abandoning the idea of humanity as the center and measure of all things. His vision destabilizes anthropocentric rationality and strengthens the imaginary of Amazonian utopias as paths of reinvention in the face of Anthropocenic collapse. In this context, the forest emerges not merely as a biome, but as a collective body in suffering and resistance, a living organism threatened by the destructive logic of progress. Krenak's words help us understand the Amazon not only as an ecosystem but as an insurgent territory, where the rupture between nature/culture becomes stark and dramatic. For Krenak, postponing the end of the world is a profoundly utopian gesture, not an escape into the future, but a reconnection with ancestral forms of life that remain alive and vibrant in the Amazon Rainforest today. This principle echoes in the everyday practices of Amazonian peoples, who resist the commodification of the forest and affirm, in the present, the real possibility of other worlds and other utopias, whether Amazonian or planetary.

In the Amazonian utopia, *forest-ship* is taught to a *citizenship* who has been edified by a woods-and-water knowledge of life—to dialogue with José Manuyama. In the Amazonian utopia, cities stop devouring the world and we no longer talk about the extermination of traditional peoples but about the end of species—to dialogue with Ailton Krenak. In the Amazonian utopia, forest-peoples reforest the world, full of empty cities, and Shakespeare's trees will walk—and we have circled back to Fernando Birri.

Yet in this Amazonian tragedy of destruction, violence, and land theft, the biome continues to elude our many attempts to control it.

And what will then be revealed to all peoples
Will come as a total surprise, not because it is so exotic
But because it has managed to stay so hidden.
*Obvious though it is.*³

But we, members of the human species, will certainly come to an end. Because without the forest inside us, our finitude will expire faster. The empire of no-things.

In *Ideas to Postpone the End of the World*, Ailton Krenak describes the experiences and subjectivity of the Krenak people, who hunt through their dreams. Krenak describes a shaman's dream in which "the spirit of the prey was very angry and said I was irresponsible, that I was not taking good care of the animals' spirits, that the *Waradzu* [whites] were preying on everything and that soon there would be no more hunting and people would have nothing left to eat."⁴ The Krenak people defy the idea of human exceptionalism when they link dreams to other forms of human/more-than-human relationships, thus proffering new ways of experiencing dreams and utopias. We must listen to the clouds and birds, to fruit and trees, to waters and rivers; we must listen to the voices of the forest and hear how they reject the Western notion that humanity has a predefined destiny.

In allying themselves with other living beings, the Krenak people are questioning alleged human superiority and affirming that we aren't the humanity we like to think we are. The impact of the shaman's dream later leads Krenak to visit the

³ Caetano Veloso, *Um Índio*. Original lyrics: "E aquilo que nesse momento se revelará aos povos / Surpreenderá a todos não por ser exótico / Mas pelo fato de poder ter sempre estado oculto / Quando terá sido o óbvio."

⁴ Ailton Krenak, *Life Is Not Useful*, trans. Alex Brostoff and Jamille Pinheiro Dias (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2023), 3.

rainforests of Acre, Rondônia, and other regions of the Brazilian Amazon, where he reaches a conclusion: “It was then that I realized that there was something in Indigenous peoples’ perspective, in our way of seeing and thinking, that could crack open a window of understanding in the environment that is the world of knowledge.”⁵ Krenak admits that he heard his elders as if he were a spectator back then:

Until I started to have the same premonitory dreams when I saw the roads, the tractors, and the chainsaws coming; the noise of them cutting down the big trees and the rivers revolting. I could hear the river speaking, sometimes angry, sometimes outraged. We’ve ended up becoming a nerve ending of what they call “Nature.” And the science of that shaman, warning an entire generation that is now 50, 60 years old that their territory would be devastated and left without game, turned out to be absolutely right. Agribusiness invaded the Cerrado—and the Xingu Indigenous territory became a pizza; or, rather, a little pie surrounded by soybeans, with tractors cutting everything down. Since then, I have been experiencing the meaning of dreaming as an institution that prepares people to relate to everyday life.⁶

