

The First Peaceful Contacts with the Brazilians

As told by Maneru

(This story) is about the first peaceful contacts (of the Kaapor) with the Brazilians.

My ancestors shot a lot of arrows at the Brazilians. They didn't like the Brazilians. And they in turn shot at the Kaapor with their shotguns. So they responded again by shooting arrows at them until they killed one.

They didn't like being shot at with arrows so again they shot at them with their shotgun. So my ancestors fled into the jungles to hide.

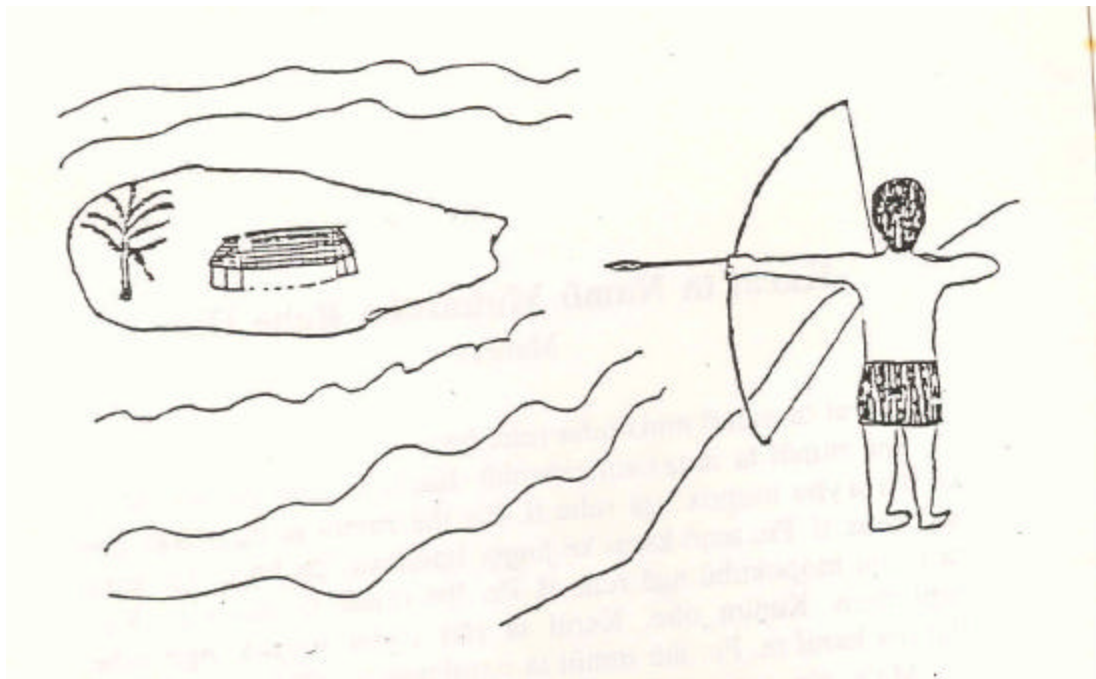
Our ancestors wanted machetes but they were afraid of the Brazilians. One said:

"I'm going to kill them."

But he returned to his house. And another went to look where Araújo was. He was making his house on the island of Canindé. He was preparing his place and cleaning the ground. His workers were helping him. And our ancestors returned to their house and said that they greeted them thus:

"Hey!"

They said that Araújo was preparing a place for his house and there were lots of Brazilians at the rapids on the Gurupi river. Near there, they were making their houses. And our ancestors went there and shot arrows at them. The Brazilians were afraid of them. Then our ancestors returned to their homes.



"Where are the Brazilians?"

Their relatives replied:

“Over there, nearby at the rapids. There are lots of them there and they called out to us. They want to make peace with us. They called out to us, ‘Friends! Friends! Friends!’ Finally it will be well.”

Our ancestors decided to go again. Another old man from another village went also. What was his name? Ah, Aramiatã! He went also, this Aramiatã.

“I’m going to kill a Brazilian.”

And he went to see also.

Raimundo Caetano, a Brazilian, put machetes along the banks of the river. Aramiatã went very slowly keeping a close watch as he went. And they arrived at the machetes.

“Here are some machetes,” his companions said. “Here are some machetes. Let’s take them.”

And so they took them. And they brought them to their village where their relatives were.

“Where are the machetes?”

“Here they are. The Brazilians put them there for us. There are more there.”

Éi, another went.

“I’m going to see.”

So Raimundo Caetano left more machetes, he left two. He also left ceramic beads, mirrors and some whistles.

So others began to arrive. Pa’i arrived first and he took away a machete. He only took one. And another arrived and also carried away one. And the Brazilians called out:

“Friends! There will be peace now! It will be well for you forest dwellers!”

They called out a lot and smiled a lot and were happy. And Pa’i arrived again. And my ancestor arrived, that is my father.

“I’m going to look.”

And he went at night with a light of a pitch and arrived where the machetes were. There was only one there and he carried it away. It was night. Then Pa’i arrived where the machetes used to be. There weren’t any left. His companions carried them all away. So Pa’i said:

“I’ll talk to them now. I’ll make peace with the Brazilians now.”

