*Comparative Studies in Society and History* 2011;53(4):855–881.
0010-4175/11 $15.00 © Society for the Comparative Study of Society and History 2011
doi:10.1017/S0010417511000430

# Longing for Elsewhere: Guaraní Reterritorializations

GASTÓN GORDILLO

*Anthropology, University of British Columbia*

In September 2003, dozens of Guaraní families from the town of Hipólito Yrigoyen in northwest Argentina decided to take back La Loma, the forested hill that stands at the edge of town and from where they had been expelled decades earlier by the San Martín del Tabacal sugar plantation. On the verge of a cliff from where they could see the town and behind it the sugarcane fields, men, women, and children began clearing a space near their old cemetery in order to plant and begin building homes. In their makeshift camp, people raised an Argentinean flag and erected signs that read "Our Land" and "Argentinean Land." The participants in the takeover whom I talked to a few months later remembered that their return to La Loma generated an enormous collective enthusiasm and the hope of living "like before," working the land, raising animals, and free from the urban poverty and overcrowding of Hipólito Yrigoyen. However, six days later, when over a hundred people had gathered in the dark around a bonfire, police officers stormed the place shouting, "Move out!" Some officers accused them of being "undocumented Bolivians"; others asked where the Argentinean flag was, offended the flag was there. Twenty men and two women were arrested, handcuffed, and forced to walk single file down the hill, in an atmosphere of screams and scuffles that included shots in the air and the beating of a young man. A person from the community

Acknowledgments: My fieldwork in the sugar-producing region of Salta and Jujuy was funded by two grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and two Hampton Grants from the University of British Columbia. I presented previous versions of this article at the Latin American Studies Association Meeting in Puerto Rico (March 2006), and the Departments of Anthropology at Hunter College, City University of New York (March 2010), and the University of Victoria (November 2010). I thank the many people who guided me through the intricate paths of the Guaraní political aspirations, in particular the late Gloria Pérez (Campinta Guazu of the Guaraní people of Jujuy) and Mónica Romero, Ramón Tamani, Flora Cruz, Abel Camacho, Dominga Mendieta, Pablo (Indio) Badano, and Hernán Mascietti. I am also grateful to Jon Beasley-Murray, Silvia Hirsch, Shaylih Muehlmann, and the anonymous reviewers for *CSSH* for their challenging critical comments. Except in the case of leaders whose positions are publicly known, the names used in this article are pseudonyms.



https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

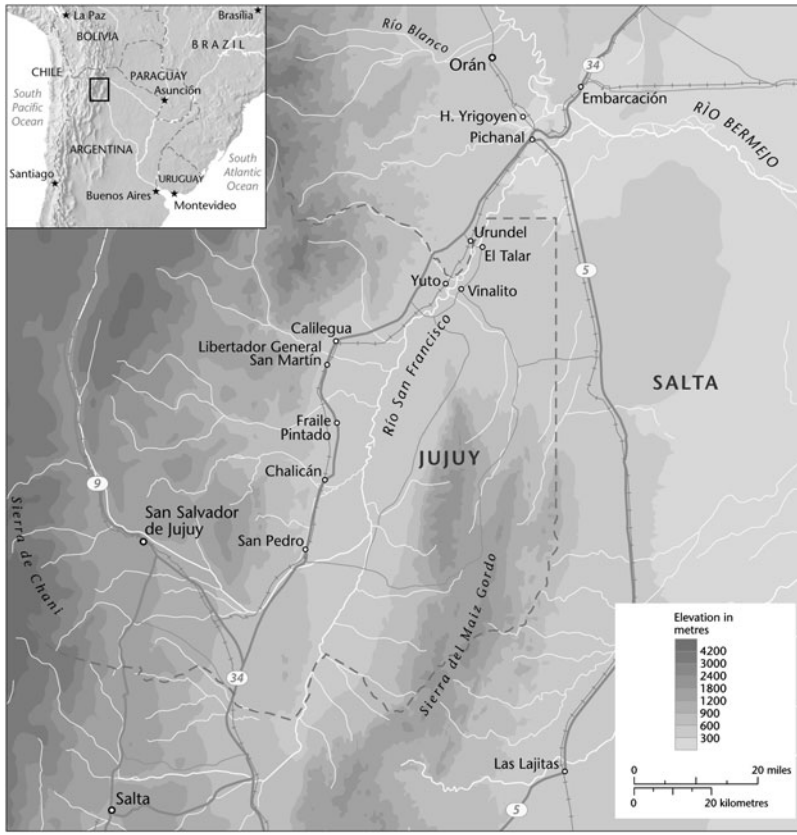



FIGURE 1 The sugar-producing region of Jujuy and Salta in northwest Argentina. Map by Eric Leinberger.

recalled what the plantation spokesperson subsequently said about their claim, based on the fact that many of their ancestors were plantation workers who came from Bolivia: "What do these immigrants think they're asking for? They should go ask for land in Bolivia."

The struggles for rights, as pointed out by Don Mitchell (2003), usually involve the right to occupy certain *places*. But while in other areas of northern Argentina the demand for land titling by groups who identify as indigenous often involves spaces they already occupy, what distinguishes the conflict around La Loma is that the demands "for the rights of the Guaraní people" imply an attempt to move to a rural space under the control of more powerful actors. A similar spatial dynamic has defined the main Guaraní land claim in the neighboring province of Jujuy, focused on government-owned lands east of the town of Vinalito, forty kilometers (twenty-five miles) south of Hipólito

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Yrigoyen. As in La Loma, the people who fought for the lands in Vinalito aimed to move there from nearby towns and this mobilization also generated accusations by the regional elites that the Guaraní are Bolivians with no rights to land. These two struggles, in other words, have revolved around contradictory views about the type of presence that the Guaraní people have historically had in the region. Whereas officials and businessmen see them as foreigners who are not entitled to territorial indigenous rights, Guaraní activists claim that they have been alienated from those rural spaces and that this legitimizes their territorial claims as "indigenous people." In this article, I analyze how these mobilizations bring to light the fraught spatiality that defines Guaraní indigeneity in northwest Argentina as well as the spatially productive nature of the reterritorializations it generates, with the overall objective of examining the unresolved tensions that characterize a diasporic indigeneity.

In the last decade, a growing number of scholars have examined indigeneity as a political process that can acquire very diverse historical expressions (de la Cadena and Starn 2007; Li 2000; Muehlmann 2009; Povinelli 2002; Tsing 2007). In the words of Mary Louise Pratt (2007: 402), indigeneity is "a bundle of generative possibilities, some of which will be activated or apparent at a given time and place while others will not." As part of this activation of multiple possibilities, different groups articulate their indigeneity in heterogeneous ways, due to the diverse regimes of recognition set up by different nation-states and the wide variety of historical experiences of those who identify as "indigenous." Contradicting stereotypes still common in media and popular representations, many actors define their indigeneity in their subsistence practices (as artisans, fishers, hunters) and in a shared experience of oppression, rather than language fluency or cultural authenticity (Field 1998; Gordillo 2004; Muehlmann 2009). In this regard, many people claim indigenous positionings despite having gone through prolonged processes of racial mixture and despite having lost their native language or abandoned distinct rituals (see Tilley 2005; Warren 2001; Escolar 2007).

Yet one of the conceptual challenges faced by recent attempts to problematize indigeneity involves its spatiality. Space, as well as space-based conceptions of temporality, has been at the core of the very concept of "indigenous," in particular the view that these actors have a presence in a given geography that is prior to the arrival of European settlers or state actors. This spatiality has been studied from a variety of positions. Some authors have focused on patterns of localized mobility and have sought to undermine old colonial views of indigenous people as nomads without attachment to a territory (Myers 1986; Ramos 1998). But other studies have projected onto indigenous people what I would call a stable spatiality, which emphasizes that their identities are grounded in, and defined by, well-defined territories saturated with meanings produced throughout generations. Keith Basso's ethnographic account of the Western Apache is probably the most famous

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

representative of this approach. In the author's words: "Inhabitants *of* their landscape, the Western Apache are thus inhabited *by* it as well, and in the timeless depth of their abiding reciprocity, the people and their landscape are virtually as one" (Basso 1996: 102, original italics; see also 62, 148). And while Basso's ethnography is sophisticated, rich, and evocative, it replicates a dichotomy between indigenous ("Native American") and non-indigenous ways of being in space, in which only the former involve "spatial conceptions of history" (see 1996: 33–34, 64, also 31). Richard Lee, for his part, stressed a similar place-based indigeneity when he argued: "The most compelling feature that sets indigenous people apart is *their sense of place*.… What indigenous people appear to have is what migrants and children of migrants (i.e., most of the rest of us) appear to lack: a sense of belonging, a sense of rootedness in place" (2006: 450; his italics).