For Krenak, dreaming is an intimate cultural practice, where people share their dreams early in the morning, not in public spaces but with people close to them. In this exchange, dreams are a channel where caring bonds the dream world to our everyday reality. By sharing their dreams, listeners can easily slip back into their activities, no barriers between dream world and daily life. Here again, the wisdom of the original peoples reintegrates what our deadened science has torn apart (although Freud once told us things aren’t quite like that): consciousness over here, unconsciousness over there; dreams on one side, reality on the other; humans on one side, Nature on the other. The Amazonian utopia reunites these pairs, these conjoined twins, in the unity of a Pachamama who waits for her offspring to mature and is inaugurated in the collective dream advocated in this article.

Amazonian utopias allow us to tell stories that postpone the end of the world. They explore different forms of interdependence and invite us to imagine a reality where the ecology of ancestral knowledge enhances our existence. Attuned to the nuances of individual and collective transformations over the course of time, these

⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁶ Ibid., 4.

utopias inspire us to envision other possibilities. Would it be an Amazonian utopia to halt any and all invasion of the last strongholds where life has always been resilient, thereby allowing thousands of people to go on with their lives without jeopardizing the vital sources of the magnificent terrestrial ecosystem that keeps this planet's climate in balance? I don't think so.

Transformations to everyday relationships in the Amazon and our lost capacity to dream and imagine utopias are the concerns that underpin this article. Amazonian utopias offer an oneiric answer that impinges on reality and builds a way forward. Almost seventy years ago, during one of the planet's biggest, most aggressive occupations of a frontier, the Brazilian government began laying highways into the Amazon, and the region gained economic importance both nationally and internationally, not because of what the biome is (we were, as I said, blind) but because of what could be taken from it. As Krenak reminds us, the city devours the world. Amazonian utopias are about acknowledging the forest as a living being endowed with the right to enjoy life in all its fullness. Here, the greatest investment is to preserve life, both human and more-than-human.

An extremely high price has been paid: record forest destruction, a generalized assault on Nature, spatial disorganization, illegal land occupation, burgeoning violence (especially related to land theft), the invasion of ecological and Indigenous reserves, and the de-characterization and destruction of local cultures and native residents. An Amazonian utopia is a city free of "forest eaters" or "commodity people," to borrow the words of Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert in *The Falling Sky*⁷. These are people who gobble up the world, who transform everything into currency exchange. The city, land of the poor commodity people.

Carlos Walter Porto-Gonçalves advises us to pay attention not to means but to models. He encourages us to examine the processes by which societies move, produce, reproduce, and reinvent themselves. Models annihilate urgently needed imagination, especially when they ratify the world-as-is and prevent us from idealizing other worlds based on this world we have been given to live in and transform. So he summons us to

⁷ Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert, *The Falling Sky: Words of a Yanomami Shaman*, trans. Nicholas Elliott and Alison Dundy (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013).

eschew models of development or progress and instead comprehend the means by which a modern-colonial capitalist society, violent and oppressive, sustains itself, alongside its “cognitive obstacles,” masked by words, notions, and ideologies, according to Raquel Gutiérrez Aguilar. Amazonian utopias afford other means of imagining life.

This brings us to the need for new utopian approaches to the region. Believing in the Amazonian utopia is now a matter of life and death. The Amazon is the center of the world, as Eliane Brum tells us:

[...] the Amazon is also the center of the world because it is inhabited by peoples who know how to live on the planet without destroying it, peoples who understand, in the most diverse ways, that their flesh is the Earth's flesh. Peoples who are also forest. Peoples from whom whites need to learn, if they are still willing to teach us after everything that so-called civilization has done to their bodies.⁸

Amazonian utopias clear paths to other possible horizons, ones concerned above all with preserving and nourishing life through a different way of feeling-thinking. Grounded in Indigenous ancestral knowledge, this vision recognizes Earth as a living, interdependent organism, where human communities have for millennia inhabited their lands through a process of intersubjective complementarity with Earth and all other communities of beings, banishing the idea of the world as an object that can simply be appropriated or exploited by a “privileged” human community. This outlook dovetails with the pressing need to address the climate collapse, the point we now find ourselves—brought here by the utopia of capitalist modernity.

