



A University of Sussex PhD thesis

Available online via Sussex Research Online:

<http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/>

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Please visit Sussex Research Online for more information and further details

**Local communities and private protected areas in the
Atlantic Forest of Brazil: implications for sustainable
development and nature conservation**

Peter Slovak

**Thesis submitted for the
PhD in Development Studies**

University of Sussex

March 2017

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted in whole or in part to another university for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

Peter Slovak

Local communities and private protected areas in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil: implications for sustainable development and nature conservation

Summary

The recent rapid proliferation of Private Protected Areas (PPAs) around the world has been attributed to the continuing process of neoliberalization and the commodification of nature. Although the numbers of PPAs have been growing in recent years, little research has been conducted on their everyday functions and particularly their interactions with local populations. Based on 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork, this thesis focuses on a specific PPA, the Redonda Private Reserve in the Atlantic Forest region of the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and three local, surrounding communities, Jabá, Esperança and Bamba. Through this focus, the thesis examines a number of issues, including the incentives and motives which lead landowners to establish and administer private reserves and how these influence the pattern of relationship formation between the reserve and the local communities. The research also considers the main implications of such private reserves for local people and their livelihoods. Finally, the thesis considers whether and how local people's perception of the environment and the way they use their surrounding natural resources have changed since the establishment of the private reserve.

A central contention of the thesis is that although often interpreted as 'new' or 'modern' and labelled as 'contemporary' solutions to common environmental problems, PPAs, particularly when considered in the context of their interaction with the affected local rural populations, cannot be analyzed in isolation from the wider socio-economic processes and local context where they are found. Thus, areas where PPAs emerge cannot be simply divorced from the past processes of territorialisation and land appropriation; rather, they must be understood as their continuation often reproducing pre-existing social and economic inequalities. For example, the proclaimed 'modern' way of relating to local men and women, such as through employment, can help to disguise the continuation of traditional social hierarchies, perpetuating unequal power and wealth distribution. The thesis also shows how local people are purposefully constructed by PPAs and their representatives to gain the sympathy of outside donors and thus secure the essential funding they depend on for their existence, facilitate control over the protected natural resources and eliminate or reduce local resentment. The implications of such social interactions are profound for both the involved rural communities and the natural environment that PPAs have been set up to protect.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Acknowledgements | 9 |
| List of Abbreviations | 10 |
| List of Figures and Tables | 12 |
| Introduction: Private Protected Areas in the Mata Atlântica, Brazil | 13 |
| Chapter 1: Literature Review and Theory | 17 |
| 1.1 Neoliberal conservation and PPAs | 17 |
| 1.2 Emergence, proliferation, definition and categorization of PPAs | 20 |
| 1.2.1 Emergence and growth of PPAs in Brazil | 23 |
| 1.3 Enabling and motivating factors behind private conservation | 26 |
| 1.3.1 Important links between PPA governance and motivation factors | 29 |
| 1.4 Role of PPAs in biodiversity conservation | 34 |
| 1.4.1 Contribution of PPAs to biodiversity conservation in Brazil | 37 |
| 1.4.2 Private vs public in natural resources management | 40 |
| 1.5 People and private protected areas | 43 |
| Chapter 2: The Fieldsite and Methods | 51 |
| 2.1 The Atlantic Forest of Brazil: history and conservation | 51 |
| 2.2 Rural communities in the Atlantic Forest region of Brazil | 53 |
| 2.3 Introduction to the fieldsite | 55 |
| 2.3.1 Redonda Private Reserve | 55 |
| 2.3.2 Local communities, Jabá, Bamba and Esperança | 58 |
| 2.4 Methodology | 62 |

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| 2.4.1 Participant observation | 64 |
| 2.4.2 Ethnographic interviews | 65 |
| 2.4.3 Life stories | 66 |
| 2.4.4 Household survey | 67 |
| 2.4.5 Ethical concerns | 67 |

Chapter 3: History of Social Relations over Land and Forest – Perspectives from the Wider Community **70**

| | |
|---|-----|
| 3.1 Introduction | 70 |
| 3.2 Rural communities as complex societies rooted in history of slavery | 70 |
| 3.2.1 Dobregas and the origin of Jabá community | 75 |
| 3.2.2. The story of <i>senhor</i> Nelson | 76 |
| 3.2.3 ‘Traditional’ families | 81 |
| 3.3 The rural poor | 88 |
| 3.3.1 The Afro-Brazilian community of Esperança | 89 |
| 3.3.2 The story of <i>senhor</i> Lemuel and <i>dona</i> Ruana | 90 |
| 3.3.3 Indigenous origins | 99 |
| 3.4 Redonda Private Reserve as the recreation of traditional structures of control over natural resources | 106 |
| 3.4.1 Early history of Redonda Private Reserve | 106 |

Chapter 4: The Accumulation of Land for RPR **113**

| | |
|---|-----|
| 4.1 Introduction | 113 |
| 4.2 Land purchases as the RPR principal conservation intervention | 114 |
| 4.2.1 Land purchases and NGO involvement in conservation | 115 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 4.2.2 RPR land purchases | 119 |
| 4.3 RPR creation and expansion | 121 |
| 4.3.1 Becoming conservationists | 123 |
| 4.3.2 The other motives | 128 |
| 4.3.3 Creating private reserve to preserve family landed patrimony | 131 |
| 4.3.4 Creating RPPN | 134 |
| 4.3.5 Becoming a 'green' businessman | 137 |
| 4.3.6 The plan for 'Future Forests' | 139 |
| 4.4 Context on the ground | 140 |
| 4.4.1 Land titles and land prices | 140 |
| 4.4.2 Private vs public conservation | 142 |
| 4.4.3 Threats to local Atlantic Forest | 146 |
| 4.5 Local population and the RPR land purchases | 148 |
| 4.5.1 The case of Bamba Gap | 148 |
| 4.5.2 Negotiations with locals | 152 |
| 4.5.3 Local people do not want to live there anyway | 159 |
| 4.6 Conclusions | 165 |
| Chapter 5: Socio-Economic Aspects of 'Modern' Encounters between Private Reserves and Local Rural Populations Founded on Traditions Rooted in Clientelistic Relationships | 168 |
| 5.1 Introduction | 168 |
| 5.2 The socio-economic and historical context of the relations between local communities and RPR | 170 |
| 5.2.1 The story of Valnisete | 173 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 5.3 Local interpretations of RPR embedded in the traditional social structures of socio-economic relations | 175 |
| 5.4 Workplace ' <i>fazenda</i> ' | 178 |
| 5.5 Reciprocal relations as the underlying logic of social relations between RPR and its employees | 179 |
| 5.5.1 Reciprocity exchange in the local context | 180 |
| 5.5.2 Reciprocity in labor relations between RPR and community members | 183 |
| 5.5.3 Past and future in RPR labour | 184 |
| 5.5.4 Patron as a debtor | 186 |
| 5.5.5 Traditional clientelistic relationships as a foundation for reaching out to communities | 188 |
| 5.6 Local perspectives of the employment at RPR | 190 |
| 5.6.1 A good job at the reserve | 190 |
| 5.6.2 Our patron is a mean person | 195 |
| 5.6.3 Jobs in the tourist industry | 198 |
| 5.7 Rangers or agricultural workers? | 200 |
| 5.7.1 Forest rangers are ex-hunters | 200 |
| 5.7.2 Planting manioc | 205 |
| 5.8 Conclusions | 200 |
| Chapter 6: Resentment and Resistance | 208 |
| 6.1 Introduction | 208 |
| 6.2 Non-confrontational approach of RPR | 208 |
| 6.3 The case of Tacíeatá | 210 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 6.4 Foreignness character, control and unknown intentions | 214 |
| 6.4.1 Foreignness of the conservation project | 215 |
| 6.4.2 Control | 217 |
| 6.4.3 Unknown intentions | 219 |
| 6.5 RPR reaction | 221 |
| 6.6 Resisting removal | 225 |
| 6.7 Symbolic conflict | 227 |
| 6.8 Conclusions | 232 |
| Conclusion | 234 |
| Bibliography | 240 |
| Appendixes | 253 |

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr Evan Killick and Professor James Fairhead, for their continuous support and encouragement throughout the entire process of thesis writing. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to both for their guidance, expert advice and eternal patience. Not losing their faith in my abilities and my research project proved critical during the times of difficulty and despair.

My sincere thanks go to Dr Roberto José Moreira from Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro without whose precious support my fieldwork would not have been possible.

My thanks also to Alessandro Riffan, Christiane Pimentel Teixeira, Claire Colnot, Daniel Turi, Dr Eli de Fátima Napoleão de Lima, Jâmerison Jacinto de Carvalho, Jorge Bizarro, José Luiz Rogick Motta, Nicholas Locke, Pedro Paula, Raquel Locke, Tânia Carvalho, Vinícius Maya Cardoso, Fernando Pimentel Teixeira, Prefeitura de Cachoeiras de Macacu, among many others, for their indispensable support in this process.

Thank you to Jane Pennington for proofreading the thesis.

I also acknowledge the financial support from the ESRC, without which this project could not have been undertaken.

Finally, my very special thanks go to my daughter Viktória, the best motivator in the world.

List of Abbreviations

AF – Atlantic Forest

BINGO/BINGOs – big NGO/s

CI – Conservation International

CNRPPN – National Confederation of RPPNs (*Confederação Nacional de Reservas Particulares do Patrimônio Natural*)

CSR – corporate social responsibility

E-ICMS – Tax on the Circulation of Goods and Services across Interstate Lines (*Ecológico Imposto sobre Operações Relativas à Circulação de Mercadorias e Prestações de Serviços de Transporte Interstadual e Intermunicipal e de Comunicação*)

IBAMA – Brazilian institute of the Environment and Natural Resources (*Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente*)

IBDF – Institute for Forest Development (*Instituto Brasileiro de Desenvolvimento Florestal*)

INCRA – National Colonization and Land Reform Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária*)

INEA – State Environmental Institute (*Instituto Estadual do Ambiente*)

IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature

IUCN-NL – International Union for Conservation of Nature – Netherlands

MST – Landless Workers Movement (*Movimento Sem Terra*)

NGO/NGOs – non-governmental organization/s

NTL – New Trust of Land

PES – payments for ecosystem services

PETROBRAS – Brazilian Petroleum Corporation (*Petróleo Brasileiro S.A.*)

REDD – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

RPPN/RPPNs – Private Nature Heritage Reserve/s (*Reservas Particulares do Patrimônio Natural*)

RPR – Redonda Private Reserve

PPA/PPAs – private protected area/s

SNUC – National System of Conservation Units (*Sistema Nacional de Unidades de Conservação*)

TNC – the Nature Conservancy

TPSP – Três Picos State Park (*Parque Estadual de Três Picos*)

GTL – Global Trust of Land

WWF – World Wild Fund for Nature

List of Figures and Tables

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1 Area covered by RPPNs in Brazil and the Atlantic Forest (AF) | 25 |
| Figure 1 Biodiversity corridors in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil | 52 |
| Map 1 Project area | 56 |
| Image 1 Casa grande in Jabá | 77 |
| Image 2 The road to Esperança | 90 |
| Image 3 The remnants of the Carmelite convent in 2008 | 107 |
| Map 2 Overlapping areas of RPR and TPSP | 144 |
| Image 4 Rural workers at Fazenda do Carmo around 1912 | 171 |
| Image 5 Partial view of the seat of the Fazenda do Carmo featuring in the foreground the farm's aqueduct and distillery, around 1912 | 172 |
| Image 6 Cultivation area within the forested area co-owned by RPR | 211 |

Introduction: Private Protected Areas in the Mata Atlântica, Brazil

Private protected areas (PPAs) are rapidly increasing in number around the world and are one of the most important phenomena in current nature conservation strategies. They are crucial in the conservation policies of many developing countries and have significant implications for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. They offer great potential to limit deforestation, curb the emission of carbon dioxide and act against climate change, but at what cost? This research addresses this question through studying the interaction between PPAs and local communities in the Atlantic Forest (AF) of Brazil and their implications for local sustainable development.