The sense of belonging in a given territory is certainly central to the subjectivity of many indigenous people worldwide and the authors cited above have made important contributions to the understanding of these experiences. However, as part of the recent explorations of the multi-layered nature of indigeneity, a number of anthropologists have examined the indigenous diasporas produced by processes of spatial dislocation and by the increasing presence of indigenous people in large urban centers (Clifford 2007; Harvey and Thompson 2005; Ramirez 2007; Smith 2006; Watson 2010). And these authors have shown that rootedness and sense of place are not necessarily the defining features of actors who self-identify as indigenous.

Here, I will draw on this perspective on the multifaceted spatiality of indigeneity as well as on Deleuze and Guattari's ideas on deterritorialization and reterritorialization to examine the diasporic experience of the Guaraní of northwest Argentina. The concept of reterritorialization, in particular, can help us understand not only the dislocations created by diasporas but also the fact that, as pointed out by several authors (Harvey and Thompson 2005; Maynor 2005; Watson 2010), displaced indigenous peoples try to build an affective connection to new places. And I draw on Deleuze and Guattari's ideas on rhizomic forms of connectivity to examine these spatial reconstitutions as the product of multiple, horizontal, and expansive political practices.

Deleuze and Guattari's use of the terms "deterritorialization" and "reterritorialization," developed in *Anti-Oedipus* and expanded in *A Thousand Plateaus*, is complex and does not necessarily refer to territories in the spatial sense of the term. They broadly conceive of deterritorialization as a "decoding" of flows, a breakdown of the codes of control that regulate the flows of human action, setting them free. Likewise, reterritorialization is viewed as a "re-coding" or "over-coding," conducted primarily by the state, of what was previously decoded and deterritorialized, that is, a reassertion of domination over those flows. Still, in Deleuze and Guattari's work these terms do have spatial dimensions (particularly in *A Thousand Plateaus*) that allude to the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

patterns of mobility through which social actors are separated from certain geographies (deterritorialized) and united with others (reterritorialized). For Deleuze and Guattari the two dimensions are inseparable, for "what modern societies deterritorialize with one hand, they reterritorialize with the other" (1983: 257).

In what follows, I refer to reterritorialization in this spatial sense, but unlike Deleuze and Guattari I do not view this process as an expression of state domination. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre (1991), I conceive of reterritorializations as *spatially productive* processes that, rather than simply unfolding on a fixed spatial matrix, transform and reconstitute the social and physical texture of the geography. And these reterritorializations, as I will show, can be analyzed as rhizomic because they produce spaces through the horizontal spread of flat, connective, but relatively independent lines of spatial expansion.

I also examine how reterritorializations by diasporic indigenous people unsettle hegemonic assumptions about indigeneity and are judged negatively by state and capitalist actors through the lens of what Liisa Malkki (1997) has called "sedentarist metaphysics." This metaphysics becomes particularly exclusionary when the indigeneity of a given group is projected across an international border onto another nation-state. In these cases, indigeneity is inseparable from nationality and struggles for space are inseparable from nationalist forms of exclusion.

I will examine the mobilizations for La Loma and Vinalito as projects of reterritorialization guided by the urban experience of their protagonists, their aspirations to move to places that evoke the agrarian autonomy of their ancestors, and their attempts to challenge Eurocentric parameters of Argentinean nationhood. I will also analyze the contrasts between these claims, due to their location in different provinces and the distinct character of the sites in dispute. Toward the end, I will draw a further counterpoint involving a third conflict forged by different territorial practices, which opposes a Guaraní community with the San Martín del Tabacal plantation fifteen kilometers (ten miles) north of La Loma. In my conclusions, I make some final observations about the spatially expansive dimensions of these efforts at reterritorialization and of diasporic indigeneities generally.

## GUARANÍ DETERRITORIALIZATIONS

The people who in Salta and Jujuy call themselves "Guaraní" (or "Ava-Guaraní") were long known in the historical and ethnographic literature as "Chiriguano," which was the name the Spanish used to refer to the Guaraní-speaking groups inhabiting the eastern slopes of the Bolivian Andes (Combès and Saignes 1991; Saignes 1990). While southeast Bolivia is the territorial core of these groups, numerous documents confirm the presence of "Chiriguano" subgroups in what is today the sugar-producing region of northern Argentina, in the Zenta and San Francisco River Valleys, at least since the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

1600s (Fernández Cornejo 1989 [1791]: 64, 66; Tommasini 1990 [1933]: 107–17; Villafañe 1857: 35, 33–34). In those days, Wichí and Toba groups from the Gran Chaco inhabited those valleys, but in a context of permanent interactions with Guaraní and Andean groupings who moved in from the north and the west, respectively.

At the turn of the twentieth century, when state and capitalist encroachment on their lands in Bolivia became particularly severe, thousands of "Chiriguano" men and women migrated to Argentina, attracted by the demand for labor on its expanding sugar plantations (Hirsch 2000; Métraux 1946). These plantations became machines of capitalist deterritorialization that transformed vast geographies on both sides of the border as they recruited thousands of permanent and seasonal workers from the Andean highlands and the plains of the Gran Chaco (see Gordillo 2004). This deterritorialization led to a reterritorialization largely dictated by the interests of agribusinesses. Most Guaraní workers, in particular, settled on the Ledesma, La Esperanza, and San Martín del Tabacal plantations on a permanent basis in the so-called *lotes*: the spaces where workers had their dwellings. Their proletarianization was therefore the product of a transnational migration that anchored their daily life in spaces of labor discipline. In La Loma, the forested hill of 5,000 hectares (12,500 acres) near the sugar-processing factory of San Martín del Tabacal, this proletarianization acquired a different spatial form. Three Guaraní settlements emerged there. La Capilla, the largest, was officially founded in 1938 (with the support of the plantation administration) by the Franciscan priest Roque Chielli, who nonetheless pointed out that Guaraní people were living there prior to his arrival.[1] While the people living in La Loma planted small fields, raised chickens and pigs and recreated spaces of relative autonomy over several decades, they were largely plantation workers who lived under the orbit of San Martín del Tabacal.

The social-spatial relations that had organized the sugar plantations began to change radically in the late 1960s. First, beginning in 1964, and more forcefully in 1970, San Martín del Tabacal ordered the hundreds of families living in La Loma to move out. In the resulting diaspora, most people (led by Father Roque Chielli) settled eight kilometers (five miles) to the southeast in Pichanal, and also in Hipólito Yrigoyen, Orán, and on the Blanco River (near Orán). Meanwhile, as part of the mechanization of the sugarcane harvest in the whole region, San Martín del Tabacal, Ledesma, and La Esperanza began laying off workers and dismantling the *lotes* (see Karasik 1989). Because of this capitalist reordering of the regional space, thousands of people who had been socialized on the plantations were forced to move to the cramped

[1] See interview with Roque Chielli in "Misión del Cura Roque," *Revista Relatos* (Orán) 5 (1993): 7.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

margins of the nearby urban centers that, surrounded by sugarcane fields, could not expand further.

In the twentieth century, the Guaraní experience in this region in this regard was marked by a double deterritorialization that first took them away from their lands in Bolivia and, decades later, forced them to leave the *lotes* and La Loma. Their subsequent reterritorialization off the plantations transformed a former rural proletariat into a marginalized urban sector scattered in ethnically mixed neighborhoods and characterized by high levels of spatial and sociocultural fragmentation in their practices and senses of belonging. This urban experience accentuated the cultural and linguistic syncretism created on the plantations. By the 1980s, many people with "Ava" or "Simba" ancestors—some of their main terms of self-identification, together with *ñandeva* ("us")—spoke only Spanish and did not identify as indigenous or did so ambiguously, largely because of the discrimination that the "Chaguancos," the denigrating term used regionally to refer to them, were regularly subjected to (Bernard 1973; Rocca 1973).[2]

In the 1990s, this spatial and political terrain began to change in the context opened up by the 1994 reform of the Argentinean Constitution, which included for the first time a clause on the right of indigenous people to own their own territories. The parallel rise of conflicts over lands in Salta and Jujuy and the emergence in Bolivia of the Asamblea del Pueblo Guaraní (APG, Assembly of the Guaraní People) had a profound impact on this region. The Bolivian APG rejected the colonial legacy associated with the terms "Chiriguano" and "Chaguanco" and highlighted a "Guaraní" identity based on the widespread use of this language among the various groupings in southeast Bolivia that joined the organization (Gustafson 2009; Hirsch 2003; 2004; Postero 2006). The narrative of a Guaraní indigeneity that was spreading south from Bolivia provided people in Argentina with an idiom that resonated with their own memories and experiences of domination. In Salta and Jujuy, leaders now self-identified as Guaraní or Ava-Guaraní began celebrating a transnational ethnicity viewed as intrinsically connected to that of their Bolivian peers; and they organized dozens of "Guaraní communities" involving nodes of spatially scattered households that recognize a common political leadership.