Amazonian utopias shift decision-making power and discussions about the future of the region from the hegemonic centers of the Northern hemisphere and major cities of Brazil and other Latin American countries to the heart of the forest. It is here that a large diversity of Indigenous peoples, slave descendants known as Quilombolas, and the traditional forest-peoples known as beiradeiros and ribeirinhos increasingly converge in an ecology of ideas. These people are managing to defend their territories,

⁸ Eliane Brum, “Amazônia Centro do Mundo,” *El País Brasil*, November 15, 2019, https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2019/11/15/opinion/1573820553_621324.html.

bodies, biomes, and cultures while also proposing innovative solutions that transcend the limits of traditional politics, characterized by the coloniality of power and knowledge.

If capitalist materialism demands that humanity sacrifice itself and summons the world to commit collective suicide, an Amazonian utopia, on the other hand, provides continuous regeneration and harmony. This utopia responds to and resists predatory pillaging by large corporations and an economic model that prioritizes profit over life. It does so by resisting—by reXisting—by creating and transforming, grounded in the ancestry of forest-peoples, who know that whenever we can't predict exactly what lies ahead, it is wise to look back. The future is ancestral, as Krenak reminds us.

This is how an Amazonian utopia challenges the vision of a world in collapse, countering it with the real possibility of a shared, sustainable life. This perspective casts Indigenous peoples' ancestral knowledge and ecological practices as central not only to preserving their own territories and the biodiversity sheltered therein but also to summoning culturally different others to reinvent a global co-existence. In the context of today's climate emergency, the many Amazons have become a focal point of planetary attention.

Amazonian utopias are key to shaping a shared life that is more just and balanced, a life where our relation to Nature and the world is based on respect and care, ensuring the continuity of life for future generations of all communities of beings living in this world. Guided by the ethical compass of dignity and justice, every utopia should be viewed not as abstract hope about some distant future but as the material and symbolic expression of ongoing *Do-topias* by all peoples and communities who, down through the ages, have never stopped reXisting.

In *The Falling Sky*, Davi Kopenawa, leader of the Yanomami people, alerts us more than once to the importance of dreams: "We shamans dream of everything we want to know."⁹ Later he says, "White people call us ignorant because we are other people than they are. But their thought is short and obscure. It does not succeed in

⁹ Kopenawa and Albert, *The Falling Sky*, 296.

spreading and rising because they prefer to ignore death. [...] The white people, they do not dream as far as we do. They sleep a lot but only dream of themselves.”¹⁰

Hanna Limulja, in *O Desejo dos Outros*, expands our understanding of Yanomami dreaming. According to the author, for the Yanomami to dream is to see—and see the invisible. The past, present, and future entangle in the “time-space of dreams,” where things truly happen. Yanomami dreaming is their utopia and their projection of the future; it is the counter-anthropology of resistance. Borrowing Limulja’s perspective and careful reading, I would say that Yanomami dreaming is the best definition of what I am calling Amazonian utopias. In the land of Yanomami dreaming, dreamers become vulnerable when they ponder the “falling sky” or realize how dreams—“the small death,” in Yanomami terms—can cave in on us all, and irreversibly so (to engage in dialogue with Renato Sztutman¹¹). So the Yanomami and other Indigenous peoples dream the dreams of others, of all of us—whether to “postpone the end of the world” or postpone “the falling sky.” Kopenawa tells us the Yanomami have always dreamt like this because they are “hunters who grew up in the forest. *Omama* put the dream in us when he created us. We are his children, this is why our dreams are so distant and inexhaustible.”¹²

We must turn the utopia experienced in the Indigenous-Nature relationship into an educational technology available to all peoples of the world. Because Western society takes forever to hear the rivers, trees, and more-than-humans; because it never listens to the cry of fish when a tailings dam fails, generating countless miles and months of abundant, visible death; and because it doesn’t understand them even when it hears and sees them, this article, with its voice rooted in today’s urgencies, assigns concrete roles to this utopia—a utopia that echoes the warning cry sounded by Cacique Raoni at the United Nations: “What you’re doing will change the whole world and destroy our house—and destroy your house as well. Then you will feel the fear we feel.”