The number of PPAs has been increasing for the last 40 years (Langholz & Krug, 2004). Significant areas are now under private protection in Africa and Latin America (Bond *et al.*, 2004; Chacon, 2005; Brown & Mitchell, 1999; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Although they seem to be able to thrive under a variety of socio-economic conditions, their recent proliferation is closely linked to an emerging convergence between mainstream conservation and global neoliberal capitalism (Brockington *et al.*, 2008).

Protected areas, including PPAs, are usually central components of conservation policies and can provide important global benefits, particularly in terms of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB, 2009) concluded that it is cheaper to maintain nature's capacity to fulfil essential environmental services than invest in technological solutions and infrastructure to replace nature's lost functions. Money invested in protecting natural environments can be associated with substantial financial benefits. These opportunities envisaged for investment in nature protection (TEEB, 2009), coupled with the relative under-provision of protected areas by national governments (Tisdell, 2005), make PPAs important players in future climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and the nascent markets in environmental services.

Although many writers (Bond *et al.*, 2004; Langholz & Lassoie, 2002; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014) have demonstrated that PPAs can significantly contribute to the protection of threatened habitats, considerably less attention has been drawn to the function of PPAs in the promotion of sustainable development, particularly in the context of the

debate around the relationship between people and protected areas. Many conservation projects can have negative impacts on the welfare and livelihood of local people (Jeanrenaud, 1999). The establishment of protected areas often threatens local community rights to cultivate land, limits their access to natural resources and in some cases, leads to their eviction (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Koziell & Inoue, 2006; Fabricius, 2004). Yet local people's involvement and support is often a crucial component of any conservation strategy (Mulder & Coppolillo, 2005). Thus, the nature of the relationship between people and PPAs seems to be crucial for both the welfare of the local community as well as the success of the underlying conservation endeavour. Within this context, specific attention needs to be given to questions around the links between poverty and nature conservation (Koziell & Inoue, 2006), genuine local participation (Pauda *et al.*, 2002) and social inequality (Quintana & Morse, 2005).

The Brazilian AF is an area of particular interest regarding these issues. Situated in the most populated region of Brazil (Gallindo-Leal & Câmara, 2003), a target of centuries long human destructive activity, afflicted by extreme fragmentation (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2009) and threatened by a high rate of deforestation (Metzger, 2009), the AF is still rich in endemism and biodiversity (Tabarelli *et al.*, 2005) and retains significant areas of living forest. Above all, what makes the AF region so important as a region for study is the fact that it contains areas where biodiversity of significant global value overlaps with severe and multifaceted poverty (Fisher & Christopher, 2007). A rapid increase in the number of PPAs (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005) as well as the fact that most of the remaining AF is still in private hands (Tabarelli *et al.*, 2005) only highlights the importance of PPAs in conservation strategies. They protect small but important fragments of the AF (Rylands & Brandon, 2005), provide protection to unique species (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005) and have recently come to play a crucial role within biodiversity corridor initiatives.

Several questions arise about which very little is known, answers to which are important to conservation, to sustainable development and to understanding the shaping of modern encounters with nature. In particular, little is known about the intrinsic motives and incentives which prompt landowners to establish and manage private reserves, while even less is known about the relationship between them and local communities whose livelihoods often depend, in part, directly on the natural resources under their protection. This raises questions concerning changes in rural people's perception of the environment, and how, in

the end, this affects the prospects of more sustainable development (Ingold, 1993). With these issues in mind, this research set out to answer four central research questions:

1. What are the main, more obvious as well as intrinsic, incentives and motives which lead landowners to establish and administer private reserves in the Atlantic Forest and how do these influence the pattern of relationship formation between the reserve and the local community?
2. What are the principal factors and issues that shape the relationship between a private reserve and the local community and where do their roots lie?
3. What are the main implications of a private reserve establishment for local people and their livelihoods?
4. How has local people's perception of the environment and the way they use the surrounding natural resources since the establishment of a private reserve in their vicinity changed, and what are the patterns of this change?

The study focuses on the Redonda Private Reserve (RPR) in the AF region of the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and three local communities, Jabá, Esperança and Bamba, located in its vicinity. Redonda was officially established as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in 2001. It protects 6,700 hectares (ha) of the Guapiaçu River watershed and has been expanding the area under its protection. It has a proven record of cooperation and interaction with local communities. Members of the local communities demonstrate, to various extents, direct or indirect dependency for their sustenance on the natural resources protected by the reserve.

The importance of PPAs is likely to grow, given the income flows that derive from payments for ecosystem services (PES), whether as components of national Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) strategies or as part of global carbon and biodiversity markets. It is often proclaimed that such finances should be channelled equitably, yet in-depth research on these issues remains scarce. In revealing more about the interaction between local communities and private reserves, this research will thus provide important insights into experiences and working solutions which could benefit other parts of Brazil as well as other forested regions of the world, while also contributing towards the global mitigation of climate change.

Following this brief introduction, the next chapter reviews the literature and theory outlining the main debates around PPAs, including the emergence and proliferation of PPAs as well as their contribution to biodiversity conservation and relations with surrounding rural communities. Chapter 2 introduces the fieldsite where the research was conducted and describes the methods applied to data collection and their analysis. Then Chapter 3 explores the social and economic world where the RPR PPA has been established as represented by different people from the study area. Different rationales behind landowners' decisions to create the PPA and related potential impacts on local human populations are discussed in Chapter 4. The following Chapter 5 looks at PPAs as spaces rich in social production and examines how socio-economic relations around them are established through the analysis of the employment PPAs provide to people from rural settlements in their neighbourhood. Thus, the forms and content of local resistance towards PPAs is then discussed in Chapter 6, followed by the Conclusion.

Chapter 1 Literature Review and Theory

By focusing on what has been already said about PPAs, this review aims to outline the main issues that have been, at least during the last 20 years, at the centre of the debate on the role of PPAs in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The recent burgeoning of different studies and publications on PPAs only reflects their grater growing number and increasing importance. Their benefits for biodiversity conservation, often significant, are commonly brought to the fore, yet their relationships with human populations settled around them continue to draw considerably less attention. By reviewing, discussing and revealing this existing lacuna this chapter aims to identify where this work can contribute to missing knowledge on PPAs, and in particular, those established in the AF of Brazil. It begins with a discussion of the relation between neoliberal conservation and the growing number of PPAs worldwide, followed by debates the motivations behind the creation of PPAs, the role of ownership, their contribution to biodiversity conservation before closing with a consideration of their relationships the adjacent rural communities.

1.1 Neoliberal conservation and PPAs

Brockington *et al.* (2008) argue that the expansion of PPAs is closely linked to the emerging convergence between mainstream conservation and neoliberal capitalism. Neoliberal capitalism is the most recent manifestation of the centuries-long processes of capital expansion and proliferation (Heynen & Robbins, 2005). The origins of neoliberal free-market theory can be traced back to 1970s and to the Chicago School's economists such as Frederich Hayek, Milton Friedman and Richard Epstain, among others. Its importance rose in 1980s through the political-economic projects under the governments of Reagan in the US and Thatcher in the UK (Peck & Tickell, 2002). In the 1990s, it became the dominant ideology with profound influence on international development and relations (Büsher & Whande, 2007), as well as the operating framework for competitive globalization driving far-reaching structural state reforms across different scales and contexts (Peck & Tickell, 2002:380). Neoliberalism is better understood as a process – neoliberalization – or a multiplicity of processes, rather than as 'thing' or static object (Heynen & Robbins, 2005; Igoe & Brockington, 2007; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Yet, these processes of neoliberalization are not homogeneous, but rather historically and geographically conditioned; they vary from one location to another leading to a diversity of outcomes (Castree, 2008). However, it is in its

processual and transformative character that neoliberalization encounters nature and directs human efforts to bring solutions to global environmental problems.

Aliances between neoliberalism and nature conservation have been being forged for some decades. The foundation of modern conservation were laid in the industrializing West of the late 19th century based on the binary understanding of nature as either non-human or already spoiled by humanity. It sought to protect the harmonies of the remaining pristine nature against human-induced disturbances mainly through the creation of protected areas (Adams, 2017). During their coexistence, both the environmental (and conservation) movement and the neoliberal ideology have absorbed the constituents of each other, proving to be beneficial for the expansion of neoliberal institutions as well as increasing the acceptance of environmental concerns (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004). For instance, McAfee (1999) notes how in the 1990s neoliberal ideas came to dominate the discourse produced by international environmental organizations turning their preference towards market-based solutions of world environmental problems and, in the same time, withdrawing from their critical appraisal of industrialization. Yet, such convergence between neoliberalism and conservation does not come as a surprise to Adams (2017) who maintains that the affluent conservationists have always been the same people who have been benefiting from the exploitation of nature they abhor, and the related processes of dispossession and accumulation. Thus, market-based solutions came to be in the 21st century recognized as the legitimate approach to tackling the deepening ecological crisis, with an underlying logic of the commodification of nature (Igoe *et al.*, 2010).

The key element of neoliberal thought is the idea of the extension of markets and the related logic of competitiveness (Peck & Tickell, 2002). This includes the spreading of market principles into areas that were previously not considered primarily economic (Foucault, 2008). Or, we can say, the commodification of ‘everything’ (McCarthy & Prudham 2004). Thus, in the neoliberal economic model, in theory, almost everything can be treated as a commodity (Büsher & Whande, 2007), and even previously non-tradable items can be transformed into tradable products (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Consequently, nature itself has become the object of neoliberal commodification. Connections of complex ecosystems are separated and split into its constituent elements. These are alienated and prized and thus reduced to exchange values for consumption by global constituencies (Büsher *et al.*, 2012). More importantly, by turning nature into objects of conservation that can then be sold a new mechanism for financing conservation projects emerged (McAfee, 1999), such as PES or

ecotourism. As markets continue to absorb nature, ever more conservation commodities of derivative nature, such as species credits, are created (Pawliczek & Sullivan, 2011). But, it is not only nature itself, but also many of the environmental crises themselves, the results of other market forces, that also represent new frontiers for the ever expanding logic of capitalism (Büsher *et al.*, 2012). Here new tradable conservation commodities, such as carbon credits, are created derivatively in the sphere of capital circulation as the abstract representations of non-human nature (its underlying biophysical assets), as means to fictitiously offset the negative impacts of environmental destruction and degradation (Büsher, 2013; Sullivan, 2011). Thus, it is through commodification that natural worlds and conservation are being brought into neoliberal capitalism in exponential fashion.