A key concern articulated by these leaders was that theirs was an indigeneity that had been deterritorialized and lacked a space of its own. Many youth had reinvented themselves as urban subjects and did not necessarily share this concern. Yet the towns where they live are dominated by actors that look down on Guaraní indigeneity and try to make it invisible and push it to these towns' margins. Influenced by the language of "the land" articulated

[2] *Ava* means "people" and *simba* refers to men with ethnic bodily markers such as wearing long hair and *tembeta* (a wooden disc inserted in the lower lip).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

by NGOs and indigenous political organizations, leaders and ordinary people began demanding spaces in rural areas where they could overcome their alienating urban experience through the production of Guaraní territories. In Salta and Jujuy, several land claims began to emerge independent of each other but roughly at the same time. Unlike the imposed reterritorializations they had been through in the twentieth century, these were framed as explicitly Guaraní reterritorializations.

In the area around Hipólito Yrigoyen in Salta and in the Jujuy lowlands, these political projects expressed the distinct relations that the Guaraní urban communities had with the surrounding geography as well as the different interests they had to confront. And the main place of any significant size in the whole region where Guaraní families had carried out farming of their own over several generations was that hill near the factory of the San Martín del Tabacal plantation.

## LA LOMA: CONTAINED RETERRITORIALIZATION

In Hipólito Yrigoyen and Pichanal, Guaraní men and women over fifty never stopped viewing the hill as their home. The memory of the moment when the plantation forced them to leave that place permeates their narratives as a collective lament, as an event that affected and disrupted their lives at a profound level. People agree that the eviction was enforced on several stages, and that a well-known foreman began wandering around, armed and on horseback, telling them that they had to move out. In June 2004, Germán, a man of seventy who lives in Yrigoyen, told me about him: "He said: 'The company orders that you've got to go. We will provide with the tractor. Where do you want to go? Pichanal or Orán?' So, people then put their little things [*sus bultitos*] on the tractor and were forced to go." Later on, referring to La Loma, he added, "There, there was freedom for the kids. This is our land.… And the powerful took over and forced us away, as if we were nothing, as if we were *una basurita*—a little piece of trash."

By 1970, the evictions had come to an end, enforced with threats of violence and the actual destruction of fields by armed plantation employees. But the families who left La Loma to settle a few hundred meters away in Yrigoyen were separated from their former home only by the road to Orán and the railway line. This meant that the hill, visible from any point in town, remained an unavoidable physical presence in their lives. In fact, many people continued going to the hill on a daily basis to collect firewood, work small fields hidden in the forest, gather medicinal plants, and visit the overgrown cemetery where their ancestors were buried. These surreptitious daily practices allowed many people of Yrigoyen to maintain a direct relationship with the texture of La Loma but also contributed to creating deeply nostalgic memories of that place, which were highlighted by the urban poverty and alienation they experienced in Yrigoyen.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In June 2005, I interviewed two elderly women in town who had grown up on the hill. One of them, María, told me about her life in that place: "From there, we got eggs to sell. That's what we want to have in La Loma. We want to go back to doing that." I asked her if she could not do something similar in Yrigoyen. "It's impossible to do that here! … We have many children who have to take up day jobs [*changitas*], and it's not enough to eat." Lidia, the other woman, added that in her house "my sister, my brother, everyone is.…" "Crammed up," interrupted María, completing the sentence for her, and the two of them laughed. María added that on the hill, by contrast, each family had a lot of space because their homes were "all spread out" (*desparramaditas*).

These perceptions shed light on the ways in which the contrast between the town and La Loma generates meanings about both places, in a field of spatial tensions that characterizes all spatial formations (Gordillo 2004; 2006; 2011). Additionally, many people draw a counterpoint between both places in terms of the vitality of the Guaraní culture. In Pichanal, the idealization of life on the hill is even more apparent, partly because overcrowding and poverty are there even more severe than in Hipólito Yrigoyen. In October 2006, I participated in a meeting with Guaraní leaders in Pichanal. At one point Angélica, a fifty-seven-year-old woman born and raised in La Loma, remembered, "We all spoke in Guaraní. We had space to plant.… The nuns went to catechize, but they didn't take our culture away. Here [in Pichanal], it's all gone. Here, it's all over.… This is really sad for me: taking our place away, the place where we were so free. When we lived in La Loma, it was very beautiful.… Here, it feels like being locked up, and you feel sad."

As is apparent, the longing for La Loma is recreated by an urban spatiality that many people experience as degrading and suffocating, comparable to an open-air prison of sorts that keeps them "locked up." Because of this experience, some people in Hipólito Yrigoyen never gave up on the idea of returning to La Loma. Mónica Romero, who led the 2003 attempt to wrest the hill back from the plantation, is a sturdy, courageous woman. She told me that when she was young she enjoyed wandering around La Loma and dreamed of returning, but that her mother reminded her that this was not possible "because they kicked us out." But her affective attachment to the hill was parallel to her fear of being discriminated against as "Chaguanca." For years, she told me, if she heard Guaraní on the bus she pretended she did not understand. A few years later, Mónica developed a new political awareness of her Guaraní background and of indigenous rights through her interaction with activists in the city of Salta. She then began thinking about organizing with men and women in Hipólito Yrigoyen to try to recover the land. The rise of a local Guaraní consciousness, in this regard, led to a territorial claim directed toward the place now explicitly remembered as their home as "indigenous people."

In November 2001, this effort materialized as a reterritorializing political assemblage with the organization of the "Estación Tabacal Guaraní Indigenous

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Community," which elected Mónica Romero as president and was subsequently recognized by the National Institute of Indigenous Affairs (INAI). In 2006, I asked Mónica how the plan of returning to La Loma took shape, and she began by referring to the harsh, unsanitary living conditions people experience in Hipólito Yrigoyen:

> First, the brothers and sisters who come from La Loma don't have land.… Some people live in a tiny little plot, in a shack where people do the laundry and throw away the garbage.… So, I said, "How is this possible, when we have a large piece of land like La Loma? We get charcoal, crops, fields from over there. Why can't we live over there? We can plant and live there." … So people began saying: "Yes, when I lived in La Loma I had a small field and many chickens. There were many eggs and I didn't go hungry. So, what are we waiting for?" And that's how the idea of returning began.

When the land occupation took place in September 2003, therefore, many people sought to turn their nostalgic memories of well-being in La Loma into a material reality by moving their bodies en masse to the hill. And the shared sense that they were living in an overcrowded, hostile urban space turned their indigeneity into a political force that pulled them toward the hill as ancestral Guaraní territory. This claim to a space viewed as indigenous was not a calculated invention. It was what Tania Li has called "a *positioning* that draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes, and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle" (Li 2000: 151). This was also an affective and spatial positioning. During the land invasion, dozens of families camped out on the hill for almost a week in a festive atmosphere of collective effervescence. During those days, a stream of Guaraní people from Yrigoyen and Pichanal arrived at La Loma attracted by the news that the hill had been taken back from the plantation. They wanted to ask whether they could get their own plot of land and move there with their families. This action marked the first time in over three decades that the plantation's control over La Loma had been challenged collectively and openly. And many people were convinced that those were the first days of their new life on La Loma. The occupation and the high spirits, however, did not last long. The eviction by the police pushed people back into town and created a new field of forces aimed at preventing their collective impulses from leaving the urban fabric and trespassing into the hill again.