This utopia, as Eliane Potiguara tells us, lies in the creative, caring strength of women, their everyday resistance, and their harmonious relationship with the world around them:

¹⁰ Kopenawa and Albert, *The Falling Sky*, 313.

¹¹ Renato Sztutman, “O profeta e o principal: a ação política ameríndia e seus personagens” (PhD diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2012).

¹² Kopenawa and Albert, *The Falling Sky*, 375.

Women! [...] Creating is our power: write, dance, compose, plant, love, pray, study, paint, cook, hoe, lecture, spiritualize yourselves, defend the Earth, take care of yourselves, take care of the animals, children, elderly men and women, caress the world, kiss the world's scars, nurture relationships, nurture friendships, nurture family, in short: be...¹³

Indigenous thought opens up other possibilities when it comes to environmental protection, helping us see beyond the limited scope of capitalism; it asks us to recognize the interconnectedness of all living beings, human and more-than-human, and embrace a collective responsibility to safeguard our planet. Citing Eliane Brum once again: "The end of the world is not an end. It is a means. This is what Indigenous peoples have shown us, as they have resisted the destructive forces sponsored by non-Indians for over five hundred years."¹⁴ Further on: "Indigenous people aren't in the forest, they *are* forest. [...] The forest is everything, visible and invisible."¹⁵

Kopenawa and Albert leave no doubt: "In the forest, we human beings are the 'ecology.' But it is equally the *xapiri*, the game, the trees, the rivers, the fish, the sky, the rain, the wind, and the sun! It is everything that came into being in the forest, far from the white people: everything that isn't surrounded by fences yet."¹⁶

In our search to find solutions, we must concede that Indigenous communities cannot be the only ones responsible.¹⁷ Their call for collective action and mutual understanding is an invitation to forge alliances and work toward a common future: Amazonian utopias. We have to move beyond environmentalist rhetoric and actively engage with the knowledge systems that have sustained a diversity of ecosystems for millennia.

¹³ Pedro Stropasolas, "Daniel Munduruku: 'Os Povos Indígenas São a Última Reserva Moral Dentro desse Sistema,'" *Brasil de Fato*, October 17, 2021, <https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2021/10/17/daniel-munduruku-os-povos-indigenas-sao-a-ultima-reserva-moral-dentro-desse-sistema/>.

¹⁴ Brum, "Amazônia Centro do Mundo," *El País Brasil*.

¹⁵ Eliane Brum, *Banzeiro Okótó: The Amazon as the Center of the World*, trans. Diane Whitty (Minneapolis: Graywolf Press, 2023), 17.

¹⁶ Kopenawa and Albert, *The Falling Sky*, 393.

¹⁷ Marcos Colón, "Indigenous People Cannot Be Solely Responsible," *Latin America Bureau*, January 10, 2024, <https://lab.org.uk/indigenous-peoples-cannot-be-solely-responsible/>.

On a recent visit to Ecuador, I gained a deeper understanding of three notable cosmologies grounded in the country's diverse Indigenous philosophies: *Sumak Kawsay*, *Kawsak Sacha*, and *Tarimiat Pujustin*. All three humbly try to illuminate the complex, dynamic relations of interdependence between humanity and Nature, which are often obscured by Western science and the various forms of cultural anthropocentrism that shape its pretensions of objectivity.

Sumak Kawsay—a concept born in the Andes, often translated “good living”—urges people to live in harmony with Nature. In the vast Amazon rainforest, *Kawsak Sacha* (Living Jungle) celebrates the spiritual connection between Nature, humans, and the cosmos. Lastly, originating in the Shuar world, *Tarimiat Pujustin* is about living a good life within your own territory and caring for Nature, true to the Indigenous relationship with Earth and the more-than-human world. Together, these concepts ask us to recognize the interdependence of all forms of life and adopt a collective approach that will safeguard our planet.