Another important aspect of neoliberalization, also in relation to nature conservation, is the regulatory status of the new ‘neoliberal’ state. Founded on the liberal critique of the excessive regulatory role of the state in society, neoliberal ideology pursues the return to ‘frugal government’ (Foucault, 2008). Thus the Reagan-Thatcher neoliberal governance projects of the 1980s were associated with state downsizing through financial austerity and the reduction of the governments’ administrative resources and functions, the so-called ‘roll-back’ phase of neoliberalism (Peck & Tickell, 2002). In this manner the power of ‘neoliberal’ states is steadily weakened as it is increasingly transferred downwards to local government, upwards to international organizations, and outwards to the private sector and NGOs (Dudley *et al.*, 1999). Yet, such ‘softening’ of state regulatory power, coinciding with the increasing number of non-state actors (self-governing within the regulatory framework set by the actions of the sovereign state), is as much a part of neoliberalization as the market-friendly reregulation (Castree, 2008:142). Thus, Peck and Tickell (2002) note a shift from the previous Thatcher-Reagan focus on the downsizing of the state and its interference, to a more recent focus on the active construction of neoliberal structures and regulatory frameworks, also termed the ‘roll-out’ phase of neoliberalism. Thus rather than diminishing state regulatory intervention, as often advocated by its proponents, neoliberalization arguably represents the building of new governance and regulatory structures, ‘a comprehensive mode of governance’ (Castree, 2008:143), necessary for the existence and expansion of free-markets (Foucault, 2008; Pawliczek & Sullivan, 2011; Peck and Tickell, 2002).

Such analysis further explains how the multiplication of PPAs is inherently interconnected to the convergence of conservation and neoliberalism. Igoe & Brockington (2007) note how the alleged ‘hollowing out’ of the nation state has not been reflected in a decrease in the number

of newly created public protected areas over the last 20 years. On the contrary, such areas have continued to proliferate at the global scale, as a crucial part of the ongoing process of territorialization (antedating neoliberalization), extending the control of the state over people and natural resources. What is more important, they also observe how neoliberalization has also benefited the increase of the private conservation projects and business-oriented conservation approaches (neoliberal territorialization) promoted by a few, and ever more influential, large conservation NGOs (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Thus, while neoliberalization has not impacted the role of the state as regulator (to establish new protected areas), it has made the decentralized, unbalanced, sometimes impoverished, state more contingent on the financial resources and expert knowledge of the private sector and NGOs. This in turn has resulted in new types of ‘hybrid environmental governance’ (section 1.4.2) and increased the direct involvement of non-state actors in the management and creation of protected areas, with potential to generate further financial values through the continuous commodification of nature (Igoe & Brockington, 2007; Igoe *et al.*, 2010; Kelly, 2011).

Therefore, it can be argued that the ongoing process of neoliberalization, based on the idea of commodification as being the only effective solution for common environmental problems (Igoe *et al.*, 2010), where the state’s primary role is to function as the regulator for expanding markets (Pawliczek & Sullivan, 2011), creates favourable conditions for the proliferation of PPAs. It is in this context that protected areas are increasingly designed to provide environmental services that can be used to offset other, environmentally degrading, commercial activities, while spreading economic benefits (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Thus, through the commodification of nature, they are able to secure funds in a situation where the state is often unable or unwilling to provide adequate protection and fails to meet society’s demand for nature conservation (Langholz & Krug, 2004). Hence, new opportunities for private sector involvement in biodiversity conservation are emerging (Kay, 2015) and PPAs are often presented by the conservation community as able to provide an economically viable (Bond *et al.*, 2004) and more effective protection of nature (Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005), than the largely under-funded and often ineffective protection offered by the state (Gallo *et al.*, 2009).

1.2 Emergence, proliferation, definition and categorization of PPAs

The number of PPAs around the world has been growing during the last 50 years, with a particular expansion in last the two decades (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Chape *et al.*, 2008;

Kay, 2015; Langholz & Krug, 2004). Although first acknowledged by the World Congress on National Parks in 1962, private parks have existed in various forms for centuries (Langholz, 2002). Their very early predecessors were hunting reserves created by rulers or sacred forest maintained by communities (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). The first private nature parks as they are known today were established in the USA and the UK in 1891 and 1899, respectively (Chape *et al.*, 2008). Among the countries of the Global North, there has been notable proliferation of PPAs in the UK, Australia and particularly the USA, where even in 2002, 1,300 reserves protected well over half a million hectares and represent the largest private reserve system in the world (Langholz, 2002). In the Global South, one of the most significant expansions of PPAs has been in southern Africa. For example, in South Africa, the number of private reserves increased from 10 in the 1960s to approximately 5,000 in 2000 (Bond *et al.*, 2004). Further evidence also suggests that important numbers of PPAs or significant land areas under private protection exist in East Africa (Carter *et al.*, 2008; Jones *et al.*, 2005) as well as Central and South America (Barany *et al.*, 2001; Chacon, 2005; Holmes, 2014; Langholz *et al.*, 2000a; Quintana & Morse, 2005; Shanee *et al.*, 2015; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Although efforts to map their growth globally (Appendix 1) indicate strong and wide interest in creation of PPAs (Stolton *et al.*, 2014), they have so far attracted only limited attention from the broader conservation community. Any reliable source of information about their overall numbers, size and geographic reach at international level does not exist (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Carter *et al.*, 2008; Langholz & Krug, 2004; Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

There is a lack of agreement across the conservation community at international level on what constitutes a PPA. A broad range of PPAs, filling a variety of conservation niches and representing a variety of ownership structures and management systems, exist around the world. Studies focusing on PPAs in different parts of world consequently resulted in various definitions and categorization systems. Early definitions formulated, for instance, by Langholz (2002) or by World Park Congress (Mitchell, 2005), were criticised for being insufficient in reflecting the wide range of approaches to PPA management and ownership and the bewildering combination of interactions between the different subjects involved in private conservation (Carter *et al.*, 2008). New modifications of definition as well as PPA typology often reflecting PPA regional particularities were subsequently proposed. As a result, currently as many as 50 different definitions of what PPAs are can be found around the world (Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

Trying to introduce more clarity into the understanding of PPAs and facilitate their systematic and complete analysis globally, Stolton *et al.* (2014), in their most recent study, emphasize the application of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) practice and approach, based on IUCN categorization of protected areas and guidelines. According to Stolton *et al.* (2014: 12), “...a privately conserved area is only a PPA if it is a protected area as defined by IUCN.” Since IUCN categorization is based on the combination of different management categories and governance types (Appendix 2), PPAs are found under private governance. This explicitly lists the owners and/or managers of PPAs as: individuals or group of individuals; NGOs; corporations; for-profit owners; research and religious entities. What is important is it excludes ‘shared’, community and indigenous ownership types that are often included in other definitions of PPA, as for these non-state actors the IUCN created a separate governance type, governance by indigenous people and local communities. Also, they set out criteria that distinguish PPAs from other types of governance, in particular that nature conservation is the primary objective and that the protection provided is permanent (Appendix 3). However, they recognize that not all privately conserved areas around the world will fit under this definition. As no global agreement regarding PPA definition and categorization has been found so far and given their ongoing evolution and proliferation, further discussion on the subject can be anticipated within the wider conservation community.

Debate on the definition and categorization of PPAs only reflects the variability in the conditions that underpin the existence of various forms of PPAs found in different regions around the world and explain why gathering information about them is a challenging process. PPAs exhibit a wide range of governance regimes and management mechanisms (Chape *et al.*, 2008) and differ dramatically in their size and management objectives (Langholz & Krug, 2004). The range of actors involved in private conservation is wide and encompasses large and small landowners, wealthy individuals, corporations and NGOs that often have an international character or foreign origin (Mitchell, 2005). Furthermore, in many countries, governments in recognition of PPA contributions to biodiversity conservation have enacted legislation to regulate their activities, stipulate the rights and duties of landowners, and provide incentives. Such examples of well-established legal systems can be found in Costa Rica (Langholz & Lassoie, 2001), South Africa, and Namibia (Bond *et al.*, 2004). In other countries, such as Peru or Bolivia, the legislation is more recent (Environmental Law Institute, 2003). However, there are still many countries where the state does not provide the

necessary or sufficient legal framework. For instance, in Chile, formal recognition of PPAs is inhibited by a lack of implementing regulation (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). Thus, many PPAs continue to be recognized only by international or local conservation NGOs (Chacon, 2005) or choose not to seek any formal recognition (Langholz *et al.* 2000a). In some countries, such as Kenya (Stolton *et al.*, 2014) or Chile (Fundacion Terram, 2005), for example, PPAs have been able to establish national networks as well as attract funding and technical assistance from different big conservation NGOs (BINGOs), including the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Conservation International (CI), among others (Meza, 2009; Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). This evidence further supports the argument that, irrespective of the challenges related to their documentation, PPAs are thriving under a variety of different socio-economic conditions and legal systems and, what is most important, they continue to expand.