In the following months, Mónica Romero and other leaders and supporters conducted trips to Buenos Aires and met with officials and members of Congress, and this presence in the national site of power gave the protest relative visibility in the national media. In Hipólito Yrigoyen, however, in the second half of 2004 the confrontation led to a notable increase in the control of La Loma by the plantation's private security guards. Until then, controls were limited to the occasional destruction of the makeshift wooden bridges that people built across the two irrigation canals that they needed to cross over to

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

enter the hill.[3] Yet beginning in September, the guards became a regular presence; they destroyed once again the bridges, set up a permanent control booth, and began patrolling the perimeter of La Loma on a regular basis. This policing put an end to the porosity that had characterized the boundaries between the hill and the town and also meant that hundreds of people lost their main source of household energy, firewood collected in La Loma, and the income they made from selling it.[4]

The attempt to reclaim the hill has pitched the Estación Tabacal Community against one of the most powerful companies in northern Argentina, owned by a multinational corporation based in the United States, the Seabord Corporation. This has aligned the politically conservative government of Salta and the provincial media firmly against the claim. Further, the plantation has partly succeeded in dividing the local Guaraní population and undermining support for the protest with the argument that any threat to the company's control over La Loma would threaten their jobs at the factory in Tabacal, the main employer in town. After the September 2003 repression, several Guaraní leaders co-opted by the government and the plantation began to criticize the protest on local radios and in the main provincial daily *El Tribuno*.[5] In June 2004, I had a tense meeting with some of those leaders, who argued that the struggle for La Loma was manipulated by leftists and emphasized that the plantation should not be confronted "because we have to protect people's jobs" (*las fuentes de trabajo*). Even though the struggle for La Loma has generated multiple expressions of solidarity in Argentina and the world, this adverse situation has restricted its connection with broader social movements in the province.

The plantation has argued that the Guaraní have no rights over La Loma because they are a foreign, deterritorialized, diasporic people without legitimate indigenous rights to local territories. But many Guaraní men and women in Hipólito Yrigoyen see their deterritorialized status as the result of their forced eviction from their home across the railroads: the place where they were born and where they grew up. And the confrontation with the plantation and the closure of their access to that space further politicized the view of La Loma as ancestral indigenous territory: a place that is spatially and affectively near them and that they can *see* every single day. People emphasize the antiquity of their presence in La Loma not only through narratives of ancestral

[3] In June and July 2004, for instance, on four separate occasions I explored La Loma with members of the community, identifying the location of the old Guaraní villages, the old cemetery, and the small fields still cultivated by people from Hipólito Yrigoyen, and we encountered no guards.

[4] *Página/12*, 30 Oct. 2004. In February 2005, this control also affected a team from the University of Salta sent by a judge in Orán to conduct an anthropological survey. Even though the team members produced the court order, the guards prevented them from entering La Loma. They were able to conduct the survey only after the police were called in.

[5] See, for instance, *El Tribuno*, 24 Dec. 2003.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

rights but also, and primarily, by pointing to the main vestige that proves it: the overgrown cemetery. This makes of the cemetery the political core of La Loma, for that debris of human bones and tombs proves that the Guaraní presence on the hill is temporally deep. This is why, when the plantation began logging some areas on the northern side of the hill in 2007, many people in Hipólito Yrigoyen feared that the plantation would bulldoze the cemetery in order to destroy the last material proof that La Loma was Guaraní territory.

Despite the presence of the security guards and the closure of political channels of negotiation with the provincial and national governments, the Estación Tabacal Community has continued to challenge the plantation's control over La Loma at several levels. In addition to filing several unsuccessful lawsuits in court, people have organized demonstrations that marched to the gates of the factory in Tabacal and to the edge of the hill while chanting, "We want our land back!" These practices, together with ongoing, individual acts of trespass, have created a spatial micro-politics through which people, in their attempts to get closer to the hill, regularly test the spatial reach of the plantation's power. The plantation has, in turn, continued deploying security guards to keep these men and women contained within the urban space of Hipólito Yrigoyen.

Simultaneously with this conflict, but not politically articulated with it, the Guaraní organizations in Jujuy were making their own demands for land. The space that leaders and activists in this province were fighting for was very different from La Loma, but also led to disputes about nationality and indigeneity and, more importantly, to spatially expansive practices that sought to escape oppressive urban spaces.

## VINALITO: EXPANSIVE RETERRITORIALIZATION

In July 2003, in the town of Fraile Pintado, I paid a visit to Gloria Pérez, the leader of the Mburuvichas Council (Council of Leaders), one of the two Guaraní organizations in the province of Jujuy at that time. Her home was two blocks away from a wall erected by the Ledesma plantation to prevent people entering its vast sugarcane fields. Gloria welcomed me with her characteristic smile and we were soon talking about her experience in Guaraní activism, a topic that was then new to me. In a few minutes, she began talking about the land claim in Vinalito evoking the memory of the old Guaraní practices: "Our great desire is to go live over there, to plant our own fields. Why is there malnutrition today? There is malnutrition because in the city we eat a lot of artificial, unhealthy food. Instead, our grandparents planted the fields, corn, potato, manioc, and everything that our communities eat. That is our food." Contrasting those lands with the urban spaces of the Jujuy lowlands, she added: "We want our land so that we don't have to live all crammed and in promiscuity."

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Since I had never heard of Vinalito, I asked Gloria where it was. She said it was about seventy kilometers (fifty miles) to the north, and that she had been over there a couple of times. I was initially surprised by Vinalito's distance from the main towns in the region, and only later did I begin reflecting on the spatial implications of this distance for the land claim. This soon emerged as a distinctive feature of the view of Vinalito among Guaraní leaders and activists in Jujuy: this was a place located far from their homes, which most of them did not know well or in person. In this regard, these lands are the opposite of La Loma: they are geographically distant and devoid of personal memories of a recent occupation. In spite of this, this place began to generate political affects similar to those created by the hill next to Hipólito Yrigoyen.

The claim over the lands of Vinalito was influenced by decrees and laws in Jujuy that date back to 1996, when the provincial and federal governments agreed to hand over a million hectares (2.5 million acres) of land to indigenous groups. While the stronger salience of grassroots activism in Jujuy has created a context more favorable to indigenous land claims compared to the neighboring and more conservative province of Salta, this was just the beginning of what became a long political dispute. The provincial agency of land adjudication initially allocated for "the Guaraní people" 11,000 hectares (27,000 acres) east of the town of Vinalito, one of the few spaces in lowland Jujuy owned by the government, in a forested area bordering the plains of the Gran Chaco. But while there were Guaraní communities in the nearest towns (Vinalito and El Talar), at that time no Guaraní families were living on that land, which was in a hard-to-reach, semiarid area.

In contrast to the case of La Loma, the provincial government's act of setting aside this piece of land opened up a new space, both physically and politically, for the rise of novel forms of Guaraní activism. Despite its low quality, *la tierra de Vinalito* (the land of Vinalito) soon galvanized the two Guaraní organizations in Jujuy—the Mburuvichas Council and the Assembly of the Guaraní People (APG, which is independent of the organization in Bolivia of the same name). While this space was initially earmarked for them by the state, Guaraní organizations as well as ordinary people quickly drew upon it to create their own project of reterritorialization. In order to put pressure on the government, a dozen families of Guaraní communities based in the nearest towns (El Talar and Vinalito) began to occupy some of these lands, in some cases on a seasonal basis. They cleared small sections of forest to build rudimentary homes, raise animals, and plant fields, thereby creating the first lines of spatial expansion toward the east.

In Libertador General San Martín, the leader of the APG, Flora Cruz, tried at a 2007 meeting to counter some people's doubts about the quality of these lands: "This will be the beginning of our life like we lived before. People ask why we'll go if there is no water, if there are snakes. But that's the way

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

we used to live. If we live on our land we will have our animals, our fields." While this idealization of Vinalito resulted from conditions of urban poverty and malaise, the longing was also informed by the memory of an agrarian-peasant autonomy based on maize-cultivation, viewed as the core of what defined the life of their ancestors. In contrast to La Loma, this memory tends to evoke the landscapes of southeast Bolivia rather than the actual geography of Vinalito. Yet this longing for Vinalito is also informed by the spatial and social disruptions created by the dismantling of their former homes on the *lotes* of the Ledesma and La Esperanza plantations. While those were spaces of labor discipline, in *lotes* located on the edge of thick jungles many Guaraní workers planted small fields hidden in the forest. The mechanization of production and the evictions of the 1970s destroyed these places and forced people to move to the urban spaces of San Pedro de Jujuy, Libertador General San Martín, or Calilegua. As in La Loma, many adults remember this deterritorialization as a traumatic, disruptive experience that disconnected them from their former homes and the surrounding geographies.

In the past decade, the memory of the practices of their Bolivian ancestors, as well as the more recent memory of their work in rural areas of the San Francisco River Valley, have been spatially redirected elsewhere: toward Vinalito. This has led to an effort to build a productive, cultural, and affective connection with the geographies of northern Argentina. Leaders and activists, and initially many ordinary people, began claiming that the granting of titles would trigger an exodus, through which hundreds of families would abandon the towns of lowland Jujuy and move to Vinalito "to live like before."

