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Source: *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Summer, 1985), pp. 224-244

Published by: Duke University Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/481922>

Accessed: 18/07/2010 22:55

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INTERPRETATIONS OF INTER-CULTURAL CONTACT: THE SHOKLENG AND BRAZILIAN NATIONAL SOCIETY 1914-1916

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Abstract

Between 1914 and 1916, the Shokleng Indians--previously economically and politically autonomous--were brought into the orbit of the Brazilian state through a process known as "pacification." This paper traces that process through narratives of the Indians and White Men who participated in it. It is argued that "pacification" is a form of domination, albeit a particularly subtle one, which relies upon the differential interpretation, by the two sides, of the events--principally, the giving of gifts by the White Men--that made up the early encounters.

Adrian Cowell's recent film, "The Decade of Destruction,"¹ documents the first peaceful contact established by representatives of the Brazilian government Indian agency (FUNAI) and the Uru-eu-wau-wau tribe of the western Brazilian state of Rondonia between 1980 and 1983. We see the regional context of development, the opening of a highway through this wilderness, the influx of settlers from other parts of Brazil--part of a government-planned colonization program. We see evidence of skirmishes between the Uru-eu-wau-wau and settlers, and the gradual process of "pacification" through attraction by means of gifts.

Cowell's film documents a process that is much more general throughout Brazil. Yet, even as this process brings the last remaining isolated groups into the orbit of the national society, we know almost nothing about how the Indians themselves perceive that process, how their experience differs from that of the FUNAI agents involved in the "pacification," how the seemingly identical objective events are reported and made sense of within contrasting cultural paradigms.

The present article rectifies some of this imbalance by making available contrasting reports of a specific pacification--that of the Shokleng Indians² of the southern Brazilian state of Santa Catarina, with specific reference to the 1914-1915 period. At that time, the Shokleng were a semi-nomadic hunting and gathering people, organized into three bands, each consisting of some 400-600 individuals. The individual bands were in turn organized into trekking groups, the number of which varied between two and four. There was constant feuding between bands, but relations within the band were generally peaceful.

At the time of the "pacification," the Shokleng practiced no agriculture, subsisting instead primarily on the wild game, especially tapirs and peccaries, and on the fruits and nuts, especially Araucaria pine nuts, of the region. They had earlier, like the neighboring and related Kaingang, practiced a part-time agriculture. However, by the latter nineteenth century, they had completely replaced their own agriculture with the raiding of Brazilian settler farms. Even prior to the first peaceful contacts, therefore, Brazilian settlement of the region was having an impact on the traditional Shokleng way of life.

This paper deals with the pacification of only one of the three Shokleng bands. A second band was finally brought into contact between 1918 and 1920. By this time, however, there were only some 50 survivors. The third band managed to elude peaceful contact, reports of their existence in southern Santa Catarina continuing until the early 1950's, when the group seems to have disappeared, having died possibly from disease or at the hands of Brazilian settlers. While the events described below are far removed in space and time from the Uru-eu-wau-wau pacification documented by Cowell, the overall similarities are nevertheless striking.

Planned colonization, such as that involved in the recent Polonoroeste project for western Brazil, is not something wholly new in the history of Brazil's interior. During the last half of the nineteenth century, the eastern Santa Catarina area of southern Brazil, which formed the principal locus for the Shokleng Indians at that time, was subjected to an intensive colonization program, organized by Hermann Blumenau, with colonists coming directly from Germany.

In 1850, Blumenau brought the first 17 immigrants into the region of what is today the city of Blumenau (see Map), a region then within the hunting territory of the Shokleng. The colony continued to grow, and by 1860 there were 670 settlers (Singer 1968: 81-140). In the following decade, 4,439 new settlers arrived. Naturally, tensions developed between these settlers and the Shokleng bands, as settlers penetrated more deeply into Shokleng territory.

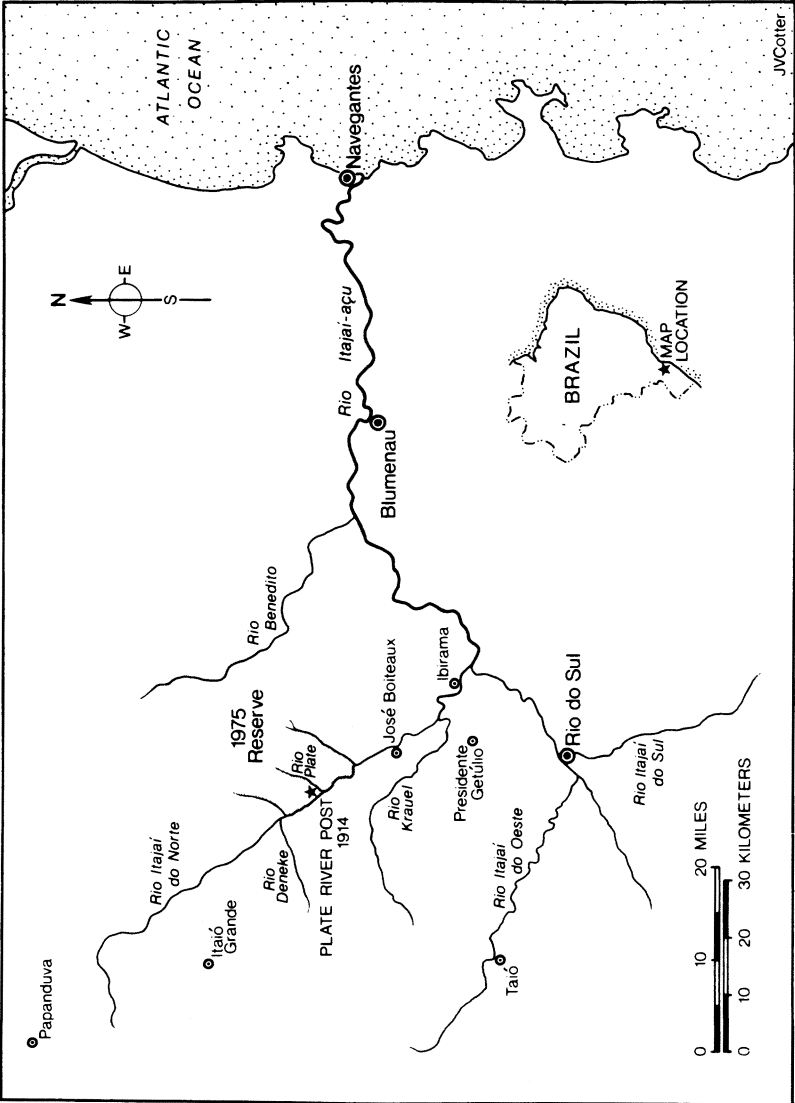
By 1899, the first colonist had established a homestead in what is today the town of Ibirama (Prefeitura Municipal de Ibirama 1977). In 1904, settlers pushed into the region of Presidente Getúlio. These settlers, however, pressed by malaria and attacks from the Shokleng, were forced into retreat. Tensions on the frontier, a direct result of government-planned colonization efforts, mounted.

Sílvio Coelho dos Santos (1973) describes the skirmishes that took place between the Shokleng and colonists moving into the region. By the first decade of this century, and probably earlier as well, the Shokleng were also systematically harrassed by professional "Indian hunters," the most famous of whom was Martinho Marcelino de Jesus, known by the Shokleng themselves today as Martin Bugreiro, i.e., "Martin the Indian hunter" (Coelho dos Santos 1973: 89-97). Martinho was apparently hired by settlers, and possibly by government officials, to exterminate the Indians. Numerous reports indicate the continued employment of professional "Indian hunters" in Brazil today (Davis 1977: 11-12, 79 ff.), and their existence is even hinted at in connection with the Uru-eu-wau-wau "pacification."