1.2.1 Emergence and growth of PPAs in Brazil

The emergence and proliferation of PPAs in Brazil to a great extent reproduces the global trend, while it also exhibits some specific characteristics. Private reserves are claimed to be the principal voluntary mechanism of nature conservation in Brazil (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). They have been established by federal decree 98.914 of 1990 and termed *Reservas Particulares do Patrimônio Natural* (Private Nature Heritage Reserves - RPPN). RPPNs are created on the initiative of a landowner with the main objective to provide conservation of biological diversity in perpetuity (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). As any use or extraction of natural resources from within an RPPN is prohibited, they are consistent with the IUCN categories I, II, III and IV, this being contingent on the objectives set by the reserve owner (Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

Although RPPNs as a legal instrument of voluntary conservation appeared only more recently, Brazil has a long tradition of protection on private lands. First recognized by the Forest Code of 1934, it had the form of ‘protected forests’ (*florestas protetoras*), followed by Private Refugees for the Protection of Native Animals (*Refúgios Particulares para Proteção dos Animais Nativos*) and Private Reserves of Fauna and Flora (*Reservas Particulares de Fauna e Flora*), created by the federal government in 1977 and 1988, respectively (Juliano, 2008). The latter two are also considered the direct precursors of current RPPNs (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). Brazil thus holds a leading position in the legal regulation of private reserve establishment within Latin America (Mesquita, 1999) that some authors suggest might

provide an example to be replicated in other countries (Couzeilles *et al.*, 2012). Another important milestone for private conservation in Brazil was the recognition of RPPNs in 2000 as official conservation units established within the National System of Conservation Units (*Sistema Nacional de Unidades de Conservação* – SNUC) (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005), being the first among Latin American countries (Pellin, 2010). Since its enactment, the law on RPPNs has received further attention from Brazilian legislators, resulting in amendments. One of the outcomes concerns legal decentralization allowing for RPPNs to be created at federal, state and county (*municipal*) levels (Pellin, 2010; Juliano, 2011). Thus, 16 states and several counties have already introduced their own legal instruments for RPPN creation (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Above all, the comprehensive legal framework on RPPNs and their official recognition as conservation units are commonly claimed to be the key factors supporting their rapid expansion in Brazil (Pegas and Castley, 2016; Pellin, 2010; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

However, for the purpose of our discussion and further analysis, we need to differentiate between the owners' decision to create a private nature reserve and the legal process through which part of a land property is granted RPPN formal status of a conservation unit inserted into the SNUC. Studies carried out in Brazil suggest that the areas of RPPNs do not always correspond to the whole property available for protection (Pegas & Castley, 2014; Pellin, 2010). In fact, many landowners often own or control lands outside the RPPNs and can subject them (or parts) to informal protective measures other than the legally available conservation tools (Environmental Law Institute, 2003), such as an RPPN. Therefore, in reality, an RPPN represents only the part of a landed property which a particular owner voluntarily and intentionally decided to lock into conservation status that is regulated, enforced and monitored by state environmental institutions. While the data on RPPNs are gathered by variety of state and non-government institutions (Pegas & Castley, 2016), the data on informally protected areas in Brazil are not available.

The number and area covered by RPPNs has grown substantially since the establishment of the scheme in 1990 (Table 1). While in 1999 Brown and Mitchell (1999) noted the existence of 185 private reserves covering 376,850 ha, Pegas and Castley (2016) reported the existence of 1,182 RPPNs protecting 750,200 ha by the end of 2014. They calculated an overall increase of 35% in the number of RPPNs, and that 3,265km² had been protected since 2005, representing a 77% increase in the private conservation estate. While these RPPNs are distributed in 623 counties (*municípios*) all over Brazil, more than 80% of them are located in

the AF (Pegas & Castely, 2016). More importantly, the existence of 1,230 of RPPNs reported in 2016 by SOS Mata Atlântica (2016) suggests the continuation of this trend in the near future.

Table 1 Brazilian RPPNs and their area

| Year | Number of RPPNs in Brazil | Coverage in hectares | Number of RPPNs in the Atlantic Forest | Covered area in the Atlantic Forest (ha) |
|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 1998 ^a | 185 | 376 850 | n/a | n/a |
| 2003 ^b | n/a | n/a | 239 | 89 000 |
| 2004 ^c | 450 | 500 000 | n/a | n/a |
| 2004 ^d | 429 | 423 782 | 222 | 86 966 |
| 2014 ^e | 1 100 | 703 740 | 762 | n/a |
| 2014 ^f | 1 182 | 750 200 | 797 | 162 780 |
| 2016 ^g | 1 230 | n/a | 860 | 176 000 |

Source: Brown & Mitchell (1999)^a; Lairana (2003)^b; Pegas & Castley (2016)^f; Rambaldi *et al.* (2005)^d; Rylands & Brandon (2005)^b; SOS Mata Atlântica (2016)^g; Stolton *et al.* (2014)^e.

Further important evidence of a sound and thriving PPA system in Brazil is the existence of 17 state RPPN associations integrated in the National Confederation of RPPNs (*Confederação Nacional de Reservas Particulares do Patrimônio Natural – CNRPPN*) (CNRPPN 2016). Such institutionalization provides an important platform for networking, knowledge and experience-sharing among reserve owners and supports RPPN further dissemination (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). It also facilitates the formulation and coordination of common interests, which reinforces RPPN owners' positions in negotiations with government institutions and increases their visibility before the general public (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). Conservation NGOS have an important role in their rapid growth through providing them with financial and technical support. Among the most often mentioned are WWF, TNC, CI and Fundação SOS Mata Atlântica (Pegas & Castley, 2016; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). For instance, the latter two have formed the Alliance for the Conservation of Atlantic Forest (*Aliança para a Conservação da Mata Atlântica*) which, through a small grant scheme called *editais*, has already supported the creation of 392 RPPNs in the AF and financially, further supported another 105 (SOS Mata Atlântica 2016). This dramatic proliferation of PPAs in Brazil, founded on an entrenched legal framework and solid financial and institutional support, seems set to continue in the future. This raises many questions concerning not only the implications of the Brazilian private reserve system for the conservation of threatened

biomes such as the AF, but also for society and economy of the rural areas where they are located.

1.3 Enabling and motivating factors behind private conservation

What is it that prompts different individuals and a diversity of organizations around the world to create private reserves? Conservation objectives, such as protection of endangered species and threatened natural habitats, are commonly believed to be the primary motives for their creation globally (Langholz, 1996; Mitchell, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014) as well as in Brazil (Mesquita, 1999; Pegas & Castley, 2016; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005; Pellin, 2010; Rudzewicz & Lanzer, 2008). Other social, cultural and economic incentives may be essential, but are mostly regarded as only secondary or complementary, supporting the individuals and organizations in their conservation efforts on private lands (Mitchell, 2005; Langholz *et al.*, 2000). Yet, with growing interest in the transformative process induced by the commodification of nature (Igoe & Brockington, 2007), more attention has also started to be paid to other non-conservation, and in particular market-based, stimuli and incentives.

PPA capacity to be profitable and provide a financially competitive use of land can provide an important stimulus for their creation (Langholz & Krug, 2004; Kelly, 2011). Available research suggests that the core income-generating activity often employed by PPAs in Africa as well as Latin America is ecotourism and sustainable wildlife use (Barany *et al.*, 2001; Bond *et al.*, 2004; Carter *et al.*, 2008; Langholz, 2002). For instance, of the more than 50% of PPA owners in Costa Rica who claimed their reserves to be profitable, most were involved in ecotourism (Langholz *et al.*, 2000b). In South Africa, the most profitable are large PPAs running high-end tourism activities (Clements *et al.*, 2016). More importantly, the relations between ecotourism and conservation on private lands seem to be mutually reinforcing. While the explosive growth in ecotourism is believed to be one of the leading factors driving the proliferation of PPAs (Brockington *et al.*, 2008), private reserves also provide the infrastructure necessary for its further development (Barany *et al.*, 2001). Jones *et al.* (2005), for example, link the increase in the number of PPAs in east and southern Africa to the expansion of markets for wildlife products and nature tourism.

Notwithstanding, the role of tourism in facilitating the expansion of PPAs might often be overestimated. For example, Sims-Castley *et al.* (2005) argue that the majority of PPAs are not engaged in tourism. Many regions lack the charismatic megafauna found in Africa and have considerably less potential to attract a mass of tourists. Similarly, in Brazil the

involvement of private reserves in ecotourism activities is claimed to be low (Pellin, 2010). Pegas and Castley (2014) found that only 4% of 1,182 reserve owners reported using ecotourism within their RPPNs. As this is a very small proportion by comparison with other parts of the world, they believe that tourism cannot be the catalyst for RPPN expansion in Brazil. However, they acknowledge focusing in their research exclusively on RPPN areas where one of the principal factors impeding the development of tourism is the stringent land use restriction imposed by law. Yet tourism activities are not limited only to lands set aside as RPPNs, which frequently form only a part of a larger property, also available for tourism. In addition, they note that high-end tourism in Brazil thrives mostly on private lands outside of RPPNs (Pegas & Castley, 2014). This indicates the importance of lands adjacent to formally recognized RPPNs (informally protected or not) for the development of tourism activities. Another study, carried out by Rudzewicz and Lanzer (2008), albeit on a considerably smaller sample of RPPNs in Brazil, found that tourism was the second most important motivation for reserve creation for landowners after conservation.

Pellin (2010) provides examples where tourism drives the establishment of RPPNs. For example, she mentions the RPPN Salto Morato, founded by the cosmetics producer Boticario that attracts thousands of visitors yearly. This, similar to many other RPPNs involved in tourism, is located in the AF, which is the Brazilian biome with the highest concentration of RPPNs within its borders, in general (Table 1). Here, in the absence of charismatic game species, leading activities are hiking, bird-watching and waterfall-viewing (Pegas & Castley, 2014). Existing research thus suggests that private reserves, or properties with areas protected as RPPNs, in the AF of Brazil have the potential and capacity to attract visitors and successfully harvest the economic benefits of tourism. Yet, knowledge about the links between PPAs and tourism in Brazil is still very limited and available research results are inconclusive, leaving the question about ecotourism as a potential, motivating factor for PPA creation open to further inquiry and debate.

Income from ecotourism is far from being the only source of economic incentive for private conservation. Although created in places with limited potential for ecotourism, protected areas can still offer other virtual or material commodities for trade in global markets, particularly in the form of environmental and offsetting services (Igoe *et al.*, 2010). For example, PES are already an attractive mechanism for the promotion of private conservation in the countries of Central America (Chacon, 2005), Costa Rica, for instance (Environmental Law Institute, 2003). Moreover, their importance is expected to grow as corporations

increasingly seek to offset the negative environmental impacts of their various activities (Tisdell, 2005). Other economic activities available to PPAs will depend on their geographic location and can include agroforestry, artesanal productions, agriculture, wood extraction, and plant and meat production (Bond *et al.*, 2004; Brown & Mitchell, 1999; Chape *et al.*, 2005; Mesquita, 1999). Last but not least, PPAs can be supported by economic incentives usually provided by the state, including tax breaks and preferential access to credits (Stolton, *et al.*, 2014). Thus, there are other important economic incentives, besides the potential for tourism.

As only three activities, scientific research, visitation and education are by law allowed to be carried out inside an RPPN in Brazil, there are no other income generating activities within their limits. However, the lands on the properties with RPPNs are noted to be used frequently for agricultural production (Pellin, 2010). Also, there are cases when private landowners can benefit from PES and incentives provided by the government. In the AF, the NGO Boticario Group Foundation (*Fundação Grupo Boticário*) launched a voluntary scheme, in 2006, that they named Projeto Oásis, which transferred PES to private landowners (SOS Mata Atlântica, 2012). In the AF of Brazil, three RPPNs were established from corporate funding under the auspices of TNC and the Brazilian NGO SPVS to generate carbon credits for Chevron, General Motors and American Electric Power (Kill, 2014). However, the principal PES scheme usually linked to RPPN is E-ICMS (*Ecológico Imposto sobre Operações relativo à Circulação de Mercadoria e Prestação de Serviços de Transporte Interestadual e Intermunicipal e de Comunicação*), a state taxation system based on ecologically related tax revenues (Pegas & Castley, 2016). Some of the Brazilian states, such as Parana, adopted necessary legislation, allowing RPPNs to financially benefit from E-ICMS. In 2005 alone, seven RPPNs in this state altogether received R\$252,391,84 (Pellin, 2010). The system is slowly expanding and in 2013, six RPPN owners in the county of Varre-Sai in Rio de Janeiro state were together to be paid R\$31,122 (Nobrega, 2013). However, the direct beneficiaries of PES under E-ICMS are counties that do not necessarily pass them on to individual landowners (Pegas & Castley, 2016). All in all, existing schemes suggest great potential for PES to become a future source of funding for formally recognized RPPNs as well as for informally protected lands in Brazil.