This mobilization faced not only recurring delays caused by the provincial government but also the accusation, articulated by Governor Eduardo Fellner, that their territorial demands were questionable because the Guaraní were not "Argentinean indigenous people." The state, in short, was subsuming claims to an indigenous reterritorialization to nationally based forms of belonging. However, since the delays also affected the granting of lands in the Jujuy highlands, the Guaraní mobilization gained force through its articulation with province-wide protests led by Kolla organizations. The latter represent the indigenous groups of the Jujuy highlands, most of which are small-scale herders and farmers historically connected with the Bolivian Puna (the high plateaus of the Andes). This situation created a politically effective interethnic alliance that has been absent in Hipólito Yrigoyen, and in the province Salta generally. In the face of this joint political pressure, the Jujuy government was forced to delimit the actual land plots to be adjudicated in the area of Vinalito, but it also reduced the overall surface allocated to "the Guaraní people" from 11,000 to 4,100 hectares (about 10,000 acres).

This reduction was the result of a dramatic expansion of the soybean frontier on the western edge of the Gran Chaco plains in the province of Salta, which had made agribusinesses more interested in acquiring lands near Vinalito

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

to bulldoze the forests to plant soybeans (which would be shipped to China as pig feed). However, since families from nearby Guaraní communities already had a presence in the area, the convergence of opposing territorial projects in the same space began to generate conflicts between those families and the soybean companies that began moving in, some of which claimed to have government permits.

Because of the threat posed by the expansion of agribusinesses, the APG and the Mburuvichas Council decided to accept the titling of the 4,100 hectares while making it clear that they still demanded the rest of the lands promised. In June 2004, I attended a two-day meeting held near the town of Yuto to discuss the land claim. The event commenced with a leader's speech, in which he said firmly, "Vinalito is the only hope of land for the Guaraní people." Even though the amount of land allocated had been substantially reduced, the over sixty leaders and activists who attended were enthusiastic about the possibility of moving there. "My biggest dream is to go and live in Vinalito," said Gloria Pérez loudly, and her voice was engulfed by a clamor of approval from everyone in the room. A few weeks later, I attended another large meeting in Fraile Pintado, and the collective fervor about the idea of an exodus to Vinalito was again notable. When the leaders were asked to report on the feeling in their communities, one man said, "People are ready to go. There are no jobs for the people. We've got to go." Another leader added, "Half of the community wants to leave. Many ask me, 'When, when, when?'" One of the few leaders who expressed doubts said, "Some people are undecided, they want to know how the land is," confirming that many people did not know the place and were unsure about the move.

The delays continued. When in 2006 the Jujuy government decided to appeal a court ruling that ordered the land-titling process to be sped up, Kolla organizations responded by marching on the main roads in the Jujuy highlands and setting up road blockades that paralyzed much of the province. The resulting political turmoil forced Governor Fellner to relent and sign an agreement to accelerate the land distribution at a meeting with over a hundred leaders. The APG President, Flora Cruz, was there, and the following year she told me that when she took the floor and addressed the governor she rebuked him for saying that the Guaraní were not from Jujuy. Emphasizing a temporally deep indigeneity that I analyze in the next section, she said she told him: "Mr. Governor, you made the absurd claim that we are not originally from the Jujuy lowlands. Mr. Governor, we are a people that is present. We were already here before your people came here. Our ancestors were from this place.… All those sugarcane fields are our territory. It is the territory of the Ava-Guaraní people."

The agreement accelerated the distribution of land titles in the highlands. But since the political decision to grant the Vinalito titles continued to be postponed, Guaraní men began occupying the land allotted to them on a more

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

permanent basis, in a gesture of political defiance that strengthened the Guaraní presence begun in neighboring areas in 2000. In August 2007, I headed for the most recent settlement in my car with several leaders. Once we left the town of Vinalito behind and drove east on a dirt road, the landscape around us was increasingly dominated by the semiarid forests that characterize the plain of the Gran Chaco farther east, and that mark a sharp contrast with the lush tropical jungles covering the eastern slopes of the Andes in Jujuy. We finally arrived at a two-hectare (five-acre) clearing with a shack and a red-and-green Guaraní flag bleached by the sun. We were welcomed by Juan, a man in his forties. As he was showing me around, he told me the place was "quiet" but that, a few kilometers away, families from El Talar that had pioneered the eastward Guaraní advance had regularly faced threats, including shots fired in the air, from a soybean businessman who saw them as intruders.

The following year, these tensions increased and became violent. On 28 July 2008, forty officers of the Jujuy police, with trucks and bulldozers provided by the same soybean farmer, evicted those families from the site they had occupied for eight years, destroying their homes and fields and killing their pigs and chickens.[6] Guaraní activists and leaders from different towns agree that this eviction had a strong galvanizing effect on them. Many people were profoundly affected by the news and rapidly organized a massive political response to reconstitute the incipient reterritorialization now threatened by the confluence of agribusinesses and state power. After days of heated rallies, meetings, and road blockades, on 18 August hundreds of Guaraní men and women as well as hundreds of activists from grassroots political organizations converged on the disputed lands east of Vinalito. They arrived in an impressive caravan of dozens of buses, trucks, and vehicles from all over the Jujuy lowlands, with the explicit goal of wrestling the land from the control of the soybean farmer and his employees. On learning of the advancing multitude the latter promptly abandoned the place, which was occupied by fifteen hundred people waving red-and-green Guaraní flags and dancing the pin-pin, the archetypical Guaraní dance, to the rhythm of drums and flutes. Unlike the takeover of La Loma, no Argentinean flags were waved. This display of red-and-green flags as well as the massive nature of the protest signaled that the struggle for Vinalito was a more confident, assertive Guaraní reterritorialization.

The spatial dynamic of this action was notable, first, because it anticipated the collective move toward Vinalito that many expected would follow the land titling, and second, because it was similar to the attempt to retake La Loma in 2003 in mobilizing a multitude of bodies to charge toward the place they longed for. But whereas the attempt to take over the hill was repressed, pushed back,

[6] *Página/12*, 6 Aug. 2008.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and contained, the advance toward Vinalito was massive enough to make the government step back. On 13 September 2008, less then a month later, officials granted the titles of over 4,100 hectares in a celebratory event that, through Guaraní flags and dances, asserted that this had been a struggle to turn those lands into a new type of territory.

It is still unclear how extensive the collective move to Vinalito will be. Several families are currently living there, the area has been connected to the regional electric grid, and the government recently sent machinery to dig up two small reservoirs to hold rainwater in the rainy season. Yet the creation of viable settlements on this land still faces important challenges, given the limited availability of land and the adverse local environmental conditions. There is no doubt, in other words, that the vast majority of the people who identify as Guaraní in Jujuy will continue living in the towns of the region.

The limits of the agrarian utopia that some leaders imagined for Vinalito have surfaced at several levels. First, in the towns farther away from Vinalito, in and around San Pedro de Jujuy, some people began to reconsider their initial enthusiasm to move there. A leader in San Pedro who in previous years had been heavily involved in the land claim told me in 2007, with disarming simplicity, "Vinalito is far away." These leaders also began to acknowledge more explicitly that the Guaraní youth, socialized in urban spaces, do not necessarily long for rural landscapes. On another occasion, the same man admitted, "It is hard to take a young person brought up in an urban environment back to the land." The limits of the agrarian utopia projected onto Vinalito also became apparent when only eleven of the thirty-eight Guaraní communities in Jujuy ended up presenting lists of future inhabitants and received the collective land titling. This was a further indication that, for many people, the idea of moving to a small, semiarid piece of land had limited appeal. It is apparent nonetheless that this mobilization was a turning point in the Guaraní territorial struggles in Jujuy. This struggle prevailed over those that portrayed them as alien to the region and secured, for the first time, a collectively-owned rural space by standing up to capitalist and state actors.

The Guaraní reterritorialization in the area of Vinalito is far from over and is even expanding into new spaces. In July 2010, I joined several Guaraní families from the town of Yuto who carried out a land invasion on a plot of 500 hectares (1,230 acres) still owned by the government, adjacent to the plots already owned by other Guaraní communities. Dozens of men and women arrived at the site in several vehicles, quickly planted Guaraní flags on the perimeter, unloaded tools and tents, and began clearing various spaces where they intended to build homes. Magdalena, the group leader, told me they had decided to occupy that plot because of the harsh living conditions in Yuto and because the lands granted by the government in Vinalito "aren't enough." As men and women of all ages swung machetes to clear bushes

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

around us, she added, "We want to live well, and this is our land. In my house in Yuto, I live with all my children and grandchildren. And it is not enough for us. I don't even have space to hang the laundry. That's why we made the decision to move here. We want to live with dignity, as people and as Argentineans. We want to live free, like we lived before."