The Shokleng were not alone among tribes in Brazil's south who were at that time experiencing difficulties with the expanding Brazilian national frontier. The related Kaingang of São Paulo were being subjected to similar pressures, and, by 1905-1910, were skirmishing with crew members of the Northwest Brazilian Railway (Ribeiro 1970: 100-106).

The plight of these two indigenous populations in particular became a focus of national policy debate (Coelho dos Santos 1973: 120-126), not unlike the debates underway in Brazil today (Urban 1985). As a result of this debate, the national government created an Indian Protection Service (Serviço de Proteção aos Índios or SPI), the precursor of the presentday FUNAI (Fundação Nacional do Índio), which replaced the SPI in 1967.

Eduardo de Lima e Silva Hoerhan, whose reflections are recorded below, was



the principal SPI agent in charge of one phase of the Shokleng pacification project. SPI was guided by the philosophy of its first director, Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon, and this philosophy furnished the moral blueprint for Hoerhan's own activities in relation to the Shokleng.

SPI attitudes were based in part on a vision of the inevitability of Brazil's expansion into the interior, and on a sense of urgency in contacting isolated tribes in the path of expansion in order to cushion the impact of this encounter. SPI actions could buffer tribal populations from the "Indian hunters," provide support and education during a transitional period, and, simultaneously, seal off the Indians from direct confrontation with the encroaching settlers. Importantly, SPI was guided by the proposition that, in the face of contact, tribal populations have a right to (1) their cultural integrity, (2) their land, and (3) their health and well-being (Ribeiro 1970: 131-138).

The general situation surrounding the Shokleng pacification bears a striking resemblance to the situations surrounding FUNAI's efforts today, and it deserves to be studied more intensively by scholars interested in the contemporary Brazilian situation, and in development issues more generally. Missing from our understanding of these situations, however, are documents reporting how the participants--especially the Indians themselves--perceive the "contact."

The Reports

In what follows, I present two contrasting points of view on the Shokleng pacification, that of the Shokleng and that of the "Whiteman." It is clear that there are several viewpoints to be had among the Brazilian nationals. I present two, namely, that of a journalist writing for the Blumenau colonist audience, and that of the principal SPI agent, for whom I provide excerpts of a "Report of the River Plate Post (1915)," and some reflections recorded in 1975.

The Shokleng point of view is contained in a single narrative told to me in 1975 in the context of interviews. I was endeavoring to elicit "life histories" of the eldest members of the tribe, who had actually participated in the 1914-1916 "pacification." These life histories invariably came out as community histories. When it came to descriptions of the role of the SPI agent, Eduardo de Lima e Silva Hoerhan, the narratives I elicited were also designed to communicate the dissatisfaction the Shokleng then felt toward Hoerhan. The Shokleng narrative must be interpreted in some measure in this light, even though it is on the whole even-handed.

Correspondingly, the "Report of the Plate River Post (1915)" was written for the SPI directors with the intention of convincing them that the SPI agents assigned to the Shokleng project had performed some extraordinarily difficult tasks and that more supplies and support for the Shokleng project were desperately needed. The report thus plays up the difficulties surrounding the Shokleng pacification and it must be read in some measure in this light.

José Deeke's newspaper account had been written for the Blumenau settlers, letting it be known that the SPI team had indeed succeeded in "pacifying" the Shokleng. There had been some tension between the SPI, a federal agency, and the Blumenau colony, which consisted largely of German immigrants. Various local newspaper articles had criticized SPI activity and there was even general skep-

ticism as to whether the Shokleng had really been pacified. Deeke's account was designed to assure the settlers of the region that, although the pacification had indeed been difficult, it was an already accomplished fact. There was no need for the settlers to fear any further Indian attack. He thus painted the SPI work in a sunny light.

As regards Eduardo Hoerhan's 1975 recollections, there is no simple motivation to be discerned. Eduardo was bitter at the Brazilian government for the way he had been treated. He had been dismissed from the SPI and imprisoned in 1954 for his alleged involvement in the murder of an Indian (Coelho dos Santos 1973: 117-172) and he clearly felt that he had received no recognition or remuneration for his years of seemingly selfless labor on behalf of the Indians. Criticized by the government, by the colonists, by the Indians themselves, and even by some anthropologists, he sealed himself off from the world and had generally refused to comment on his experiences. I never felt that Eduardo was trying to impress me, even if he wished to present himself in a favorable light. His recollections represent more an expression of disillusionment at lofty ideas debased by an ugly reality; at good intentions neutralized and rendered ineffectual by an amoral world.

Amidst this jungle of clashing goals and purposes which the following narrations were designed to accomplish, however, there can be discerned a picture of the pacification process; of how the different participants made sense of what was going on. The reports show how, from their different vantage points, the narrators have assigned distinct motivations and intentions to the persons involved and have assimilated the events of the pacification into differing cultural frameworks.

Point of View I: The Shokleng

The first narrative of the 1914-1916 events I supply is one reflecting the Shokleng point of view. It is an excerpt from the "life history" of Wāñpō Payà. Wāñpō is the son of Kāmṛēn, one of the two great leaders of the Shokleng in 1914. The other leader at that time was Gakrā, nicknamed "Thunder" by Hoerhan, to whom reference is made frequently in the narrative. Wāñpō was probably some 16 or 17 years old in 1915.

*Wāñpō's Narrative*³

In Presidente Getúlio,⁴ there is a place called "Morador dos Índios."⁵ There we found a path, and when we arrived in the village there were knives, cups, shirts, blankets, and axes. The White Men had already captured Ñoveñ, Nānyavi, and Kōzirkā. Gakrā thought it was they who had put the things there because they wanted us to meet the White Men. We took everything and returned to the village, where we made mead [i.e., held a ceremony]. After this, we moved camp to Deneke, because we wanted to kill cattle. There was a farm there. We killed the cattle and ate the meat.

Then we returned here, where Eduardo had already made a farm. So we went to Blumenau, because they⁶ wanted to get things from the White Men. Some White Men were hunting in the forest and we wanted to kill them, but they escaped. We entered their houses and took everything. Then we returned to the village, where they made mead and held an āgran⁷ festival. There were five infants who received lip-plugs.

Then my father made arrangements with Gakrã. We were to go to Papanduva and his group to Rio do Sul. "I will go there," said Gakrã, "and it will take time, maybe one year. After that you can look for me here..." Gakrã went south to Rio do Sul with lots of people. He returned and crossed the river here, going up to Navegantes. Then his daughter's husband, Patê, died. So they stayed there some time while the wife went into seclusion. Then they held an *âgyin* ceremony.

When they returned and descended over the mountain here, Eduardo was already there. They wanted to kill him, and so, they left the women above while the men descended. There were five tents, one closer to the river, filled with things such as knives and axes. Wòmle and Kowi came and took everything. They knew these were presents. And they knew that Eduardo was watching.

The next day, Eduardo was farming on the other side of the river. Wãñêki, Wòmle, Paci, everyone came. Kowi wanted to kill Eduardo, so he shot, but his arrow missed the mark. The White Men quickly crossed back over the river, screaming, in their canoe. Then Eduardo was showing them clothes and things, saying come and get these clothes. He already spoke Kaingang because of old Kàunuñ and the other Kaingang in Paranã. Eduardo said, "my relatives, I will give you you red clothes, white clothes too. Also knives." So Wòmle said, "bring the clothes here." These he put in a sack and carried away. He said to Eduardo, "leave the gun over there." So Eduardo gave the gun to someone else. I didn't see this because we were up in Pananduva, but everyone told me about it later.