Among other economic benefits provided by law to RPPN owners in Brazil are exemptions from paying rural property taxes (*Imposto Territorial Rural – ITR*) and preferential access to selected government conservation funds, and agricultural credit for productive parts of

property. The tax benefits are, however, rather insignificant and the other incentives are poorly administered and hence unattractive for the majority of RPPN owners (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Pegas and Castley argue that since the establishment and management of an RPPN is a costly and bureaucratic process, and given that their economic benefits are very modest, the role of economic benefits as motivating factor for RPPN creation is rather ambivalent (2016). What, then, is the role of other economic incentives, as motivating factor for landowners, in establishing PPAs/RPPNs in the AF?

1.3.1 Important links between private protected area governance and motivation factors

PPAs are created voluntarily by private individuals who own, control and/or manage the land. Different landowners may have different motives or incentives when they decide to set up a PPA (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). As Mitchell (2005) notes, it would be naive to believe that all of them act with altruistic intentions as they are only rarely stimulated by a single motive. Their rationale can often be complex and multiple, generally reflecting the particular socio-economic, historic and political context where PPAs are located (Mitchell, 2005). The relationship between PPA ownership and motivation is thus crucially important.

A first group of PPA owners are national or local companies and corporations. Despite their lower presence numerically on a global scale as proprietors of PPAs (Stolton *et al.*, 2014), they play a crucial role in funding and creating PPAs in many parts of the world, such as Chile (Meza, 1999; Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2016) or Costa Rica (Langhoz & Lassoie, 2001). Motivated by societal expectations, they establish PPAs as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Pegas & Castley, 2014). They either seek to ‘mitigate’ or ‘offset’ their harmful activities performed elsewhere, and obtain access to new natural resources, or to certify their existing production (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). For instance, in Brazil, in 1996, a paper producer Veracel Celulose S.A established the RPPN Estação Veracruz on 1,716ha of AF in compensation for the negative impacts of its eucalyptus plantation (Mesquita, 1999). Commonly, the final product sought by companies is the symbolic capital of a ‘responsible green business’ (Mitchell, 2005), frequently transformed into benefits such as green propaganda, films and images, or virtual commodities such as carbon credits (Igoe *et al.*, 2010). Thus, companies and corporations are primarily strongly motivated by their economic interests.

In Brazil, only 24% of all RPPN owners are corporations, and this together (included in one category) with industries and NGOs (Pegas & Castley, 2016). Nevertheless, it does not make

their role in conservation on private lands in Brazil less important. On the contrary, the involvement of private conservation has a long history, dating back to at least the 1970s (Dean, 1995).¹ Also, several PPAs, founded especially by corporations, are in many aspects considered to be the paragon of well-managed private conservation projects, such as the RPPN Estação Veracruz, mentioned above (Hinchberger, 2004; Mesquita, 1999; Pellin, 2010). Thus, local companies and multinational corporations create private reserves responding to the mix of economic and societal stimuli. Whilst not numerous, some of them are well-run and provide important lessons to other PPAs in Brazil.

Another important group of PPA owners worldwide are individual landowners. Whether due to their isolation or their lack of interest in participating in formal processes and reporting, it is difficult to estimate their numbers or areas protected worldwide (Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

Nevertheless, studies report, for instance, that 25% of all PPAs are under long-term individual landownership in Kenya (Carter *et al.*, 2008) and two thirds of all PPAs are owned by individuals or families in Costa Rica (Langholz & Lassoie, 2002). In Brazil, the number is even higher and according to Pegas and Castley (2016), 76% of all RPPN owners are individual landowners, which makes this specific group and their potential motivation highly significant in the context of conservation on private lands in Brazil.

What is so specific about this particular group of PPA owners is that their motivation is believed to be the most complex of all. According to Mitchell (2005), although many of them might be motivated by their concerns with nature, they need some help to act on these concerns. This does not need to be necessarily financial. Thus, middle and upper class urban dwellers were noted to be motivated by a mixture of property investment, business opportunities with recreation, and philanthropy (Holmes, 2014; Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2016). They set up PPAs, seeking to increase their quality of life by having rural residencies in places of natural beauty (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Also, urban environmental activists acting enthusiastically to protect the natural habitat are known to have established small but well-known PPAs such as Katalapi reserve in Chile (Holmes, 2014) or RPPN El Nagual in the state of Rio de Janeiro of Brazil (Pegas & Castley, 2014) on the basis of donations and income from visitors and the educational programmes they run. There are many such PPAs of

¹ For example, Dean (1995: 334) notes the case of the Linhares nature reserve established in the 1970s by Vale do Rio Doce mining company as a result of the pressure from Brazilian environmentalists and with the purpose to improve the unfavourable image of the company related to deforestation activities carried out in the Amazon.

a few hectares, created by better-off middle class urban dwellers in the AF of Brazil (Stolton *et al.*, 2014), accounting for the rapid increase in the number of RPPNs there.

Yet, individual landowners, often holders of larger properties, can also create PPAs to retain or protect their properties. Motivated by their emotional ties to land, they wish the property to remain with the family. According to Stolton *et al.* (2014), inter-generational conservation is an important societal and self-directed benefit for individual landowners globally. For example, Langholz *et al.* (2000a: 180) claim the ‘bequest value’, or “...the value of keeping a resource intact for one’s heirs...,” represents an extremely important non-market value for the owners of PPAs in Costa Rica. Similarly, Pellin (2010) describes the desire to leave a (natural) land heritage for the next generations as an important motivation among the RPPN owners in Brazil. However, here the role of negative incentives is also important. Among them are economic or regulatory conditions that might force the landowner to act against their interests or conviction (Mitchell, 2005). Thus, for instance, Langholz *et al.* (2000a) claim that in the case of the Costa Rica Wildlife Refuge Program, many individual landowners were prompted to create a PPA to prevent squatters’ invasions or having their land expropriated by the government for tourism development. Also, protection against land expropriation or land reform is frequently mentioned as a significant motivating factor among RPPN owners in Brazil (Buckley & Pegas, 2015; Mesquita, 1999; Pellin, 2010; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Dean (1995) notes cases in the past when landowners became involved in private conservation to escape taxes, and Rambaldi *et al.* (2005) describe how some landowners did so in an attempt to legalise illegally occupied areas. Despite the frequency with which these motives are recorded to influence the RPPN owners in Brazil, they have not been given due attention in the existing research.

Last, but not least are the wealthy and powerful individuals who are, in general, believed to act mainly with altruistic reasons, motivated by concerns about the negative anthropogenic impact on the environment (Brockington, 2009). Private reserves historically established by wealthy individuals wielding considerable power are considered the predecessors to modern PPAs (Mitchell, 2005). Although some evidence supports the argument linking the proliferation of PPAs to wealthy individuals (Büscher & Whande, 2007; Chudy, 2006; Mulder & Coppolillo, 2005), there are no estimates of how many such PPAs exist around the world. In the Latin American context, the most notoriously discussed is the case of Pumalin Park, established by US businessman and environmental philanthropist Doug Tompkins (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2016; Vidal, 2008). After establishing emotional ties to the area

during his visits to Chile as a mountaineer (Holmes, 2014), he purchased 320,000 ha of land in 1991 to establish his own private park (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). Once the co-founder of the outlet chain Espirit, he eventually became a full-time conservationist and together with his wife, was also the driving force behind the creation of a number of PPAs in Chile and Argentina (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). Thus, the wealth and power as well as the extent of areas purchased make the role of wealthy individuals in conservation on private lands highly significant.

Although depicted as acting on the most altruistic motives, for the ‘good of us all’, wealthy philanthropists might also be motivated by expanding their control and influence over new territories or into new non-material spaces. For instance, they might be gaining political sway over how the development or conservation agenda is shaped in the Global South (Holmes, 2012). Others might respond to benefits related to receiving credits for solving environmental problems, improving their image and/or thus being transformed into conservation celebrities (Brockington, 2009). For instance, Tecklin and Sepulveda (2014) note how PPA ownership came to be perceived among Chile’s elite as a sign of social distinction similar to the ownership of a vineyard or ranch in the past. Thus, it is questionable whether wealthy philanthropists differ from other individual landowners, and create PPAs without other agendas and act on purely altruistic motives.

Above all, while most of the studies on PPAs acknowledge that individual landowners, irrespective of their size, are motivated by other factors than just their concerns about local or global environmental problems, they only rarely examine these. Thus, Pegas and Castley (2016) in their most recent study conclude that there is only limited information about why individual landowners create PPAs/RPPNs and whether and how their motives differ from those that prompt other actors, such as corporations or NGOs.

Lastly, environmental NGOs are also key actors in private conservation. While they actively promote new PPA creation (Amrock, 2006; Hodge & Adams, 2011; Holmes, 2014; Meza, 2009; Kamal *et al.*, 2014), they also own and/or manage thousands of PPAs around the world (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Conservation NGOs thus became the dominant actors in mainstream conservation including conservation on private lands globally, whether by setting agendas, providing funding or executing outright purchases (Brockington & Igoe, 2007). For instance, they have been purchasing land for the creation of PPAs in Latin America since the 1970s, such as Monteverde Reserve in Costa Rica, established in 1972 (Environmental Law

Institute, 2003). Since then, conservation NGOs heavily invested in land purchases for private reserve creation in many other Latin American countries. For instance, in 2003, TNC and WWF purchased forestlands in Chile to create the 60,000ha Vladivian Coastal Reserve (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2016). When it comes to their motivation, NGO owners of PPAs are argued to be primarily motivated by their mission to protect biodiversity (Environmental Law Institute, 2003; Mitchell, 2005). However, some of the biggest conservation NGOs are closely allied to corporations and their interests which, in turn, influence NGO agendas and constrain their actions (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Also, other smaller conservation NGOs might be purposefully created by individuals or companies to run their private conservation projects, such as in the case of Pumalin Park in Chile, where the ownership was transferred to foundation controlled by the Tompkins' family (Holmes, 2014). Thus, the 'real' agenda of NGOs involved in conservation on private lands might be frequently obscured and/or additional motives besides protecting nature might often exist. Although in Brazilian conservation NGOs are primary providers of crucial financial and technical support for RPPN creation, their presence as reserve owners is minor (Pegas & Castley, 2006) and in most of the cases, we know very little about their motivation.