Ah, two men went. There was a small boy that went also. And he said to that one:

“You stay here.”

He trembled. That one was weak. Not Pa’i, he was brave. And so he went to the bank of the river and called out:

“Hey! Friends!”

So Araújo heard it.

“Hey! Friend!”

And Araújo called out:

“Raimundo Caetano! Raimundo Caetano!”

And he came running.

“Go quickly!” Araújo said. “Go quickly! Hey, Raimundo Caetano! Go see! A Kaapor is calling now. An Indian is calling.”

Pa’i called out:

“All’s well, friend!”

Raimundo Caetano moved near and called out:

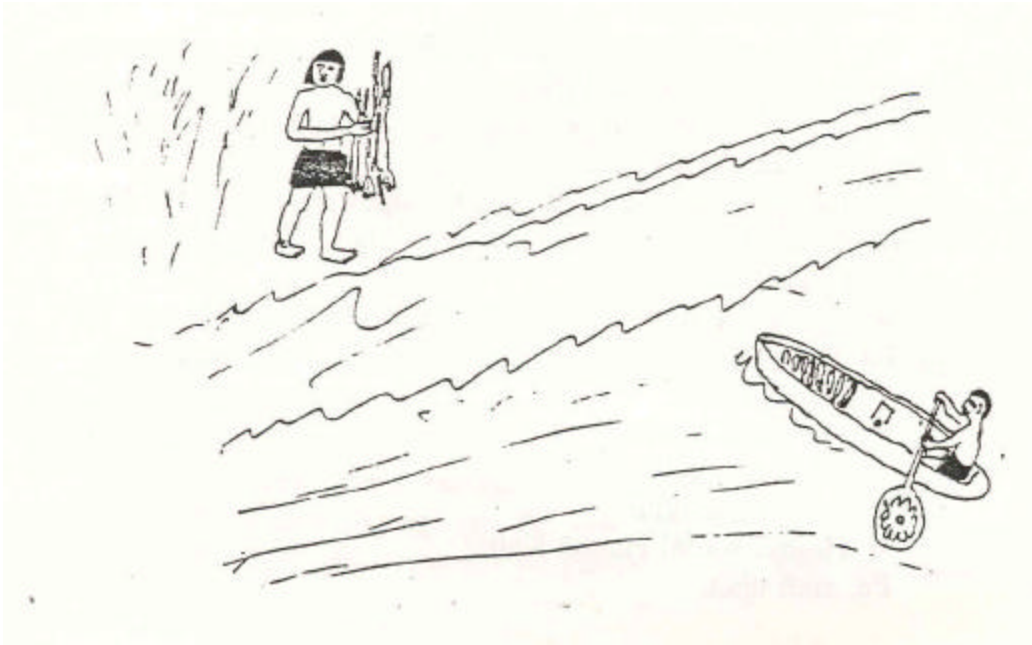
“Hey! What do you want?”

“Machetes,” Pa’i said. “I want machetes. I’m without anything in the jungle. We’re destitute in the jungles.”

So Raimundo Caetano got machetes that Araújo gave him and brought them to Pa’i. He brought them to the edge of the river.

“Bring them quickly,” Pa’i said. “Bring them quickly!”

Raimundo Caetano asked:



“You’re not wild and hostile are you?”

“No. It’s okay. I’m a good man. I’m not afraid,” said Pa’i.

Thus he took two bundles of machetes.

“Take them,” said Raimundo Caetano. “Where is your wife?”

“I don’t have a wife,” responded Pa’i. “I live destitute in the jungles. I’m like a nomad.”

“Where is your son?”

“I don’t have a son. I live in the jungles,” Pa’i replied.

What he said was a lie. His wife and son were there. He lied. Then he left and arrived at another village. He traveled at night and arrived to where his father lived. What was his name? Oh yes, Iaripó. And he arrived to the old man who asked:

“Where are the machetes? Did you bring a lot?”

“Here!”

And he gave one to his father. He gave to others. He distributed a lot to his relatives. Another one who got one was Ca'aro.

It was a long time ago that they made peace. And others arrived at the river bank and they had painted themselves red with achoyte (pink lipstick plant). Others sang while standing on the river bank. There was Captain Rucu who sang along with José. They sang a lot. We also arrived there but Captain Rucu said to us:

“You folks stay over there. The Brazilians like to kidnap children.”

And so we moved away some distance. They put fear into us. My father said:

“Now the Brazilians will take you away.”

“No, they won't take us away.”

Raimundo Caetano distributed machetes. He distributed everything. He also distributed scythe type implement. There were sufficient machetes, well no, there weren't enough for everyone. And so another got angry. His companions jumped on him and took hold of his bow.

“I'm going to kill a Brazilian. I'm going to kill one,” he said.

And he stamped his foot (to show his anger). So another took his bow away from him and cut the string. Another gave him a scythe like implement.

“There! Go with this.”

And he went away.

It was a long time ago that they made peace with the Brazilians. Really a long time ago. And Araújo was understanding everything. And he was satisfied.

End.