Eduardo had a revolver in his pants and Wòmle saw it, so he said, "what is that thing in your belt." "My friend, it is a gun. I'll throw it away." Wòmle told him to leave the blankets, and Kowi went to get them. Eduardo said, "there are lots of clothes here for you." So they said, "get them." Eduardo was alone, the others far behind him. They say that Eduardo had killed another White Man, but didn't go to jail. So the government sent him here to be killed by the Indians. But he conquered the Indians instead.

Finally, the blankets ran out, so Wòmle told Kowi, "go tell the others." Wòmle then went alone with Eduardo, who asked, "do you want to eat beef?" Wòmle said yes, and so Eduardo invited him to come and kill the bull. So everyone came. They killed the bull and took away the meat. Then Eduardo said, "do you want to eat manioc flour?" They killed 2 bulls and 8 pigs.

They then reassured each other that there would be no attack or killing on either side. So the Indians disappeared into the woods. Eduardo remained there, but sent someone down the river with 2 canoes. In the morning, they returned with 4 pigs, manioc flour, sugar, and honey. Eduardo gave 2 pigs for the Indians, who were camped up there. Nil and Wãñpô were also with Eduardo while the others were up there. Patê and Wòmle were also with Eduardo. The group came down in the early hours of the morning and, they still didn't know about the contact. Everyone was saying, "can it be they will really make contact?" Nil then returned and said, "it is true; we have discovered the White Man."

They all came down and Kreno Wòmle told the story to Gakrã. Gakrã told Wòmle to go in front and that he [Gakrã] would come afterwards. Kreno came, shouting out for Eduardo, who in turn had a horn which he used to call the Indians. Kreno asked for pigs. So they killed two of them. Eduardo gave them 3 sacks of manioc flour. He gave them 2 sacks of rice, and also clothes, knives, and more. He said that tomorrow would arrive. In the afternoon, Kreno, Kowi, and Nil Paci came. They killed 2 more pigs and took away the meat.

The next day Eduardo called them with his horn. Kreno said he could call the group when the clothes arrived. There were many clothes. Gakrã divided them up among the group. He gave away a box full of axes and knives. Then they brought two more bulls. Kreno was ordered to kill them, and they divided up the meat.

Then the Indians left. They crossed over the river and went to the ceremonial village. I didn't see this, but Gakrã told about it later. He ordered Kagnan, Zeca, and Wãñêki to go up and look for us. We were returning to Itaió Grande and, there, we met the messengers. Gakrã, meanwhile, had gone off to Presidente Getúlio with his group. There, the daughter's husband of Gakrã, Cukãmãg, died of gripe he caught from the White Men. They burned the body, the wife went into seclusion, and then they held an *âgyin* ceremony.

Then they said, "let us return; by this time Kamrèn must be in the great ceremonial village." They returned, but we still had not arrived. Eduardo had come to look for us at the Post, but no one was there. He told us this later. He went away leaving all sorts of food, which the Indians took.

Gakrā's group was camped at the great āgran village. While here on [what is today] the reserve, Wakra had a swollen leg. She was probably bitten by a snake. She was in bad shape, with the leg rotting. Meanwhile, we were descending here to the pripa tōl region.⁸ My father, who was her cousin, was advised, and in the early morning we arrived. Soon afterwards, she died. That afternoon they burned the corpse and her husband went into seclusion.

Gakrā ordered the bachelors to pick up the food Eduardo had left. When they arrived, Eduardo was here. He had 4 pigs and 2 bulls, so he gave them 2 pigs to kill. They killed them and took away the meat. Eduardo told Gakrā to come.

The Kaingang [from Paraná] were all here when Gakrā returned. They were together with Eduardo. Word was sent to the group to come and eat and get things. They had already killed the pigs and taken them to the great ceremonial village. The husband of Wakra had held his seclusion but there was no āgyin ceremony afterwards because there was such a confusion.

Nil and Patè came back a week later but, Eduardo wasn't here. So the Indians went after him. We arrived in José Boiteaux. There was a group of White Men there, but Eduardo was not among them. These White Men did not speak the Indian language, but they understood that the Indians wanted Eduardo. So the White Men sent a message and later he arrived. He brought more cattle, and there was a place there in José Boiteaux where he bought cloth and other things.

It was at this point that the Indians began to get sick. First Zeca died. Everyone began to get grippe. They decided to divide up because of the sickness. This was the first time disease had come and many died. Gakrā went to Navegantes. Wày took a group to Presidente Getúlio. Kāmren stayed here on the reserve. Kawe Patè took some people and went towards Deneke. Eduardo came after us. He brought 4 bulls, so we crossed over there to the house of Nil Mōkōnā. Nobody in our group was really sick, except for Mōgñā, my [other] father, who later died. Those who had gone into the forest tried to give their medicines, but nothing worked. Many people died. Zāgpope, son of Gakrā, died, Nil Paci, Wāñglō, and Wāñpō (another son of Gakrā) died. Uglō (Gakrā's wife), Wāñēki, and Zeca died. Zāgçò, Yacag, another Zāgçò, and Yagnan Āgrè all died. Mōgñā, my father, died too. Cātag, Wāñluñ, and Mu all died. Wày died too. And Kaga, Wāñkuklō, Kowī, Kagnan, and Pankle died. The wife of Mōkōnā died, and then Mōkōnā died. Zeñkug died as well. And this was only among the adults. Many, many more children died.

So my group went to live south of here on the reserve. Then Eduardo saw our smoke, so he called to us with his horn. The Indians thought Eduardo was a good man. We thought that the children who had been picked up by the White Men were responsible for the attempt to contact us. They wanted to get in touch with us to teach us. Eduardo had their names marked down on paper. Kōzīkrā, Nowēñ, and Nānyawī. He asked whose children these were and, we told him. Nowēñ was my brother. Eduardo said that it wasn't he who had picked up the children but other people.

Eduardo was right down there, so we came and he gave us pigs and manioc flour, cane sugar, and more. The next day we returned and killed another pig. We were on the east side of the Plate river. I was there with my father, Kāyèta, Wāñpō, and Wāñēki. The others were off in the forest. For two months, we stayed here and no one appeared. So my father ordered Wāñēki to go to look for Gakrā. Wāñēki found Gakrā and told him that Kāmren wanted to see him. He told Gakrā, "when you return, Kāmren will ask for some cattle for you." Wāñēki returned and told Kāmren, who went to Eduardo to ask for cattle. We killed them. The women stayed here while the men went to carry the meat to the others, and then Gakrā arrived.

Eduardo sent another bull. The Indians liked beef, and at first we liked Eduardo too, because he gave us everything. We were never missing anything. It was only later that he refused to give us medicines. We were camped on the north end of the reserve. Eduardo called to us, and I went because I was already grown up. Eduardo said, "call them. Tell them that I will give them things." Wāñēki went to notify the trekking group of Wày and somebody else went to notify the group of Kawe Patè. Eduardo sent someone to get pigs and cows. Then he distributed clothes, blankets, and knives.

At this point, no one was holding the seclusion, because the spouse, in general, was sick as well and, we were afraid to leave her in seclusion, for fear she would die. So we just held the āgyin ceremonies. But no one in our trekking group died, except for my father Mōgā. Gakrā discussed this with my father. "If someone dies, what are we going to do?"

“We should call everyone here for a meeting.” They wanted to hold an *ãgyin* ceremony in which everyone would paint, but no one would observe the seclusion. So they made mead and painted, over there on the east bank of the Plate River. They notified Eduardo of the ceremony, and he gave 2 pigs and a cow. He also gave presents to all the widows. Afterwards, they decided that it was time to hold an *ãgran* ceremony.