While different actors involved in the creation of PPAs with their particular motives are often analyzed separately, it is also crucial not to forget about the interaction and the networks established between them. These networks between conservation NGOs, wealthy philanthropists and corporations were forged during the process of national park creation at the beginning of 19th century and later became increasingly transnational (Igoe *et al.*, 2010). The interactions between different actors involved on the ground can be highly complex as, for instance, in the case of East Africa, where the creation and management of private conservation projects involve very diverse private actors such as group ranches, individual landowners, conservation enterprises and NGOs (Carter *et al.*, 2008). Thus, while PPAs can be created by companies and individuals, they might be owned or managed by conservation NGOs, supported by a variety of different sources of funding, and overseen by public authorities. Potential combinations are innumerable. The interplay of different interests, values and agendas will differ from case to case, while creating the background on which the conservation on private lands takes place. Above all, this raises the question of how this is all played out in the context of PPA creation in the AF of Brazil, as well as how different actors acting on different motives are involved together in funding, managing and controlling PPAs.

1.4 Role of PPAs in biodiversity conservation

One of the frequently discussed issues related to PPAs is their contribution to biodiversity conservation. Evidence gathered by studies carried out in different parts of the world suggest that PPAs can significantly contribute to the protection of endangered species and valuable natural habitats (Bond *et al.*, 2004; Holmes, 2013a; Kamal *et al.*, 2014; Langholz & Lassoie, 2002; Leménager *et al.*, 2014; Stolton *et al.*, 2014; Teh *et al.*, 2008). Some (Gallo *et al.*, 2009) go even further and claim that they are likely to play an important role in biodiversity conservation worldwide because the most productive and hence most threatened portions of a landscape tend to be privately owned. Yet, important data on PPAs are still missing (Holmes, 2013a) and the existing studies are deficient in the analysis of wider contextual factors that might decisively influence the final outcome (Macura *et al.*, 2015). There are several aspects that dominate the ongoing debate on PPAs concerning their contribution to biodiversity conservation.

First, PPAs are often claimed to play an important role in expanding the total area under protection, adding to existing public or community protected areas (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). PPAs cover approximately 1.2% of the national territory of Costa Rica (Langholz & Lassoie, 2002), 1.4% of terrestrial area in Kenya (Carter *et al.*, 2008) and 5.4% of the national protected area network in Peru (Shanee *et al.*, 2014). In some regions, their presence might be even more significant. For instance, in Little Karro region of South Africa, PPAs cover twice as much area as public protected areas, 24% and 12%, respectively (Gallo *et al.*, 2009). Yet, PPAs are disproportionately distributed around the world, and while they might be important regionally or nationally, their contribution to total areas under protection on the global level is still considered to be of less significance (Holmes, 2013a). However, this is not the only benefit of PPAs and other and more specific contributions of PPAs to biodiversity conservation exist. They protect places harbouring biomes and species that are underrepresented in national protected area networks (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Often, smaller ecosystems found on private lands might not be available for public protection due to their higher economic value (Adams & Moon, 2013). Moreover, local resistance or opposition within state institutions might pose obstacles to further expansion of public protected areas (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Thus, while in Costa Rica PPAs assist to protect coastal regions under estate development pressure (Langholz *et al.*, 2000a), in South Africa they protect lowlands with agricultural potential and embracing critically endangered habitats (Gallo *et al.*, 2009). In addition, PPAs can be rapidly established in areas exposed to immediate threats to avoid

their destruction, especially in situations when government authorities might take too long to decide (Stolton, *et al.*, 2014). PPAs also help to create buffer zones around public protected areas (Brown & Mitchell, 1999), and enhance their connectivity by establishing biodiversity corridors (Stolton *et al.*, 2014) that are vitally important for reducing the negative ‘edge effects’ and maintaining the genetic flux of many species (Pauda *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, many scholars (Gallo *et al.*, 2009; Langholz & Lassoie, 2001; Leménager *et al.*, 2014; Quintana and Morse, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014) believe that the main role of PPAs in biodiversity conservation is not to represent an alternative to publicly administered protected areas, but rather to complement them. Ultimately, the potential of an individual PPA to biodiversity protection will depend on the particular conditions and conservation specifics found in the area where it is located.

Nevertheless, the contributions of PPAs to biodiversity conservation are not completely without doubts and controversies. These relate mainly to the efficiency and permanency of the protection provided. As the majority of PPAs around the world are small, they tend to be criticised for providing effective protection only to limited quantity and quality of biodiversity (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Whereas they are seen as insufficient for protecting large animals and whole ecosystems (Langholz & Lassoie, 2001; Macura *et al.*, 2015, Sims-Castley, *et al.*, 2005), they can prove to be valuable for safeguarding specific species of plants, smaller animals or individual habitats (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). While examples of large PPAs exist, such as the Pumalin Park in Chile mentioned earlier, in many other cases the disadvantage of being too small might be overcome by their role in buffering and linking and most importantly, as Langholz *et al.* (2000b) note, it is the optimal size that matters. Given available financial and human resources, many landowners might be incapable of managing larger reserves. Thus, smaller might sometimes be better.

Since PPAs often depend on private funding, their efficiency might also be affected by their ability to achieve financial sustainability. Such concerns were raised especially in the case of PPAs relying on the income from economic activities, such as tourism, which can be subject to market fluctuations and changing tastes and trends (Langholz & Lassoie, 2001). To attract tourists and sustain their income, they can be motivated to build inappropriate tourism infrastructure (Langholz & Krug, 2004), introduce non-native species (Jones *et al.*, 2005) or maintain only few charismatic animals (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). In other words, failure to achieve financial sustainability might lead to further degradation of natural resources in some cases of PPAs.

However, PPAs might not be different from other protected areas in this respect. These, in the context of the dominating model of neoliberal conservation, are also increasingly expected to co-fund themselves, for instance, from income generated by tourism activities (West & Carrier, 2004), and can thus be exposed to the same pressures as PPAs, most importantly, with similar negative impacts on protected ecosystems. While PPAs are often praised for their management flexibility, financial resources use efficiency and fundraising efficacy (Leménager *et al.*, 2014), public protected areas face concerns of financial mismanagement (Shani, 2013). Also, according to Stolton *et al.* (2014), the results of two studies, one on PPAs in Chile (Tacón *et al.*, 2012) and the other on PPAs in Brazil (Cifuentes *et al.*, 2000), show that their management effectiveness does not differ substantially from that of public protected areas. Thus, while PPAs are more susceptible to market changes, the efficiency of their protection might not be always regarded as of less quality than that provided by public protected areas.

Another issue affecting their efficiency is the lack of standards as well as effective control and enforcement from governments or other institutions. Stolton *et al.* (2014) note that in some countries, PPAs can be left without any active management and thus protection, which leads Mitchell (2005) to conclude that similarly to public protected areas, some PPAs might be equally susceptible to the problem of being just ‘paper parks’. Therefore, many of the authors writing about PPAs argue strongly that more institutional involvement is necessary to set and enforce standards, to ensure accountability, as well as to strengthen PPAs (Mitchell, 2005; Gallo *et al.*, 2009; Langholz & Krug, 2004; Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

Furthermore, protection provided by PPAs is also strongly influenced by the property regimes in different countries. These regulate how different topsoil and subsoil rights to a single property of land or water are distributed, an issue also dubbed the ‘bundle of rights’ (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). For instance, Tecklin and Sepulveda (2014) note how in Chile the associated rights to water, subsoil mineral, geothermal water and energy, and so on, are separated from ‘real property’ rights. As PPAs are not legally recognized, and different rights are available for different markets, the protection provided by private reserves is highly vulnerable. Similarly, in Australia, decoupling of topsoil from mineral use rights means that PPAs are not necessarily protected from mineral exploration (Adams & Moon, 2013). Contrastingly, a higher concentration of associated rights is believed to increase conservation security on private lands (Kamal *et al.*, 2014). In brief, such disaggregation of associated land

rights coupled with weak regulation and enforcement can negatively impact the potential of PPAs to effectively safeguard the habitats they seek to protect.

These issues around efficiency are closely intertwined with another common concern related to PPAs, which is their capacity to provide protection in perpetuity. Therefore, Brockington *et al.* (2008) ask what will happen with private reserves expected to generate income once they become financially unavailable, or what the future will be of PPAs owned by NGOs if the focus for funding changes. Also, as many PPAs are owned by individuals, they can be sold or inherited by someone who has no interest in conservation at all (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Yet, practice shows that examples of long-lived PPAs exist, such as those run for more than a century by NGOs in the UK (Hodge & Adams, 2012). Others claim that PPAs are not that different from public protected areas that also might be vulnerable to changes in political situations, funding priorities of government or conflicting demands of different interest groups (Mitchell, 2005; Shani, 2013). In addition, some believe that private ownership can often be only a precursor to public protection, protecting threatened land until governments become willing or able to assume protection (Langholz & Lassoie, 2002; Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005; Jones *et al.*, 2005). Thus, NGOs or corporations can use legal arrangements to secure the land for conservation purposes and transfer ownership to the state should they cease to exist (Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005). Although changes in ownership or owners' mindsets can result in PPAs ceasing to exist, often legal tools are available to assure their existence in perpetuity.

In conclusion, PPAs conserve extra land by removing it from other, potentially damaging activities, such as agriculture or estate development, in situations when governments are not willing or able to provide protection (Holmes, 2013a). Their potential contributions can reach maximum when they complement existing public protected areas. By contrast, the most susceptible to be ineffectual or ephemeral are those PPAs that predominantly depend mainly on income from commercial activities, exist in isolation from other protected areas, and in the absence of any government scrutiny and regulation, and where associated land rights are subject to extreme disaggregation. Yet, they still might not necessarily perform worse than many protected areas under other types of governance.

1.4.1 Contribution of PPAs to biodiversity conservation in Brazil

This debate also sets the context for looking at the role of PPAs in biodiversity conservation in Brazil. Important in this sense are the results and information gathered by Pegas and

Castley (2016). They note that RPPNs cover only 0.1% of Brazil's territory. This is still small in comparison with the combined area of public and indigenous protected areas, covering 18.1% and 12.8% of the country's territory, respectively. The main reason is their small size. As 59% of all RPPNs are less than 50ha, their benefits for ecosystems functioning at the landscape level are rather limited and their contribution to biodiversity conservation at national level remains small. In spite of this, many of them might play an important role in the protection of particular habitats and species at regional and local levels, such as the AF (Pegas & Castley, 2016). This only coincides with what is being argued about the role of PPAs in biodiversity conservation in general.