As we grapple with the environmental dynamics of the Amazon rainforest, we are not only taking a step toward justice but also tracing a practical path forward when we integrate Indigenous perspectives into the mainstream discourse. It is time for us to do more than merely acknowledge Indigenous communities and instead actively involve them in devising environmental policy and strategy. By doing so, we can collectively strive for a future in which environmental protection is not a choice, but a responsibility shared by all of us.

Beyond scientific and literary narratives about the Amazon, which we read by “seeing slowly,”¹⁸ the region has its own narrative imaginaries and representations of its original peoples, which lend us a renewed repertoire of ideas to help us rethink the post-pandemic world as we confront the daily genocides of the Anthropocene. In the words of Marcos Reigota, we are living through a time when machinery produces “an absence of sense.”¹⁹ The Amazon stretches across 49.5% of Brazil's territory and has a population of some 25 million people. According to Brazil's Institute of Geography and

¹⁸ Marcos Colón, “Slow Seeing and the Environment: Connections and Meanings in *Beyond Fordlândia*,” *Sustentabilidade em Debate* 9, no. 1 (April 2018): 136–44. <https://doi.org/10.18472/SustDeb.v9n1.2018.29861>.

¹⁹ Marcos Reigota, “The Production of an Absence of Sense Permeates the Everyday of Schools and Kills” (paper presented at the round-table “Paulo Freire: Educação e Política no Enfrentamento do Obscurantismo,” Instituto Sedes Sapientiae, São Paulo, October 9, 2019), 2.

Statistics (IBGE), the biome is home to around 300 ethnic groups, who speak about 274 languages, 180 of which have been classified linguistically—all of them representing ways of living, experiencing, feeling, and imagining the world.

This world needs new solutions if humanity is, at long last, to enjoy some measure of well-being. However, the well-being touted by so-called civilization is far from universal; never has it extended to all of us. But who is paying the price for civilization's unwell-being?

In the first place, the price has been paid by the Indigenous, people whose otherness clashes with Western modernity—an otherness that may eventually be silenced forever. Our collective survival is at stake. When we ignore Amazonian utopias, we are sacrificing the ancestral contributions of forest-peoples, along with other “horizons of perspectives”²⁰ distinct from those historically imposed on us both subtly (under civilizing pretexts) and violently (through colonization).

The end of the Amazon is the end of humanity's heart. I am not speaking in a biological sense, like conventional wisdom calling the Amazon the lungs of the planet. I mean “heart” in the lyrical sense, heart in the sense where the poetic and scientific imaginations are forces that should guide projects of dialogue between public policy and forest-peoples.

Lastly, these utopias fit into and forge a new pedagogy, as announced by Daniel Munduruku: “I believe strongly in the potential for our pedagogical process, for the Brazilian educational process, to create a singular way of seeing. May it be a pedagogy born of our own lands, our own origin.” We believe this too. Munduruku adds:

If we offer children other narratives, they put these narratives together so they feel fulfilled, complete, and therefore we can imagine that literature has an activist role to play, the role of letting children learn other world views so they can humanize themselves and grow as people, more tolerant people, more respectful, in diversity [...]. I write because I see this as my way of doing politics,

²⁰ M. Vitkin, “The ‘Fusion of Horizons’ on Knowledge and Alterity: Is Inter-traditional Understanding Attainable through Situated Transcendence?” *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 21, no. 1 (1995): 57–76.

my way of helping Brazil think about the Brazil it doesn't know, the Brazil that has always been occupied by hegemonic narratives.²¹

We write because these Amazonian utopias entwine us with another cosmogony, where the *xapiri pë*—the spirits of the forest—teach us diverse ecologies and new dreams and utopias. After all, as Kopenawa and Albert tell us, “the spirits knew ‘ecology’ before the white people gave it this name.”²² For they believe and teach us that if we accept our diversity, some day we will come to understand ourselves as children of one same planetary community, our veins running together in our Amazon Forest. These Amazonian utopias are the politics that seek to enrich the world's chorus by absorbing the voices of the original peoples, who cannot understand the enlightened deafness of the West—child of the blinding light of which Adorno and Horkheimer spoke—and feel themselves called upon to re-educate us as a collectivity, for the sake of our own survival.