The first time they held an *ãgran* ceremony on the reserve, it was held where Gervásio’s house is now. They made 5 vats of mead. Eduardo gave 2 bulls and 2 pigs, clothes, and blankets. He gave blankets to all of the widows. At the beginning of the *ãgran*, Gakrã notified Eduardo to come and take pictures with his camera. After 4 vats of mead had been drunk, Eduardo gave them another bull. The ceremony ended after three days.

Afterwards, the men went to hunt. All of the women stayed behind. The hunters sent word for them to make mead again. They made 5 vats, then they held the *ãgran* ceremony, but without giving lip plugs to infants. Eduardo sent 2 canoes to Ibirama, which brought back 4 pigs, 1 bull, and some manioc flour. He brought clothes too, and then he summoned Dr. Straube to come and see the *ãgran*. The latter came, with his wife, on horseback. When the mead was ready, the group of hunters arrived. They brought back tapirs and wild pigs, which they divided up. At mid-day, the *ãgran* began.

We stayed here for a long time, then we divided up and went to the forest. My group went to Itaió Grande. Kawe went to Deneke. Gakrã went to Navegantes. We stayed maybe 5 months in the forest.

At this time, Eduardo was good for the Indians. He didn’t want to kill them. It was only later that he killed Indians. We always used to work together with Eduardo at that time. All of the young men worked for him, but the older ones made their own fields, because they had families. But after a few years, the young men too went off to take care of their own farms. At first, Eduardo had given us meat to eat. He had given us everything. But later all of this stopped. When we had all of the workers together, we would plant 3 sacks of corn and 2 sacks of beans with no trouble at all. When all the corn and beans were ready, the Indians got some to eat. But it turned out not to be worth it, because we got so little. The children went hungry and starving.

Point of View II: The White Man

The second interpretation of the 1914-1916 events reflects the point of view of the “White Man,” in this case, that of Eduardo de Lima e Silva Hoerhan. José Deeke, with whose narrative of the first days of contact in 1914 I begin, arrived at the River Plate Post shortly after the contact had been made. His account probably derives, in some measure, from conversations with Hoerhan. The latter also, together with Dr. Hugo Straube, wrote the “Report of the River Plate Post (1915),” probably sometime in 1916, and it was Hoerhan’s reflections that I recorded in 1975.

Born in the last decade of the nineteenth century, Eduardo Hoerhan reportedly grew up in an aristocratic household in Rio de Janeiro. According to his testimony, the principal intellectual influence on him was Lobato,¹⁰ whose works he read in their entirety. He completed the *Ginásio* (high school) and entered the university in agronomy but soon left. He chose agronomy, he said, because of a sense of duty to his country, and he thought that this was an area in which he could make a contribution. His interest was always in applied science, although he considered himself an intellectual. When he told his mother of his decision to “pacify” Indians in the wilderness of southern Brazil, she said, “you will repent; you will cry tears of blood; you will eat bread that the devil has kneaded.” Looking back over his life more than 60 years later, he said: “it was all true, but I never repented.”

*José Deeke's Account*¹¹

The Indian Agency, or "Commission of Savages,"¹² as one is accustomed to call it here, maintains in the Hansa region two so-called "Attraction Posts," one of which is on the Krauel River and the other on the Plate River. These posts, each one occupied by a Post chief, some workers and some tame Indians with family, serves, with its farms and presents placed in the vicinity, as a lure for the Indians, with whom communication is to be established through the already tame Indians. Since the beginning, things have not been successful. When the Indians appeared for the first time at the Krauel River Post, the occasion on which they killed the worker Horak, it was not possible, by any means whatsoever, to enter into contact with them. The workers that were there consider themselves lucky to have escaped with their lives. Afterwards, it seemed that the Indians had abandoned the area entirely. They did not appear again, and the Posts, maintained with great expense, appeared effectively to have been made for the recreation of the workers. These latter, indeed, also ended up losing the confidence that, in the beginning, had animated them. Now, suddenly the savages appeared, on the 20th of this month and, without any prior sign having been noticed, they chased away all of the personnel in the Plate River Post and set on fire all of the huts. The time of the attack was well-chosen, because the Post chief was then in Hammonia [Ibirama]; three men had descended the river by canoe to get supplies and two others had ascended the river to hunt and fish.

As soon as he received word of the attack, Eduardo [Hoerhan] went immediately by canoe up the river with a group of men he had organized. They arrived in the locale the day after the event. After having hidden the weapons they had brought in the bottom of the canoes, they went to the site of the Post, which was still smoking, and the tame Indian Bree was shouting out from within the forest. The Indians then responded immediately and, it could be seen that some of them were sitting on the trunks of trees that had been felled for the farms not long before. It was there that they had made their observation posts. They let out a kind of war cry and made threats with their arrows which they had placed in their bows.

But Eduardo, who had learned the language of the tame Caingang Indians, exhausted the entire vocabulary at his disposal, and the Indians did the same, until they succeeded in exchanging a few recognizable words. When they noticed the similarity of the languages, the Indians as well attempted to speak very clearly and slowly, in such a way that they arrived at a reasonable understanding.

But with this, they had still accomplished little, because the Indians were not to be so easily convinced that nothing bad would happen to them. They believed that they were being attracted in order to be later annihilated and, because of this, they continued to maintain a hostile attitude, threatening with their weapons, preventing any attempted approximation.

Then Eduardo threw away the weapons he had with him and, with his arms raised, he went in the direction of the Indians, accompanied by the Indian Bree, who also had his arms raised.

Even though the Indians had verified that, from the two unarmed men, no harm could come, they continued to be mistrustful and threatened to shoot. When the two were very near by, one of the more excited Indians shot two arrows, one of which grazed the chest of the Indian Bree. Seeing this action of their companion, the other Indians became angry, grabbed him, and then threw his weapon to the ground.

With this, the first difficulties were surmounted. The Indians immediately took possession of the presents that were offered, although continuing to show themselves very mistrustful. The objects were to be taken to a determined spot and, the one who left them would have to return immediately. Only in this way would the Indians go to get the gifts. In the beginning, they preferred the pieces of clothing and objects made of iron. Foods, such as sugar, manioc flour, rice, and beans, they did not know yet.

However, these people were not modest in any way; they never showed themselves to be satisfied and, they were not content if any of the items that could have been given to them was not given. At first, only five or seven unarmed Indians would come from the forest. They were dressed, aside from their own tangas, in the jackets that they had previously acquired, while their legs remained naked. The Indian chief positioned himself, immovable, at the edge of the forest and had behind him, by what could be noticed, a group of armed Indians.

*Report of the Plate River Post (1915)*¹³

In January of this year, the Shokleng Indians, who were pacified in September of the previous year, appeared in great numbers at the Post. They adopted an attitude so ferocious and aggressive that all of the workers and interpreters assembled and presented themselves to the chief of the post, unanimously declaring themselves to be firmly committed to abandoning the service, in view of the grave risks they ran, seeing as how they were totally unarmed and fewer in number than the Shokleng, who, at each moment, threatened them with death.

In spite of the insistence, and of arguments on the part of the Post chief, they refused to continue in the service. All of the efforts of the Post chief to impede the interruption of service were to no avail, seeing as how there was not one man who, together with him, was willing to remain in the Post. It being, therefore, entirely impossible to continue the work of pacification, the group descended on the night of the 21st [of January], the service being interrupted.

It being the case that, in the middle of February, the Shokleng Indians were giving signals in the valley of the upper Krauel, the Post chief, who was then in Hammonia [Ibirama], awaiting supplies and orders to augment the group and continue the job of pacification, organized an expedition to that region. In this expedition, he traversed all of the paths and all of the farms of the former Post, without encountering the smallest trace of the presence of Indians.