Conservation on private lands in Brazil is very closely linked with the destiny of the AF of Brazil. It is here where a large number of predominantly small reserves are located (Pegas & Castley, 2016). They protect important fragments (Rylands & Brandon, 2005), giving refuge to many endangered and unique species of fauna and flora (Santos & Costa, 2008). For example, RPPNs helped to create a continuous protected area of AF in the state of Rio de Janeiro and thus brought back from the brink of extinction the emblematic species of Golden Lion Tamarin (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). About 200 RPPNs were identified in the three main Nordeste, Central and Serra do Mar AF corridors envisaged to link larger tracts of the remaining forest (Pegas & Castley, 2016). Such a contribution led many (Câmara, 2003; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005; Santos & Costa, 2008; Rylands & Brandon, 2005) to argue that they represent a critical step in preservation of the remaining AF that suffers from extreme fragmentation (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2009) and where most of the land is privately owned (Tabarelli *et al.* 2005). Yet Banks-Leite *et al.* (2014) argue that the most bio-diverse regions of the AF are already protected, and while new RPPNs would protect additional land, the focus needs to shift towards elsewhere, mainly to forest restoration. However, RPPNs still remain a fundamental part of a variety of government and non-government institutions' conservation efforts aimed at the remaining AF.

Nevertheless, it is not entirely clear how effective RPPNs are in achieving their conservation objectives. First, although the connectivity between PPAs other protected areas is crucial for conservation success (Stolton *et al.*, 2014), Pegas and Castley (2016) note the lack of available information, which precludes them from assessing RPPN connectivity with other conservation units in Brazil. Second, high establishment and management costs of RPPNs represent a significant financial hurdle for the landowners (Pegas & Castley, 2014). At the same time, many of them report not being involved in any income generating activity (Pellin,

2010) and describe the lack of finance as one of the main difficulties encountered in the management of their reserves (Rudzewicz & Lanzer, 2008). Pellin (2010) notes how the financial resources invested in RPPNs in Mato Grosso do Sul were commonly at a level sufficient only to cover the basic requirements. Hence, we do not know much about how these reserves are being financed as well as having no information about how those who might be involved in tourism maintain a balance between conservation and commercial objectives. On top of that, this is coupled with the lack of regulation and enforcement from the government agencies, often corrupt and without much interest (Pegas & Castley, 2014). Third, impacts of other socio-economic factors such as relations with neighbouring communities, local economy and so on regarding RPPNs to meet their conservation objectives are being largely omitted from existing studies. Inevitably, these unknowns raise questions about the actual ability of RPPNs to provide effective protection.

If we look closer at the RPPNs, their management, poor administration, insufficient planning and the lack of knowledge are thought to be among their management weaknesses, whilst among their strengths are clarity of legal status, compatibility with existing rules and guidelines as well as protected area design (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). This indicates that whilst RPPN weaknesses are largely internal, strengths are of external origin. According to Pegas and Castley (2016), the administration of RPPNs is governed by restrictive guidelines and regulated by law providing better land tenure security. Also, while they can be traded or passed on to other people, their conservation status cannot be revoked, thus granting them legal perpetuity (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). Reinforcing this is also the financial and technical support received from BINGOs (Pellin, 2010; Pegas & Castley, 2016; Stolton *et al.*, 2014; Buckley & Pegas, 2015). Thus, formalization, legal recognition as well as some institutional support are the main factors contributing to their supposed ‘efficiency’.

However, these factors do not act alone. Dean (1995) notes how in the course of the 20th century most of the landowning elite perceived the protection of forest on private lands as the inhibition of their right to usufruct their private property. Yet, this might not be simply only history. The controversial revision of Brazil’s Forest Code passed in 2012 (Soares-Filho *et al.*, 2014) demonstrates how legal regulation assuring protection of natural environment on private lands can be adapted or revoked to meet the vested interests of an influential group in Brazilian society, such as the agricultural lobby. In addition, compliance with environmental regulation in Brazil is generally rather low, resulting in deficient protection of natural resources on private lands (Sparovek *et al.*, 2010). Also, natural habitats protected by PPAs in

the AF donated to the state were not saved from rapid degradation, as demonstrated by Dean (1995). Most importantly, this draws our attention to the pivotal role of the wider political and economic context and its potential to a great degree to influence the final outcome of PPAs for biodiversity conservation, despite the well-entrenched legislation on RPPNs.

Thus, we can conclude that although the contribution of PPAs to protect the AF is considered significant, it is not spared the doubts and concerns similar to their counterparts elsewhere in the world. While a comprehensive legal framework and institutional support assist RPPNs to protect areas of AF, the other potentially influential factors remain rather unknown. Thus, we need to ask how the key factors, including internal characteristics of their management as well as wider socio-economic and political forces, impact and determine the ability of PPAs in Brazil to protect the AF effectively and in perpetuity,

1.4.2 Private versus public in natural resources governance

As demonstrated above, PPAs are commonly compared and contrasted with public protected areas to emphasize their advantages or discuss their drawbacks. Such juxtaposition has its origins in the supposed dichotomy between public and private, within the currently dominant neoliberal economic model, where the public is governed by the state and the private by a self-regulating market. Such an understanding then extends to natural resource management which can be either defined as under public or private governance (Sikor *et al.*, 2008).

Looking at the PPAs from this perspective, they are commonly depicted as the epitome of market-based solutions to global environmental problems (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). This notion places emphasis on well-defined, respected and enforceable property rights that work as incentives, leading the landowners to conserve the natural environment on their properties (Shani, 2013). Here, PPA owners are commonly defined as the ‘stewards’ of their own natural resources (Brockington *et al.*, 2008). Such a ‘stewardship approach’ is argued to be new and innovative by reaching beyond the public protected areas and fostering responsibility among the landowners and resource users who depend on them (Brown & Mitchell 1999; Shani, 2013). Moreover, the transfer of the responsibility for natural resources over a variety of non-state actors is interpreted as a greater participation of civil society in nature conservation and the democratization of the conservation movement (Langholz & Krug, 2004; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Thus, for Brown and Mitchell (1999: 173), stewardship means “...simply, people taking care of the Earth,” and private nature reserves are nothing other than the implementation of such an approach. Consequently, proponents of

private conservation thus defend further privatization of natural resources to the greatest extent possible (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014), believing that such formalization and privatization of land tenure systems around the world will result in further increases in the number of PPAs and their geographical expansion (Mitchell, 2005). Also, it is only by avoiding prejudices against free-market solutions and the automatic denial of privatization and liberalization that we can achieve more ‘stewardship’ (Shani, 2013). Thus, ‘stewardship’ places the responsibility for natural resources on private owners of PPAs and public and private are clearly defined as two distinct forms of environmental governance.

Applying the public-private dichotomy to nature conservation then makes it possible to outline the benefits that the complementary nature of the coexistence between public parks and private reserves can bring for the protection of the threatened natural habitats. Léménger *et al.* (2014), for instance, stress the synergetic effect and additionality that results from the existence of diverse protected areas in a given landscape. They see the differences between different protected areas as increasing the resilience of the whole protected area network with positive outcomes for the protected natural environment. In a similar fashion, Stolton *et al.* (2014) defend such a multiplicity of protected areas, arguing that it introduces checks and balances into conservation. Thus, the transfer of responsibility for the protection of nature over to the private sector as well as the coexistence between public and private in nature conservation is portrayed as having significant potential to generate benefits for nature conservation.

However, is there actually any clear division between state and non-state actors in environmental governance under neoliberal economic model? According to Sikor *et al.* (2008), many overlaps between public and private exist. Instead of a singular state and market, there are rather multiple publics and multiple privates, as well as many private-public hybrids where we see public and private collaborate in manifold ways (Sikor *et al.*, 2008). Thus, Hodge and Adams (2011) note the case of PPAs owned by land trusts in the UK and how their appropriation of private lands for conservation represents their partial ‘publicisation’ as it reduces private control and increases state engagement in land management through the influence exercised by the state over land trusts. Thus, PPAs, owned by land trusts in the UK, represent one case of a variety of hybrid environmental governance forms that are an essential part of the ongoing and complex processes of neoliberalization (Hodge & Adams, 2011). Indeed, as argued previously (section 1.1), such hybridization of natural resource management is a common occurrence and a key feature of the convergence

between mainstream conservation and the neoliberal economic model (Igoe & Brockington, 2007).

As was also reviewed in previous sections, there is now a large body of literature that shows how a multiplicity of non-state actors, such as NGOs, individuals, companies, and so on, are increasingly involved in the management of natural resources, including the creation of PPAs, around the world, as well as in the AF of Brazil. While the transfer of responsibility and authority over natural resources represents the diffusion of environmental governance (McCarthy & Prudham, 2004), complex networks and alliances of the state and diverse non-state actors, which came to dominate mainstream conservation and the management and administration of protected areas, makes it often impossible in practice to clearly distinguish what is under public and what is under private governance, generating new hybrids in environmental governance (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Note the case of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park where an abundance of different actors is linked together on a variety of scales in the management of natural resources (Büsher & Dressler, 2007). These networks and alliances in environmental governance are highly exclusive (Igoe & Brockington, 2008). To mobilize the necessary resources, they use rhetoric that is commonly based on simplifications that do not correspond with the socio-environmental realities found on the ground (Büsher & Dressler, 2007) and deploy hegemonic discourses that frame the market-oriented approaches to nature conservation as the only viable solution for tackling the growing world ecological crises (Igoe *et al.*, 2010). Thus, in the AF of Brazil (Stolton *et al.*, 2016), but also in Chile (Holmes, 2014; Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2016), partnerships among BINGOs, businesses, professionals from state institutions and a large community of middle-class, urban, educated individual landowners are the main driving force behind the promotion of conservation on private lands, with the creation of PPAs and regulatory frameworks for new environmental commodities as the source of their financing (sections 1.2.1 and 1.3). Thus, examples from conservation practices demonstrate that the presumed dichotomy between the state and market of the neoliberal economic model does not correspond with the reality, and that new neoliberal hybrid forms of environmental governance, promoted by empowered socio-political alliances, are market-driven.

Hence, neoliberalized conservation, embedded in new hybrid forms of environmental governance, where the responsibility for nature conservation is diffused amongst state and non-state actors, has the potential to produce negative impacts on nature. Kelly (2011) argues that in neoliberal conservation, the creation of protected areas by the state, but also

increasingly by a diversity of non-state actors, represents a particular form of primitive accumulation. Drawing on Marx's analysis of the separation of land ownership from its everyday use, she describes how the population occupying a particular land area during this process is dispossessed and the land is enclosed for conservation purposes. Application of absolute property rights to land, which dismiss the existence of any prior rights to use or access to the land in question, is then a prerequisite for the land to be transformed into capital that can be then circulated and thus generate further exchangeable values (Sullivan, 2011). In other words, the creation of protected areas enables further commodification of nature and the production of new conservation commodities. Moreover, new regimes of environmental governance (techniques and technologies of management and administration) rely on new types of science, such as ecosystem service science, to calculate the value of nature, as the main source of financing the protection of threatened natural worlds (Foucault, 1991; Igoe *et al.*, 2010; Sullivan, 2011). These processes, while conforming to market-logic, are founded on important concealments that can result in negative outcomes for conservation, such as the possible net loss of habitat generated by conservation credits (Pawliczek and Sullivan, 2011). Thus, while the resulting changes to societal relations related to enclosure and dispossession can lead to local resistance driving further degradation of the protected environments (Kelly, 2011), mitigating services produced by protected areas, based on the idea that degradation in one place can be offset by nature protection in others (Igoe *et al.*, 2010) can only exacerbate these already negative outcomes for nature conservation.