## GUARANÍ LINES OF FLIGHT

The ongoing and expansive reterritorialization by Guaraní actors in Jujuy stands in stark contrast to the spatial containment still faced by the Estación Tabacal Community of Hipólito Yrigoyen in its struggle for La Loma. But the two protests nonetheless constitute similar spatial and affective assemblages, which seek to create collective well-being elsewhere. And in both cases this move is imagined as a *return:* a return to the experiences of autonomy and freedom that once defined their ancestors.

For Deleuze and Guattari, deterritorialization is closely associated with what they call "lines of flight": the liberated flows that escape controlling relations of power. At one level, the struggles examined here can be seen as lines of flight in a profoundly spatial sense: the act of escaping from conditions of domination by moving away from them; vectors of deterritorialization that aim to break away from oppressive, overcrowded spaces and the social forces that regulate them. Yet these lines of flight are as *re*territorializing as they are deterritorializing, because they try to create new types of spaces organized by different social relations.

For Deleuze and Guattari, however, lines of flight that are truly liberating lead not to a promised land or a preexisting land but to wide open spaces in which movement is free of constraints (1983: 322). The lines of flight I am examining here, by contrast, are strongly constrained. A notable aspect of both mobilizations is that they involve very modest tracts of land, of no more than 5,000 hectares (12,500 acres). Further, in the case of Vinalito these lands are unsuitable for agriculture without intensive capital investment. This is why the Guaraní attempts to break with their urban incarceration through lines of flight to rural areas run the risk of creating a rural incarceration reminiscent of the "spatial incarceration of the native" that Appadurai (1988) warned about, and that is a reality on countless reservations and impoverished rural enclaves in the Americas. The force of the invocations for La Loma and the lands in Vinalito, however, also speaks of the unsettling conditions in which most Guaraní people live and of the power of indigenous positionings to transform this malaise into spatially productive actions. In other words, these people are not merely members of an urban underclass trying to escape poverty but also actors who invoke the memory of indigenous ancestors to try to reconstitute an experience of autonomy at a profoundly spatial level.

And here lies one of the paradoxes of the diasporic indigeneity that guides these struggles. The creation of a collective Guaraní consciousness in these

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

urban spaces was partly informed by hegemonic views of indigeneity as spatially fixed and rooted, and Guaraní activists have imagined La Loma and Vinalito as the spatial repository of ancestral indigenous rights. But despite the essentialist elements in their language, their actions in fact are creating *novel* spaces as they expand horizontally through multiple lines. "There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome," wrote Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 9). Likewise, it can be argued that the spatial ruptures created by the lines of flight toward La Loma and Vinalito, moving toward other places independent of one another while following a similar pattern, are part of the same damaged social rhizome.

The memories of a Guaraní past that people articulate in the two places, however, are notably different. People in Yrigoyen see the hill with their own eyes as an inescapable physical presence that reminds them all the time of what their lives were like only a few decades ago. In the towns of the Jujuy lowlands, in contrast, Vinalito was for several years an absent, virtual presence: far away from their homes and a place few knew in person. Vinalito therefore came to embody the quasi-mythical memory of a Guaraní past prior to conquest and the rise of the nation-state.

This contrast does not necessarily make the latter memory more culturally constructed than the former. Every memory involves selective gestures of commemoration as well as forms of silencing that do not escape the conditions of their production, particularly in situations of conflict (Fentress and Wickham 1992; Gordillo 2004; Swedenburg 1991). When men and women in Hipólito Yrigoyen and Pichanal remember La Loma as an indigenous place of agrarian freedom, they overlook that their experience in that place was also that of exploited workers in a proletarian environment. And when some leaders in Jujuy view Vinalito as ancestral Guaraní territory, they implicitly silence the former presence of Wichí and Toba groups in those spaces and replicate elements of the geographic essentialism that politicians and businessmen use against them. Yet all of these memories are, at the same time, historically real in two interrelated ways, for in a distant past "Chiriguano" groups did have a presence on these landscapes, both around the hill and Vinalito, and centuries ago the entire region was unquestionably indigenous territory. Since the Guaraní currently constitute the main indigenous group in the sugar-producing region of Salta and Jujuy, these memories position them as the rightful heirs to that primordial indigeneity.

These attempts to ground Guaraní indigeneity in the geographies of northern Argentina are inseparable from the foreigness that dominant actors project onto it, and a brief comparison with a different region of Argentina will illuminate this point further. The Mapuche of northern Patagonia descend from groups who crossed over the Andes from what is today Chile at least by the 1600s, and as a result they are often viewed by the regional elites as

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"Chilean Indians" with no rights to the land (Lazzari and Lenton 2000). These discourses locate the allegedly foreign caracter of contemporary Mapuche or Guaraní people not in their place of birth—that is, in the *jus solis* that defines Argentinean citizenship—but in the place of birth of their distant ancestors (Briones 2005: 29). This racialized notion of citizenship (linked to the *jus sanguinis*) views the foreignness of Mapuche and Guaraní men and women as something immutable passed on from one generation to the next, despite their being citizens born on Argentinean soil. Dominant actors in Argentina fear this foreignness because it can reterritorialize an indigenous presence in a national space that they often imagine as relatively free from it.

Guaraní leaders and activists have challenged these hegemonic notions of nationality, first, by infusing their Argentinean identities with ethnic dimensions that expand them. The display of an Argentinean flag during the 2003 takeover of La Loma, or the claim by the leader of the 2010 land invasion in Vinalito that they want to live with dignity "as Argentineans," should be seen in this context, for these positionings are inseparable from the accusations that Guaraní people are alien to the nation. But affirmations of nationality such as these are permanently intertwined with symbols of indigeneity such as the Guaraní flag, which in Hipólito Yrigoyen includes a brown stripe in addition to the red-and-green stripes common on the Guaraní flags in Jujuy.[7] This fusion of national and ethnic symbols was apparent in a 2005 march on the gates of the factory in Tabacal to protest for La Loma. Women wearing the one-piece Guaraní dress (the *tipoi*) led the way carrying a Guaraní flag and on several occasions the older leaders sang the Argentinean national anthem, but in Guaraní rather than Spanish. The demonstration, in this regard, affirmed the inclusion of their claim within the boundaries of the nation while also destabilizing the image of Argentina as a white, monolingual entity.

Guaraní leaders nonetheless articulate more diverse attitudes in trying to account for the politically sensitive topic of the labor migrations from Bolivia, and the fact that most of them have parents or grandparents born north of the border. In response to the anti-indigenist and anti-Bolivian nationalism that seeks to exclude them from the Argentinean nation, most leaders argue, on one hand, that the international border was an imposition by the *karai* (the whites) that separated what used to be an indissoluble Guaraní space in which people roamed freely over wide territories. This positioning presents Guaraní territoriality as a primordial, pre-conquest unified stratum situated above national identities and originally alien to them (see Hirsch 2000).

On the other hand, some leaders articulate an Argentinean identity that does not deny their Bolivian legacy and is therefore politically bolder in its

[7] People say that red represents the blood of their ancestors, green their connection to the forest, and brown their ties to the land.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

transnational, diasporic connotations than is an indigenized national identity. At the meeting about Vinalito in Fraile Pintado in June 2004, the accusation that they were "Bolivians" was at one point debated openly. One leader publicly recalled another meeting in which Governor Fellner had told them that they were not Argentinean indigenous people, and he recounted his reply: "Your last name, Mr. Governor, is not an Argentinean name. Who are you to tell us that we aren't Argentinean? We may be Argentineans, Bolivians, Chileans, Paraguayans, but we are natives of the Americas. You are the immigrants. You came on a boat. You are the ones who are from elsewhere."

This statement highlights the double discourse of those who naturalize the Argentinean imagined community as a largely European entity while excluding the original populations who inhabited the continent. This transnational and indigenous positioning exposes the contradictions in the hegemonic image of Argentina as a nation of immigrants, which celebrates that many of its inhabitants are from elsewhere but does so in a selective, exclusionary way. By introducing the historical dimension of the European conquest of originally indigenous land, these narratives also undermine attempts to position anti-indigenist nationalism itself as the guardian of a sovereign space allegedly constituted prior to a Guaraní presence that, in fact, predates it.