In the month of March, the Post chief had knowledge, by means of a reconnaissance group sent by river, that the Indians, in great number, with wives and children, were to be found on the right bank of the Itajai River, in front of the Post and on the edge of the Plate River. By means of loud cries, the Indians attempted to make themselves understood, requesting that they be transported to the Post for the purpose of receiving food.

With authorization of the Inspector, the Post chief went there with a small group, bringing some cattle and presents that were acquired with great difficulty, owing to the lack of payment and of credit in general.

After a few days with the Indians, the group, having exhausted the presents and supplies, returned to Scharlack [José Boiteaux].

In the beginning of May..., with a small group, the Post chief went to the Plate Post, where he found a few Shokleng that were there, waiting for him to bring some presents and supplies. The Indians then slaughtered some cattle, keeping the rest, they said, for when the other Indians came. After drying the meat, they requested that they be transported to the other side of the river, where they retreated into the forest. They said they would return shortly, accompanied by their brothers of the tribe.

After three days, there was seen on the side of the mountain four great columns of smoke rising up into the air.

On the next day, the Indians, on the other bank of the river, responded to the shouts of the Post chief. For the first time, the Post chief and his group had taken firearms. After crossing in the canoes to the Post, the Indians confiscated the firearms, taking them to their camps on the other side of the Itajai River.

As already for a day and a half there was no food, the Post chief decided to descend, making firm promises to the Indians to return shortly. They requested of him then, with much insistence, that he bring them axes, machetes, pans, blankets, clothes, in short all that they needed.

In June of this year, the Indians appeared at a distance of half an hour from the settlement of Scharlack [José Boiteaux], in the middle of the road, shouting and letting it be known that they desired to know where our personnel were, because they wanted to be given food, clothes, and blankets.

Since the Post chief was in Hammonia [Ibirama], occupied with payments, being informed immediately by the settlers of these occurrences, he went there forthwith. It required considerable effort to prevent the settlers, agitated at the sight of Indians killing their cattle, from shooting the Indians. Day after day, more Indians arrived and, day after day, the exodus of the settlers continued. Eleven families had already abandoned the settlements, taking with them only as much as was possible. Measures were taken, in the following way, to make amends for any damages caused by the Indians: in proportion as the Indians killed cattle, these cattle were acquired by the Post for an agreed upon price. Only thusly was it possible to achieve a reparation, which would otherwise have been violent, since it was no longer possible to prevent the killing of cattle on the part of the Indians, and, on the other side, it was impossible to restrain the settlers who were intent upon reacting with bullets.

So the month of June was passed, full of precautions and unforeseen events.

Thanks to his enormous efforts, the Inspector, having been apprised of everything by telegrams, succeeded not only in seeing to it that the threatened termination of services for lack of funds did not come to pass, but also in obtaining funds that would permit the continuation of the work of pacification.

The Indians now had to be removed from the center of population and conducted to the Plate River. This task turned out to be difficult because the Shokleng had already comprehended the advantages of being close to the centers of population, where everything was easy to obtain. Even so, despite all of the difficulties and obstacles of every sort, the Post chief managed to convince them of the necessity of returning to the Post. Finally, with great promises that they would lack nothing at the Post, they complied with this request. On the 13th of July, the Post chief, in the company of two tame Indians from Paraná, departed, leading them by the entirely obstructed path that goes from Scharlack to the Plate River Post.

The month of December was the most difficult for all of the work, because of the permanent residence, in the last 15 days, of 130 Shokleng Indians, who, in numbers immeasurably superior to our own group, became extremely insolent, attempting, incessantly, to disrupt the established order.

The Shokleng are of an extremely treacherous character, and the more they display friendship, the more precaution one ought to take. Their own sister of race and tribe, Amendosima, who married the Paraná interpreter João Pripri, told us various times that her brothers had the firm intention of murdering all of the personnel and, principally, the Post chief, who was dozens of times in imminent danger.

The Post chief made the greatest efforts to get the Shokleng to begin to work in the farms. Some Shokleng already work in the fields, but only when they are summoned, not having the least persistence. Even so, when they do work, they carry out their tasks. They are exceedingly lazy and do not like to exert themselves, even when they very much desire the promised remuneration.

Not liking work they, nevertheless, do not fail to enjoy feasts and dances, for which they prepare a drink from honey, with water and other ingredients, that is strongly alcoholic. They give to these feasts the name of Varncredma and, they are accompanied by a kind of dance, that only terminates when the last drop of drink has been served.

Considerable progress has been made, just in habituating the Shokleng to our foods, prepared with salt.

The observations made by the Post chief Hoerhann (sic) on the character of the Shokleng, keeping always in mind the state in which they were to be found, are the following:

They are ungrateful, not recognizing the good that has been done for them, and being convinced of this.

They are cruel and implacable, even among themselves, in the breast of their own families.

They are treacherous and cowardly, attacking always by ambush.

They are gluttonous and insatiable, nothing is enough for them, they want everything.

*Hoerhan's Relections: 1975*¹⁴

I was attracted to pacification work by a sense of mission and beneficence in relation to the Indians, also, perhaps, by a certain romantic image of frontier life.

I wanted the Indians to be a healthy and robust people. As I saw it, they would be allowed to use clothes and other conveniences to the extent they wanted. With respect to religion, they would ultimately be allowed to choose. I saw myself as a kind of missionary, *mutatis mutandis*, well-organized and effective in bettering the life of the people.

My idea was to change them economically. I saw the only possible route to adaptation as through agriculture, and I later imagined that this might occur through mechanization. But this ran counter to their entire organization.

I tried various means of punishment, explaining to them exactly why I was doing what I was doing. For example, I tried not allowing them certain privileges, such as clothes, presents, and so forth. The Indians always let on that they understood and agreed, but were inwardly revolting and intransigent. I never tried jail. I tried corporal punishment a couple of times, but it didn't work, so I gave up. They don't understand this, since death is their punishment. Order was imposed by an indirect threat of death and dire consequence, which they could understand. The punishment would come from the big chief, the government. This was a completely externally imposed order.

Many times, I wanted to leave the service, since very early on, principally because of the state of abandon in which I was left by the SPI [the government Indian agency]. I feel this to be the major reason behind my lack of success in achieving my original objectives.

I do not feel that my work has been completely useless, but I never imagined that the Indians would arrive at this state of degeneration.

Gifts, Power, and the Meaning of Contact

From an objective point of view, the events that occurred in the wilderness of Santa Catarina during 1914-1915 had to do with power, and with the ability of an encompassing Brazilian nation to have its way with the Shokleng tribe. After 1915, the Shokleng, who had once been a fiercely independent people, accustomed to making their own decisions, were considered "pacified," no longer a threat

to Brazilian settlers streaming into the region. The Brazilian government decided on the boundaries of their reservation, an island of forest in a sea of colonization. The Brazilian government protected them from the colonists. It attended to their health, taught them agriculture, built the wood-frame houses in which they began to live. In short, the Shokleng were brought into the political orbit of the Brazilian state.

Strikingly, however, the Shokleng were never militarily defeated. At no time did they ever concede the superior coercive strength of the Brazilian government. What happened in their case, instead, was what the Brazilians call "pacification." This is a process whereby the wills of the individuals making up a society are bent by a peculiar sort of persuasion. It is a process of domination, but one in which the use of force is minimized and, in which, the end result is paternalism.