It should be stressed that the collective exercise of speaking through many voices is also a utopian movement, part of what Geoffroy de Lagasnerie calls “*l'écologie des idées*.” It is therefore essential that we recognize the voices of thinkers who came before, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, insisting on other horizons of perspectives for the Amazon and its peoples. Foremost among the Indigenous voices are those of Antônia Braz Santana (*mestra* Japira), Geni Núñez, Eliane Potiguara, Márcia Kambeba, Zeneida Lima, Txima Huni Kuim, Célia Xakriabá, the *ribeirinha* Raimunda Gomes da Silva, Ailton Krenak, Davi Kopenawa, Pajé Gabriel Gentil Tukano, Higino Tuyuka, Casé Angatu, and *Cacique* Babau. We can also cite non-Indigenous voices who have in some way engaged with the peoples of this region: Eliane Brum, Carlos Walter Porto-Gonçalves, Darcy Ribeiro, Márcio Souza, Milton Hatoum, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, Ferreira de Castro, Alfredo Ladislau, Euclides da Cunha, Alberto Rangel, Inglês de Souza, Dalcídio Jurandir, Vicente Salles, Benedito Nunes, João Barbosa Rodrigues, Couto de Magalhães, Gastão Cruz, and Padre João Daniel, to name a few. Their ideas are built upon interdisciplinarity of knowledge and a rejection of epistemological

²¹ Pedro Stropasolas, “Daniel Munduruku: ‘Os Povos Indígenas São a Última Reserva Moral Dentro desse Sistema,’” *Brasil de Fato*, October 17, 2021, 18, <https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2021/10/17/daniel-munduruku-os-povos-indigenas-sao-a-ultima-reserva-moral-dentro-desse-sistema/>.

²² Kopenawa and Albert, *The Falling Sky*, 397.

borders, defying the monopoly of hegemonic narratives and opening our imagination to radically other worlds. From this vantage point we also acknowledge Alberto Acosta, Alberto Chirif, Aurélio Michiles, Bruno Malheiro, Carlos Nobre, Edna Castro, Fernando Michelotti, Flávia Marinho Lisboa, Ivânia Neves, José Ángel Quintero Weir, José R. Bessa Freire, Julia Arieira, Nathália Nascimento, Philip Martin Fearnside, Raimunda Monteiro, Renan Freitas Pinto, and Saint-Clair Cordeiro da Trindade Júnior.

These utopias and this article signal a semantic re-orchestration of the concept of utopia. And now, like *Omama*'s very first command, we must say: Do utopia!

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¿Por qué Utopías Amazónicas?

RESUMEN

Este artículo reimagina la Amazonía a partir del conocimiento ancestral de sus pueblos indígenas, posicionando la selva como un sistema biocultural vivo y esencial para la vida del planeta. Su diversidad étnica y lingüística es inseparable de la integridad ambiental. Las utopías amazónicas aquí defendidas desafían el capitalismo extractivista al proponer alternativas basadas en las cosmologías indígenas, la autonomía y una sostenibilidad genuina. Enfrentan la violencia de la concentración de tierras, el desplazamiento forzado y la destrucción ecológica, pidiendo una transformación no solo en las políticas, sino también en la forma de ver el mundo. Propongo una reconfiguración semántica del concepto de utopía, argumentando que estas visiones son tanto ecológicas como epistemológicas y que el conocimiento sobre la Amazonía debe surgir desde dentro, en lugar de ser impuesto desde afuera. Reimaginar el mundo comienza en la selva: las utopías amazónicas son el futuro que no podemos darnos el lujo de ignorar.

Palabras clave: Amazonas; utopía; indígena; deforestación; naturaleza.

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