But this positioning is also indicative of an indigeneity more openly articulated in terms of its diasporic, fractured, and transnational elements. In fact, in the public celebrations and parades that thousands of Guaraní men and women organize for carnival in Salta and Jujuy, and in contrast to political rallies, many of them wave Bolivian flags, often together with Argentinean flags. In a border region such as this, in which anti-Bolivian sentiments are widespread, this is a bold public statement that indicates that, in addition to celebrating that ancient "Chiriguano" presence in the region, they remember where their parents and grandparents came from.

## ON THE BLANCO RIVER: THE RETERRITORIALIZATION OF LA LOMA

When in 2005 I visited for the first time the Guaraní community of Iguopeigendá on the southern shore of the Blanco River, a few kilometers from Orán, I was impressed by what I saw, for dozens of families seemed to have created the type of place that many Guaraní people in Hipólito Yrigoyen and the Jujuy lowlands were dreaming of. The almost 200 hectares (500 acres) occupied by the community were covered with diverse crops and crisscrossed by elaborate trails and lush forests of banana trees. The place exuded agricultural abundance and productivity, and its multi-layered physical texture contrasted with the homogenizing sugarcane fields that surrounded it. The people who had produced this place, however, were also defending it on a daily basis from recurring attempts by the San Martín del Tabacal plantation to destroy it.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The land dispute on the Blanco River is also a long-term reverberation of the eviction of the Guaraní villages from La Loma decades ago. Several of the families that were expelled between 1964 and 1970 did not want to settle in the overcrowded towns of the region and ended up moving to a forested area that the San Martín del Tabacal plantation did not seem to claim on the Blanco River. There, they cleared fields and managed to create a place of relative autonomy over several decades. In other words, these people managed to reterritorialize their collective experience in La Loma several kilometers to the north. As in the days on La Loma, they also relied on wage labor on the plantation and in Orán, but in a context in which their access to land was an important source of food and income. In 1996, however, the Seabord Corporation bought Tabacal and claimed those lands were on its property, a situation that led to years of tensions.

In 2004, the conflict turned violent when dozens of private security guards supported by bulldozers tried to remove these families by force and destroy their fields on several occasions. People responded by forming human shields to stop the bulldozers, which led the guards to beat them up several times. The most violent confrontation took place in August 2004, when the guards injured sixteen people and beat the community leader so badly that he was hospitalized. Disputes over nationality were part of the confrontation. Some of the guards removed and then burned Argentinean and Guaraní flags planted on the ground and repeatedly claimed they were evicting "undocumented Bolivians."[8] But people's resistance as well as the media repercussion of the plantation's violence prevented these attempts from succeeding.[9]

On one hand, this conflict is similar to those in La Loma and Vinalito in that Guaraní struggles over space are inseparable from struggles over nationality. The attempts by the guards to destroy the Argentinean flags displayed by Guaraní people, as in the 2003 police raid on La Loma, illuminates the power of these flags to destabilize the foreignness attributed to these territorial claims. On the other hand, the conflict on the Blanco River represents a notable counterpoint to La Loma. Whereas the latter's boundaries are controlled by the plantation to prevent Guaraní families from trespassing, on the Blanco River it is Guaraní men and women who control their lands' boundaries from the plantation's attempts to breach them, as is apparent in the solid fences and iron gate they built to keep the security guards off their land. Furthermore, whereas the mobilizations for La Loma and Vinalito are attempts to *move* over there, these

[8] "Denuncio lesiones, amenazas de muerte y otros: Alberto Torres y Hermenegildo Navarro denuncian," *Argentina Indymedia Pueblos Originarios*, http://argentina.indymedia.org/news/2004/08/215654.php.

[9] *Página/12*, 10 Aug. 2004; *Clarín*, 12 Aug. 2004.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

families have struggled to *remain* in a place they have produced with their bare hands.[10]

This reterritorialization was even expanded in April 2008 when a judge in Orán ordered the plantation to hand over to the community fifty-two hectares (130 acres) of land that it had years earlier appropriated without a court order. When the ruling was implemented, people celebrated by dancing the pin-pin next to an Argentinean flag and two Guaraní flags. They were signaling, once again, that their indigeneity is now territorialized on the soil of the nation and that, rather than reconstituting a life like before, their struggles also seek to redefine and indigenize the Argentinean imagined community.

## CONCLUSIONS

In their edited volume *Indigenous Diasporas and Dislocations*, Graham Harvey and Charles Thompson Jr. wrote, "Diaspora is not simply an uprooting, but can also be a reseeding" (2005: 11). This phrase captures the attempts by diasporic people to rebuild a sense of home on new lands; but does so through arboreal, vertical, immobile metaphors of belonging and space, tied to roots and seeds. The Guaraní case shows that their political projects of reterritorialization are, rather, of a rhizomic type, forged through mobile practices that followed multiples lines of expansion parallel to each other. And one feature of rhizomes, Deleuze and Guattari observed, is their capacity to regenerate after being dislocated: "A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines," and these lines "always tie back to one another" (1987: 9).

The new Guaraní territorial lines that sprouted out of their dislocated experience of place were created by bodies that trespassed spatial-political boundaries, expanded horizontally, and faced the violence of police officers, private security guards, and soybean businessmen. And while these reterritorializations have taken place in different provinces, they responded to the same experiences of disruption and began eroding pre-established spatial boundaries at around the same time and following a similar spatial expansion. These lines of flight were framed through a language of indigenous belonging as primordial, rooted presence. This primordialism is certainly common elsewhere in the world, and as John and Jean Comaroff put it referring to South Africa: "Territorial claims turn history into geography, sedimenting restless pasts into the stable fixities demanded for framing-and-claiming an ethnic identity" (2009: 81). Yet the people discussed here differ from other groups in that they seek to turn history (and memory) into geography because those "restless pasts" have *not* been fully sedimented, and have forced them to live in alienating urban

[10] This control still depends on another ongoing court case, in which the community claims that their rights are based on the principle of *ocupación veinteañal*, since they have occupied the land and made improvements on it uninterruptedly for over two decades.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

spaces. This tension between their essentialist claims and their urban, diasporic spatiality is constitutive of Guaraní reterritorializations in northwest Argentina.

While these reterritorializations are modest in scale and far from the utopias imagined by some leaders, they are now a reality in Vinalito and on the Blanco River. As Henri Lefebvre would argue, these struggles *produced* those places in a material sense. The landscapes of small fields and forests one can see today on the Blanco River and in Vinalito would be very different if people had not fended off the agribusinesses trying to destroy them. These places are not self-enclosed entities but nodes intertwined with wider spatial constellations: the ghosts of proletarian spaces on the plantations, the damaged towns in which people live, and the fields worked by their ancestors on the hill, the forested interstices of the Jujuy plantations, and Bolivia.

This analysis has also been an attempt to spatialize some concepts central to the work of Deleuze and Guattari through the lens of a Lefevbrian view of space as the historical product of confrontations. Reframed along these lines, these concepts can provide us with a more mobile, horizontal perspective on the spatial dimensions of political struggles and more generally on practices that resist control by the state (see Muehlmann n.d.). An ethnographic analysis of reterritorializations is also important to counter the assumption that globalized deterritorialization would somehow make space superfluous and that what is deterritorialized would remain deterritorialized (e.g., Appadurai 1996). As pointed out by several authors (Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Sparke 2005), deterritorializations generate multiple reterritorializations, produced both by the dictates of capital and by those who, in opposing them, create new spaces.

This perspective demands undermining the dichotomy, examined critically by Harvey and Thompson Jr. (2005) and Clifford (2007), between "indigenous" and "diasporic" as alleged opposites in the spectrum of ways in which people are attached to places: one localized, stable, fixed; the other displaced, mobile, flexible. The Guaraní reterritorializations are simultaneously indigenous and diasporic and expose the multiple spatial positionalities of social practice (see Brown 2005; Gordillo 2004; 2011; Malkki 1997; Massey 2005).

Yet the land disputes examined here also show the political obstacles that diasporic indigeneities face, because for dominant regional actors diasporas and indigeneity tend to contradict each other. In their territorializing efforts, Guaraní people have navigated these challenges in various ways. Many among them, in fact, do not aspire to move elsewhere and see themselves as urban subjects. But unlike other diasporic groups longing for faraway homelands, the Guaraní men and women who have attempted to create rural spaces of their own long for this home not in Bolivia but in the geographies of northern Argentina.