The term "military" is used here advisedly, and in its broadest possible sense, as having to do with the use of force to control the conduct of others. Traditional Shokleng conceptions did not include a clearcut distinction between victory and defeat, such as is found in Western military traditions. Interactions between bands generally involved sporadic raiding over the course of years and decades. The objectives involved avenging previous wrongs and, possibly at an underlying level, safeguarding territory. However, the Shokleng did comprehend the use of force to effect domination. Just prior to the pacification, the Shokleng band discussed above inflicted a decisive blow on a second band, making use of a ruse in which the band was invited to a ceremony, only to be set upon by the hosts. It was for this reason, as much as owing to the effects of disease and conflicts with settlers, that this second band contained only some 50 survivors at the time of contact.

Military conquest and pacification both rely upon signals and meanings. However, they do so in different ways. Military coercion is a direct and unambiguous signal of domination. It suggests to the conquered population that the conqueror is in a position to carry out his will, despite resistance from others. It relies upon fear for life and well-being as the motivation for compliance. "Pacification," in contrast, is indirect and ambiguous, depending upon the interpretations by individuals of events and situations that are, in some measure, inscrutable. It holds out rewards for compliance, while simultaneously downplaying negative consequences.

Perhaps easiest for us to comprehend is Eduardo Hoerhan's interpretation of the contact. The "Report of the Plate River Post" gives us an idea of the enormous, seemingly insurmountable, difficulties Hoerhan faced. He had to keep the Shokleng from attacking the Brazilian settlers, and to keep the settlers from attacking the Shokleng. Simultaneously, he was himself short on supplies and forced to importune his superiors in Rio de Janeiro. In the midst of all this, the SPI workers were threatening to abandon the project, malaria and other diseases were rampant, and the Shokleng were making efforts to kill Eduardo and the other SPI workers.

Hoerhan considered his efforts to be heroic, and we must agree with him. He displayed tremendous courage and stamina in pursuing what he felt was a humanitarian goal. He wished to end the frontier carnage on both sides, and, ultimately, to protect Shokleng culture, in the face of a steam-rolling Brazilian national expansion. From his point of view, he was the only hope the Shokleng had.

The Shokleng did not see things the same way. They had always been politically and economically autonomous. If they could not produce what they needed,

they could use their military might to take what they needed from others. We do not sense, from Wāñpō's narrative, that the Shokleng were under unbearable economic and military stress from the surrounding settler society. The pacification resulted rather from their growing belief that Hoerhan meant them no harm and that they could get what they wanted from him without resort to violence.

Their disillusionment in this respect was twofold. They gradually discovered (1) that there were important negative consequences to the "pacification," ultimately the loss of their sovereignty, and of significant components of their traditional culture, and (2) that they could not, in fact, get what they wanted. By this time, however, it was already too late to turn back. Pacification proved to be an irreversible process.

The principal mechanism of the Shokleng pacification was the "gift." This fit into traditional Shokleng patterns, where sharing was a key component of sociability. From the narratives, it is evident that the 1914-1915 encounters consisted primarily in the giving of gifts by the SPI workers to the Shokleng. Gift-giving was the means of attraction recognized by the SPI since its founding and, it is the means that FUNAI continues to employ to this day. Through gifts, the expanding nation-state entices the isolated population, gradually accustoms it to goods only it can produce, and finally, uses these gifts in carrot-and-stick fashion to assert its dominance. We can see in gifts the central mechanism of modern conquest.

That gift-giving was subjectively prominent for the Shokleng can be appreciated through an inspection of Wāñpō's account. His narrative begins with the discovery of material items--"there were knives, cups, shirts, blankets, and axes." Virtually every succeeding page of the transcription contains further detailed description of the gifts. The textual importance of gifts mirrors their importance in thought. Moreover, the gifts are not simply undifferentiated "things." In Wāñpō's narrative, we find a wonderously rich world, filled with specific items, "manioc flour," "sugar," "knives," and "cups," items that are even in many cases quantified--"2 pigs," "2 bulls," "3 sacks of manioc flour," "2 sacks of rice." These gifts exercised a fascination, a power over the Shokleng mind. This power furnished the motor of the pacification process.

Gifts were also subjectively important to the White Men. This is indicated on page after page of the "Report of the Plate River Post" and also in Deeke's account. However, these accounts reveal a difference in the meanings attached to the gifts. For the White Men, the gifts, as objects, were taken-for-granted items. Often, they formed an undifferentiated category--"some cattle and presents," "the objects." They were not special, discrete entities, and they held no fascination or wonder.

Simultaneously, the Shokleng accounts emphasize the abundance of the gifts. This was apparent from Wāñpō's intonation patterns during the narration. The 1915 "Report," in contrast, stresses scarcity and the difficulties involved in provisioning. The gifts were seen as "acquired with great difficulty, owing to the lack of payment and of credit in general." This is echoed in Hoerhan's 1975 reflections, where he protests that the SPI had left him in a "state of abandon." For Hoerhan, the gift-giving was a draining process. Items were acquired only with difficulty, and the Shokleng wanted too much.

To see how the actual subordination of the Shokleng was accomplished, we must follow the progress of the narrative line, which in turn reflects the unfolding

historical process. For the Shokleng, the items found initially at Morador dos Indios were clearly signals of a desire for contact. But what did they make of those signals?

To understand this, it is necessary to appreciate the Shokleng perspective. The Shokleng had no awareness of the complex world system of which they were about to become part. While they knew that the gifts signalled a desire for contact, they had no idea what motive lay behind that desire. Had the Shokleng harrassed the White Men so much that the latter were finally surrendering? Were the White Men engaging in a kind of "confidence trick," luring the Shokleng into contact in order to spring upon them and kill them? The Shokleng were familiar with the technique of feigning peace, as they themselves had actually employed it in dealing with other bands. The Indian hunters, as well, had probably employed it against them. Or, was there to be a truce, with both sides agreeing to a cessation of hostilities? If this last, what were the terms of the truce to be? It is such issues that the Shokleng must have debated among themselves.

Importantly, however, there was never any question of the Shokleng surrendering. For many years, at least since the mid-nineteenth century, the Shokleng had been waging war against the Brazilian settlers. They were accustomed to a military existence, an almost guerrilla lifestyle. This was part of the order of things, and few signs had appeared on the horizon indicating that they could not have continued that life indefinitely. However, the settlers did keep streaming into their territory, and, although the settlers were sometimes forced into retreat, the Shokleng may have been contemplating alternative strategies for dealing with this problem.

The narratives provide some evidence for the view that the Shokleng saw their aggression as paying off, even if they did not feel that they had "conquered" the White Men. From the accounts, it appears that the White Man's "giving" resembled more closely aggressive "taking" by the Shokleng. This was apparent from the start, as is shown by Wãñpō's account;

Eduardo was already there. They wanted to kill him... There were five tents... filled with things such as knives and axes. Womle and Kowi came and took everything. They knew these were presents. And they knew that Eduardo was watching.

Deeke's account contains similar references to taking--"the Indians immediately took possession of the presents that were offered, although continuing to show themselves mistrustful." This domineering attitude by the Shokleng continued throughout 1915, as the "Report of the Plate River Post" makes apparent. There is repeated reference to the assertiveness of the Indians in relation to the gifts--"they requested of him (the post chief) then, with much insistence, that he bring them axes, machetes, clothes, in short, all that they needed;" "the Indians appeared...shouting and letting it be known they desired to know where our personnel were, because they wanted to be given food, clothes, and blankets."

The accounts on both sides make very clear that, at least during the initial phase, the Shokleng were calling the shots. Shokleng made demands on Hoerhan and the SPI. No demands were made on them in return. There is a critical point in the narrative where Hoerhan begins to assert his control. However, during this initial phase, which lasted from September 1914 until June 1915, a period of some 10 months, there was created an illusion of Shokleng sovereignty and even dominance. This was part of the original SPI plan for "pacification," and it is no wonder that, after this initial phase, disillusionment would set in.

A central bit of evidence that the Shokleng used in constructing their interpretation of the initial phase of contact concerned the three children who had been captured by the White Men. Wãñpõ mentions this at the beginning of the narrative: “Gakrã (the chief) thought it was they (the captured children) who had put the things there, because they wanted us to meet the White Men.” Within the narrative, placement of this critical fact at the beginning sets the stage for disillusionment. It was evident to the Shokleng that, if the gifts had been placed by the children, then there was no mischief afoot. There could be no trap, since the children would never betray them.

It is in this light that we must understand the later revelation, occurring about two-thirds of the way through the narrative:

The Indians thought that... the children who had been picked up by the White Men were responsible for the attempt to contact us. They wanted to get in touch with us, to teach us. Eduardo had their names marked down on paper. He asked whose children these were and we told him. Eduardo said that it wasn't he who had picked up the children but other people.

It is difficult for us to grasp the horror that the Shokleng must have felt upon hearing this. If the children were not responsible for the contact, what was the true motive behind the “gifts?” It is the gradual, but nonetheless chilling, revelation of Wãñpõ’s narrative that the gifts were indeed part of a “confidence trick.” They were part of the mechanism of subordination.

Hoerhan and the SPI team, from the start, conceptualized gift-giving as a transitional mode of relationship. Gift-giving was a signal designed to “attract” the Indians, to get them to see the good intentions of the SPI. Hoerhan never dreamed that unilateral gift-giving could be a permanent state of affairs, the method of articulation between the Shokleng and Brazilian national society. From the beginning, Hoerhan was experiencing difficulties in obtaining the supplies he needed. Already, by mid-1915, the Shokleng demands were becoming excessive.

Hoerhan’s 1975 reflections attest to his understanding that “the only possible route to adaptation” for the Shokleng was “through agriculture.” The Shokleng would have to produce for themselves. Moreover, they would have to produce enough for sale, so that they could obtain the “clothes and other conveniences” they wanted. By the end of 1915, according to the “Report of the Plate River Post,” some Shokleng were already beginning to work in the fields.

In contrast, the Shokleng themselves seemed not to understand that the gifts would later dry up, that there was a finite supply. Initially, the “pacification” for them meant easy access to meat, flour, clothes, knives, and axes. Indeed, it meant not even having to work so hard at hunting and gathering.

That the Shokleng entertained this view is brought out with particular poignancy in the José Boiteaux incident, as recounted in the “Report of the Plate River Post.” In June of 1915, the Indians arrived at this Brazilian outpost while the SPI agents were away. Being accustomed to taking what they wanted from the SPI, they proceeded to slaughter and eat the cattle belonging to the settlers. Evidently, they imagined that the relationship they had established with the SPI over the past ten months could be generalized to all White Men. It is notable that, in Wãñpõ’s narrative, there is no mention of the killing of cattle in José Boiteaux, which the SPI report indicates as having caused such a stir. It is as if the event were so natural that the Shokleng failed to recognize the difficulty.

In fact, the Shokleng have never been entirely disabused of their original interpretation of the contact. They continue to believe that White Men should, and will, give to them unilaterally, just as Hoerhan had done initially. Indeed, their “disillusionment” over the pacification focused not on this general belief, but rather on Eduardo himself, whom they saw as having undergone a transformation. Wāñpō’s narrative hints darkly at this transformation: “The Indians liked beef and, at first, we liked Eduardo too, because he gave us everything. We were never missing anything. It was only later that he refused to give us medicines.” The failure of unilateral giving is explained not by a reinterpretation of the “realities” of contact, i.e., what the contact was all about, but rather by a splitting of the category of “White Man” into two--“good” and “bad.” White Men are good in proportion as they give freely to the Shokleng, bad in proportion as they withhold.

The José Boiteaux incident marked a significant turning point in the history of Shokleng sovereignty. Here, for the first time, Eduardo Hoerhan and the SPI managed to exercise significant control over the Shokleng. Hoerhan persuaded the Shokleng to leave José Boiteaux and to retreat deeper into the wilderness. This the Shokleng were loathe to do because they could easily obtain all the goods they desired there. From Hoerhan’s perspective, however, the Shokleng were disturbing the settlers, and the settlers might possibly harm the Shokleng in return. Hoerhan had to act in such a way as to keep the peace.

Hoerhan’s success in this endeavor marked the beginning of the end of Shokleng sovereignty. Prior to this incident, the Shokleng had been firmly in control. They would come to the SPI post or not, as they saw fit. They would go where they wanted, when they wanted, within the constraints of only military concerns. Now, Eduardo Hoerhan, acting on behalf of the SPI and the Brazilian national society, exercised his will over the Shokleng. This was a question, albeit a subtle one, of power. From this point onward, Hoerhan would begin to assert his dominance.

Hoerhan’s method in this regard is significant. He managed to persuade the Shokleng by promising them gifts:

Despite all of the difficulties and obstacles of every sort, the Post chief managed to convince them of the necessity of returning to the Post. Finally, with great promises that they would lack nothing at the Post, they complied with this request.

Initially, gift-giving itself had been used as a means of attraction. Now, the promise of gifts was being employed as a means of control. The mechanism of attraction became the carrot that was used as a reward for Shokleng compliance with the interests of the Brazilian national society.

If the promise of gifts was used as a carrot, perhaps the withholding of gifts could be used as a stick, as a means of punishment. Hoerhan mentions this in his 1975 reflections, although he indicates that punishment generally did not work. By this time, presumably, the Shokleng had already formed their opinion of Hoerhan as a “bad,” i.e., withholding, White Man.

The events that followed the José Boiteaux incident consolidated Shokleng dependence on the SPI. The band was hit by an influenza epidemic. The severity of the outbreak is difficult for us to comprehend. Judging from genealogies and from early SPI figures, the group seems to have been reduced by some two-thirds (from around 400 to some 150)¹⁵ during the 1914-1916 period and, much of this reduction can probably be traced to the influenza epidemic. Wāñpō’s understand-

ing of these events, however, cannot be adequately conveyed by abstract figures. For him, these deaths were the deaths of real people whom he had known. Many of them were his kinsmen. His narrative brings out the staggering, virtually incomprehensible losses by means of a list, which is actually only a partial one.

The fabric of Shokleng culture was fraying. Traditional practice called for communal ceremonies after each death. The unprecedented number of deaths forced changes in this regard. Wānpō remarks that “at this point, no one was holding the seclusion, because the spouse, in general, was sick as well and, we were afraid to leave her in seclusion for fear she would die.” Prior to this time, the Shokleng had been able to manage their deaths. Now deaths were occurring in nightmarish proportions, rendering daily life bewildering and uncertain. Reduced by sickness, in the midst of incomprehensible change, the Shokleng were becoming dependent on Hoerhan. That dependency would further undermine their already waning sovereignty. Barely one year after the initial contact, the Shokleng were falling into the orbit of the Brazilian state.

It is sad that Hoerhan did not learn of the effects of this epidemic, which the Shokleng evidently withheld from him. The “Report of the Plate River Post” makes no mention of it, and my 1975 discussions with Hoerhan indicate that he was in the dark. Modern day FUNAI agents, such as Apoena Mereiles, who headed the 1980-1982 Uru-eu-wau-wau pacification project, understood that they are harbingers of death and destruction. Hoerhan, however, was the leader of one of the first SPI missions. There was, as yet, no experience of the medical horrors of contact.

The Shokleng were never defeated militarily. However, they were defeated medically. They could not withstand the White Man’s diseases, and, as the gift-giving gradually dried up, they had no strength left to resist. In 1975, Hoerhan remarked that the Shokleng had reached an “uneasy truce with civilization.” From the present discussion, we can understand what he meant.