Because these struggles have also been disputes about nationality, and despite ongoing exclusions, these mobilizations have partly succeeded in influencing public perceptions in Salta and Jujuy about the Guaraní presence in the

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

physical and affective space of the Argentinean nation. Due to the media coverage of these conflicts and the regular presence of leaders and activists in public spaces, often wearing and waving highly visible markers of indigeneity such as the *tipoi* dress and the Guaraní flags, there is currently a greater predisposition in the regional public opinion to view "the Guaraní people" as part of the ethnic landscape of northern Argentina and, therefore, as part of the nation. This was clear in Jujuy in the granting of titles in Vinalito, and also in the governor's 2006 public apology, in front of over a hundred leaders, for having said the Guaraní were from elsewhere.

In the case of the Guaraní community that faces the most adverse political situation, that of Hipólito Yrigoyen, its attempt to retake La Loma has transformed the spatial and political dynamic of the area and has prompted a public debate about the historical depth of the Guaraní presence on the hill. The very existence of this attempt at reterritorialization is notable, for it has represented for the plantation a spectral return: of the "Chaguancos" that the company removed from La Loma as a disposable object ("a little piece of trash") but refuse to accept their present urban misery and have returned to claim the only home they know.

## REFERENCES


Appadurai, Arjun. 1988. Putting Hierarchy in Its Place. *Cultural Anthropology* 3: 36–49.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

Basso, Keith. 1996. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

Bernard, Carmen. 1973. La fin des capitanes. *Bulletin de l'Institut Francais d'Études Andines* 2: 72–82.

Briones, Claudia. 2005. Formaciones de alteridad: contextos globales, procesos nacionales y provinciales. In C. Briones, ed., *Cartografías argentinas: políticas indigenistas y formaciones provinciales de alteridad*. Buenos Aires: Antropofagia, 11–44.

Brown, Jacqueline. 2005. *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Clifford, James. 2007. Varieties of Indigenous Experience: Diasporas, Homelands, Sovereignties. In M. de la Cadena and O. Starn, eds., *Indigenous Experience Today*. Oxford: Berg, 197–223.

Comaroff, John, and Jean Comaroff. 2009. *Ethnicity, Inc*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Combès, Isabelle and Thierry Saignes. 1991. *Alter Ego: Naissance de l'Identité Chiriguano*. Paris: Cahiers de l'Homme-EHESC.

de La Cadena, Marisol and Orin Starn. 2007. Introduction. In M. de la Cadena and O. Starn, eds., *Indigenous Experience Today*. Oxford: Berg, 1–30.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. 1983 [1972]. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. 1987 [1980]. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Escolar, Diego. 2007. *Los dones étnicos de la nación: Identidades huarpe y modos de producción de soberanía en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo.


https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Fentress, James and Chris Wickham. 1992. *Social Memory*. London: Blackwell.
Fernández Cornejo, Adrián. 1989 [1791]. Descubrimiento de un nuevo camino desde el Valle de Centa hasta la Villa de Tarija. In *Entradas al Chaco*. S. S. de Jujuy: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional de Jujuy, 234–55.
Field, Les. 1998. Post-Sandinista Ethnic Identities in Western Nicaragua. *American Anthropologist* 100: 431–43.
Gordillo, Gastón. 2004. *Landscapes of Devils: Tensions of Place and Memory in the Argentinean Chaco*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Gordillo, Gastón. 2006. *En el Gran Chaco: Antropologías e historias*. Buenos Aires: Prometeo.
Gordillo, Gastón. 2011. Ships Stranded in the Forest: Debris of Progress on a Phantom River. *Current Anthropology* 52, 2: 141–67.
Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson 1997. Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference. In A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, eds., *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press, 33–51.
Gustafson, Bret. 2009. *New Languages of the State: Indigenous Resurgence and the Politics of Knowledge in Bolivia*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Harvey, Graham and Charles Thompson, Jr. 2005. Introduction. In Graham Harvey and Charles Thompson Jr., ed., *Indigenous Diasporas and Dislocations*. Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 1–12.
Hirsch, Silvia. 2000. Misión, región y nación entre los guaraníes de Argentina: Procesos de integración y de re-etnización en zonas de frontera. In A. Grimson, ed., *Fronteras, naciones e identidades: la periferia como centro*. Buenos Aires: Ciccus-La Crujía, 278–98.
Hirsch, Silvia. 2003. The Emergence of Political Organizations among the Guaraní Indians of Bolivia and Argentina: A Comparative Perspective. In E. Langer and E. Muñoz, eds., *Contemporary Indigenous Movements in Latin America*. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 81–101.
Hirsch, Silvia. 2004. Ser guaraní en el noroeste argentino: Variantes de la construcción identitaria. *Revista de Indias* 64: 67–80.
Karasik, Gabriela. 1989. *El control de la mano de obra en un ingenio azucarero: El caso Ledesma (Pcia de Jujuy)*. Tilcara: Cuadernos ECIRA.
Lazzari, Axel and Diana Lenton. 2000. Etnología y Nación: Facetas del concepto de Araucanización. *Avá: Revista de Antropología* 1: 125–40.
Lee, Richard. 2006. Twenty-First Century Indigenism. *Anthropological Theory* 6: 455–79.
Lefebvre, Henri. 1991 [1974]. *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Li, Tania. 2000. Articulating Indigenous Identity in Indonesia: Resource Politics and the Tribal Slot. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42: 149–79.
Malkki, Liisa. 1997. National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refuges. In A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, eds., *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press, 52–74.
Massey, Doreen B. 2005. *For Space*. London: Sage.
Maynor, Malinda. 2005. Finding Wisdom in Places: Lumbee Family Histories. In Graham Harvey and Charles Thompson, eds., *Indigenous Diasporas and Dislocations*. Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 153–68.
Métraux, Alfred. 1946. Ethnography of the Chaco. In J. Steward, ed., *Handbook of South American Indians, Volume 1: The Marginal Tribes*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 197–370.
Mitchell, Don. 2003. *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. New York: Guilford Press.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Muehlmann, Shaylih. 2009. How Do Real Indians Fish? Neoliberal Multiculturalism and Contested Indigeneities at the End of the Colorado River. *American Anthropologist* 111, 4: 468–79.
Muehlmann, Shaylih. n.d. The Countdown in the Colorado Delta and the Rise of Enumerative Malaise. MS.
Myers, Fred. 1986. *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place, and Politics among Western Desert Aborigines*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.
Postero, Nancy. 2006. *Now We Are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Postmulticultural Bolivia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Povinelli, Elizabeth. 2002. *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Indigenous Multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Pratt, Mary Louise. 2007. Afterword: Indigeneity Today. In M. de la Cadena and O. Starn, eds., *Indigenous Experience Today*. Oxford: Berg, 397–404.
Ramirez, Renya. 2007. *Native Hubs: Culture, Community and Belonging in the Syllicon Valley and Beyond*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Ramos, Alcida. 1998. *Indigenism: Ethnic Politics in Brazil*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
Rocca, Manuel María. 1973. Los chiriguano-chané. *América Indígena* 33: 743–56.
Saignes, Thierry. 1990. *Ava y Karai: ensayos sobre la frontera chiriguano (siglos XVI–XX)*. La Paz: Hisbol.
Smith, Benjamin. 2006. "More than Love": Locality and Affects of Indigeneity in Northern Queensland. *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 7: 221–35.
Sparke, Matthew. 2005. *In the Space of Theory: Postfoundational Geographies of the Nation-State*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Swedenburg, Ted 1991. Popular Memory and the Palestinian National Past. In J. O'Brien and W. Roseberry, eds., *Golden Ages, Dark Ages: Imagining the Past in Anthropology and History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 152–79.
Tilley, Virginia. 2005. *Seeing Indians: A Study of Race, Nation, and Power in El Salvador*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
Tommasini, Gabriel. 1990 [1933]. *Los indios Ocloyas y sus doctrineros en el siglo XVII*. San Salvador de Jujuy: Universidad Nacional de Jujuy.
Tsing, Anna. 2007. Indigenous Voice. In M. de la Cadena and O. Starn, eds., *Indigenous Experience Today*. Oxford: Berg, 33–67.
Villafañe, Benjamín. 1857. *Orán y Bolivia a la margen del Bermejo*. Salta: Imprenta del Gobierno.
Warren, Jonathan W. 2001. *Racial Revolutions: Antiracism and Indian Resurgence in Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Watson, Mark. 2010. Diasporic Indigeneity: Place and the Articulation of Ainu Identity in Tokyo, Japan. *Environment and Planning A* 42: 268–84.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417511000430 Published online by Cambridge University Press