Pacification is a means of domination, comparable to military conquest, although the end result is paternalism. It makes use of certain characteristic emotional and intellectual processes. Most notably, pacification plays upon ambiguity and upon the haziness of understanding. When the haze clears, members of a “pacified” society often discover that they have been tricked, but that it is already too late. Ultimately, pacification can be construed as a form of deceit.

Moreover, it is a form of deceit in which pacifier and pacified alike may participate. Hoerhan considered himself to be acting in the best interests of the Shokleng. If it were not for him, carnage on the frontier would have continued. The result, ultimately, would have been the annihilation of the entire band of Shokleng. Such was the fate of a second band of Shokleng that eluded SPI contact. The general humanitarianism of Hoerhan’s position led him to imagine that the Shokleng would be ultimately grateful for what he had done.

However, looking back, Hoerhan had to ask himself whether he was, in fact, acting in the “best interests” of the Shokleng themselves. What did it mean to save the Shokleng biologically, if their culture--the way of life and system of values that had characterized those people--was to be destroyed? There is a kind of ethnocentrism built into the pacification process. One imagines that, when a once isolated population has had the chance to survive biologically, its members will agree that it was better to have “surrendered” than to have died fighting. Responsibility for the initial decision is removed from the population itself. However,

individuals find in themselves a desire to preserve their culture, sometimes even at the expense of their own lives. That is, after all, the essence of war. Had the Shokleng, in 1914, been able to gaze into the crystal ball, had they been able to see the devastation of traditional ways that was to occur, would they have opted for “pacification?” Hoerhan himself, in 1975, expressed a sense of despair.

The story of the Shokleng pacification, however, is not an entirely negative one. It is true that the process resulted in a sense of mutual bitterness between pacifier and pacified, and that it resulted in the destruction of many aspects of traditional Shokleng culture. However, it has also allowed for the persistence of a belief in sovereignty among the Shokleng people. This has made possible the continuation, for nearly seventy years now, of a struggle between the Shokleng community and their SPI, and later FUNAI, guardians. The Shokleng managed to have Hoerhan deposed in 1954,¹⁶ and, while this was a personal tragedy for Hoerhan, it was a triumph for the Shokleng community. Today, the struggle continues, as the Shokleng community persists in its endeavors to find a balance between political autonomy and participation in the Brazilian nation-state.

We may suspect that many aspects of the Shokleng pacification are unique. Yet, the narratives provide us with insights into the general nature of the process. They show how the participants place meaning on events and situations, and, how this meaningfulness makes possible the gradual accumulation of power by the pacifying-conquering population and how it results in the diminution of sovereignty within the pacified-conquered population. All processes of domination have a subjective moment. In pacification, this moment is particularly subtle. Meanings mesh with events and situations, like so many tiny gears, the results of whose interaction yield the large-scale process we are able to discern. To understand this intricate mechanism, we must make use of narratives. It is to be hoped that more of these become available soon for the Brazilian tribes, where the last remaining isolated populations are now coming into contact.

Acknowledgements

Field research among the Shokleng in, 1974-1976, was funded, in part, by a Doherty Foundation Program in Latin American Studies grant. Further field research in, 1981-1982, was assisted by a grant from the Joint Committee on Latin American and the Caribbean of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies, by a grant from the University Research Institute of the University of Texas at Austin, and by a summer grant administered through the Institute of Latin American Studies of the University of Texas at Austin from funds granted to the Institute by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. I gratefully acknowledge the help of these institutions.

Notes

1. The film is in four 55 minute parts, the first two of which--entitled “The Search for the Kidnappers” and “The Blazing of the Trail”--are most relevant to the present discussion. The films are available, for educational and non-commercial purposes, through Adrian Cowell, Nomad Films Ltd., 46 Anson Road, London N7 OAB.
2. They are also known as “Kaingang” (Henry 1941), owing to their linguistic and cultural affiliation with a neighboring tribe of that name, “Aweikoma” (Hicks 1966), and “Botocudo of Santa Catarina.”

3. The present narrative was obtained in January of 1975, after I had been with the Shokleng for some six months. The narrative was delivered partly in Portuguese and partly in Shokleng. Wãñpõ allowed enough time between utterances for me to transcribe the narrative. I transcribed Portuguese passages directly into free English translations, while taking down verbatim the Shokleng, later translating it into Portuguese and then into English. This particular narration was not taped, although I did tape other accounts of the 1914-1916 events.
4. See the accompanying map for the location of places mentioned in the narratives.
5. This means, literally, "living-place of the Indians."
6. Wãñpõ's pronominal usage shifts, throughout this narrative, between "we" and "they" when he means the Shokleng of 1914. This shifting usage correlates with shifts in his perspective on the events. On the one hand, he was a participant, and he signals his participation by means of the pronoun "we." On the other hand, he was not yet an adult, and so tends to view those who were making the decisions as apart from himself. When he remembers the 1914-1916 events in the latter way, he employs the pronoun "they."
7. The ãgran is one of the two great Shokleng ceremonies. It is held in connection with the giving of lip plugs to infant boys and of thigh tattoos to girls. However, it is also an all-purpose ceremony used on various occasions, e.g., to celebrate the reunion of trekking groups. The other great ceremony is the ãgyin, held to celebrate the reintegration of a widow(er) into society following his or her seclusion. See Urban (1978) for detailed descriptions of these ceremonies.
8. I am uncertain of the precise location of the region Shokleng referred to as Pripa töl.
9. Hugo Straube was jointly responsible, together with Eduardo de Lima e Silva Hoerhan, for the pacification project. Apparently, he spent most of his time in Ibirama, while Hoerhan undertook the actual work of contacting the Shokleng.
10. José Bento Monteiro Lobato (1882-1948), a popular and influential writer of general and, what he called, "infantile" literature, of whom Edgard Cavalheiro (1962: 4) wrote: "a fearless fighter, sincerely consternated by the situation of economic inequality of the society in which he lived, he has taken, since his first book, a position on the side of the weak against the strong, of the oppressed against the oppressors."
11. This account, originally published in the Blumenau Zeitung, is taken from the Portuguese translation in Coelho dos Santos (1973: 144-148). The translation into English from Portuguese is my own.
12. The Portuguese word used here, and throughout, is bugres, which has a decidedly derogatory connotation, and also means "brute." "Savages" seems an inadequate translation of this word, which I have elsewhere rendered simply as "Indians."
13. A copy of this report was given to me by Dr. Aryon Rodrigues, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Campinas (UNICAMP). I wish to thank him for his help here. The English translations of original Portuguese, in which this document was written, are my own.
14. Hoerhan's reflections were recorded over the course of several evenings in 1975, when I was a guest in his house. As the light was usually too dim for adequate writing, I scribbled down notes in free English translation, from the Portuguese in which we conversed, then went over them again the following morning.
15. According to the "Report of the Plate River Post," the highest monthly average of Indians to appear at the post in 1915 was 113. "150" represents a guess as to the upward fluctuation, but there may have been as many as 200 members of this band still alive in 1915.
16. Hoerhan served as the official government Indian agent until 1954, when he was implicated in the murder of an Indian, Lili Pripa. The issues surrounding this tragic episode are too complex to be discussed here (see Coelho dos Santos 1973: 117-172). This event was the culmination of misunderstandings and disagreements that had been building since the first contacts in the 1914-1916 period. Hoerhan continued to live on the edge of the Indian reservation until his death a few years ago.

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Submitted 16 December 1983

Revised version submitted 7 August 1984

Accepted 31 October 1984

Final revisions received 20 December 1984