Above all, interaction and intersections between public and private in natural resources governance bring additional implications. Thus, it is also important to place under scrutiny the PPAs located in the AF within the wider context of environmental governance. What are the main characteristics of coexistence and interaction between PPAs and other types of protected areas? Also, we need to ask if and how these PPAs might interfere in the management of what are considered to be public goods, and vice versa, and with what outcome for the conservation of the AF as well as the development of rural areas?

1.5 People and private protected areas

The relationship between protected areas and the local human populations that reside within and around them or depend on natural resources under their protection have been subject to a prolonged discussion. Although to a great extent this will depend on the environmental and socio-economic conditions wherever protected areas are established (Brockington & Igoe,

2006), the relationship between them and local human populations are seen as highly political encompassing issues around rights to land, access to natural resources, and the role of the state as well as non-state actors in biodiversity conservation (Adams & Hutton, 2007). While protected areas can have significant material, social and symbolic impacts on local people and their livelihoods (West *et al.*, 2006), these people and their support are often seen as a critical component of any conservation project (Mulder & Coppolillo, 2005). PPAs protecting threatened forested habitats, such as the AF, are no exception. Thus, it is often argued (Brown & Mitchell, 1999; Jones *et al.*, 2005; Langholz, 1996; Nyahunzvi, 2014; Quintana & Morse, 2005) that to achieve their conservation goals, PPAs also need to address wider issues related to the social and economic needs of people living in their vicinity.

While there has been some research and discussion on the diverse impacts of public protected areas on local human populations (Adams *et al.*, 2004; Dudley *et al.*, 1999; Fabricius, 2004; Fisher *et al.*, 2008; Higgins-Zogib *et al.*, 2010; Koziel & Inoue, 2006; Mulder & Coppolillo, 2005; Naughton-Treves *et al.*, 2005; West *et al.*, 2006), so far, we know only little about the effects produced by PPAs. Also, it is not clear whether and how they might differ from each other (Holmes, 2013a). Some, such as Stolton *et al.* (2014), maintain that people living in the vicinity of PPAs can mainly benefit from the environmental services of healthy ecosystems, while they can also be negatively affected by constrained access to natural resources. Although some debates on the impacts caused by public protected areas might be also pertinent to PPAs, other issues more specific to PPAs equally arise (Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

Besides the indirect benefit of healthy ecosystems, the main positive impact often attributed to PPAs is their contribution to local employment and to the economy on a regional and national level. The private conservation sector has been claimed to make significant contributions to the employment and national economy in South Africa (Bond *et al.*, 2004; Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005). Cases when PPAs provide employment to members of local rural communities were also noted in Costa Rica (Amrock, 2006) and Nicaragua (Barany *et al.*, 2001). Moreover, in a handful of these places, PPAs were also noted to create jobs in rural areas with few other employment opportunities (Barany *et al.*, 2001) or provide increased salaries and improved working conditions (Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005). Surveys carried out in the 1990s among PPAs in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa showed that more than 80% of their employees were from communities near the reserve (Langholz, 1996). While some local residents were able to benefit from the establishment of Huilo Huilo private reserve in Chile, elimination of traditional timber livelihoods meant that the benefits did not

extend to all of them, mainly since the transformation from timber to tourism-based economy signified that previously extreme dependence on timber extraction was only replaced by the dependence on privately managed nature tourism (Serenari *et al.*, 2015). This indicates that new opportunities created by PPAs might not always sufficiently compensate for lost livelihoods and might not benefit all those who are affected most by the restriction imposed on the use of natural resources.

Information about the impact of PPAs on national or local economies in Brazil is scarce. Neither is there any estimate concerning PPAs' contribution to new job creation in Brazil. Available research results suggest that large PPAs with advanced tourist infrastructure and high levels of visitation, such as RPPN Salto Morato or RPPN Estação Veracruz (Mesquita, 1999), might have significant potential to offer employment to several members of neighbouring local communities as well as to stimulate local economies. For instance, in the study by Pellin (2010), only 11 out of 38 RPPNs were reported to have some employees, and even these were not exclusively employed at the RPPN. Contrastingly, Kill (2014), in her research on 3 RPPNs created by corporate-NGO alliances in the AF, shows how private conservation initiatives can fail to provide the promised employment, and even contribute to rural community impoverishment and further marginalization. She notes how initial jobs as forest rangers paid little more than the minimum wage, required people from local rural communities to monitor their neighbours and did not last long. Instead, the restriction on access to previously used natural resources coupled by harassment and violence forced people from rural communities to look for employment elsewhere, often requiring them to move to poverty-ridden outskirts of urban centres (Kill, 2014). Thus, while this indicates that some reserves provide employment for locals, most of the RPPNs in Brazil might have only limited potential to make any significant contribution to local employment. Moreover, it suggests that where the opportunity exists, PPAs might fail to deliver the promised economic benefits. Thus, an important question remains as to whether and how PPAs in the AF can provide employment benefits for the affected members of rural communities.

PPAs are also often criticised for being places enjoyed predominately by privileged groups of society but which exclude those who live nearby (Langholz *et al.*, 2000a). For example, the tourism-operating PPAs from southern and East Africa, where land is concentrated in hands of European descendants (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Carter *et al.*, 2008; Jones *et al.*, 2005), serve paying wealthy tourists, but restrict the access of locals. By comparison, Holmes (2014) mentions how access by the general public to many areas in Chile improved after lands had

been transformed into PPAs. In some cases, even agreements between PPAs and affected communities were reached regarding the limited use of some of the natural resources (Holmes, 2014). Many PPAs included in the study by Langholz claimed to provide free tours to community groups and schools, but while this might help PPAs to foster better relationships with local communities, it might not dissolve the concerns over lost access to reserve resources commonly voiced by local people (1996). Most importantly, Stolton *et al.* (2014: 38) conclude that the issue of access “...is more a function of management than of governance.” Yet, protected areas in private ownership are not necessarily different from other private lands used for agriculture or forestry, and it is entirely up to the reserve owner/management to decide who might and who not access the property. Thus, while some PPAs can be more open to the general public and less exclusive than others, the main concerns of the people from adjacent communities might not be simply their eligibility to enter a privately-protected area as a ‘common visitor’, although in some cases this also might be important.

In Brazil, this aspect of PPA-community relations remains rather unexplored. When compared to African PPAs running high-end eco-lodges, Brazilian RPPNs are claimed to be more accessible to the wider public and target domestic more than international tourism markets (Pegas & Castley, 2014). Yet, under Brazilian law, RPPN owners are fully responsible for the protection and management of their reserves. Thus, they can choose to open their RPPNs to public visitation or just keep their reserves closed (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). Related sanctions for potential violation of rules or exposing the protected natural resources to risk might contribute to the reluctance of RPPN owners to open their PPAs to any kind of visitation (Pegas & Castley, 2014). Thus, many RPPNs in the AF might be just places of exclusive use for their owners, their families and friends, or selected groups of tourists without any access to the general public and people from nearby rural communities. Furthermore, more tidily-regulated access for local people, who might have been under previous land use regime, such as agriculture, accustomed to using the natural resources free-of-charge, can result in local opposition towards the private conservation project (Buckley & Pegas, 2015). Accordingly, the survey conducted by Pellin (2010) showed that while the majority of RPPN owners considered their relationship with the neighbouring community as relatively good, they identified the invasion of their reserves as the main sources of conflict with locals. Invasion, poaching, illicit extraction of plants are common source of friction and disputes with local populations reported by owners of PPAs in Brazil (Pegas & Castley,

2014), including those located in the AF (Buckley & Pegas, 2015; Dean, 1995). Thus, available information suggests that although PPAs in Brazil are accessible to the general public, it also indicates that stringent legal regulation can motivate some landowners to keep their reserve closed. More importantly, constrained access to resources might lead to conflicts and resistance towards PPAs from the members of adjacent human local population. The research question arises: how are the issues around access shaping relationships between PPAs in the Atlantic Forest and rural communities in their vicinity?

Another issue related more specifically to PPAs is that they can contribute to land concentration in the hands of wealthy landholders particularly in those countries of the Global South where land inequality is a pertinent issue (Büscher & Whande, 2007). Thus, in Chile, one of the richest men in the country, and its later president, created PPAs on land on which the Mapuche indigenous group claim use rights and ownership (Meza, 2009). In some cases, PPAs can also represent an obstacle to redistributive agrarian reforms. Examples when wealthy owners transformed their lands into private reserves to escape its expropriation and redistribution were noted in South Africa and Zimbabwe (Brockington *et al.*, 2008). Also, some indications exist that PPAs provide some protection against land redistribution to wealthy landowners in Paraguay (Quintana & Morse, 2005), Costa Rica (Langholz *et al.*, 2000) and other countries of Central America (Chacon, 2005). In these cases, biodiversity conservation is in conflict with the goals of social justice (Langholz & Lassoie, 2001). Yet, according to Stolton *et al.* (2014), such initiatives are rather rare. Nevertheless, the concentration of land in the hands of wealthy individuals for private conservation purposes will be a critical feature of a local socio-economic context, particularly in many of the countries of the Global South, such as Brazil, where land inequality and social injustice are still pertinent issues (Fairhead, Leach & Scoones, 2012).

Several studies indicate that landowners in Brazil, too, are motivated to create RPPNs with the purpose to protect their properties from their confiscation by the government either for agrarian reform or infrastructure development (Mesquita, 1999; Pegas & Castley, 2016; Pellin, 2010). However, further details of the potential impacts on affected rural populations in Brazil, particularly in relation to PPAs, do not exist. Notwithstanding, analyzed cases of public protected areas in the AF, such as that of the Parque Estadual Jacupiranga (Dünckmann, 1999), demonstrate that unsettled land tenure issues are at the core of their strained relations with indigenous groups (Castro *et al.*, 2006; Idrobo *et al.*, 2015) and peasant communities (Dean, 1995; Dünckmann, 1999). Also, Buckley and Pegas examine

how the disadvantaged and marginalized strata of Brazilian rural society stand in relation to private conservation movements (2015). They note that while the establishment cost of an RPPN might not represent a significant obstacle for wealthier urban dwellers, these are an insuperable hurdle for the majority of small-scale farmers. In other words, RPPNs are a tool available only to better-off strata of Brazilian society. Thus, RPPNs might contribute to the concentration of land in hands of a selected group of individuals and thus to further the perpetuation of the socio-economic and land inequality characteristic for rural Brazil. Therefore, we need to ask what the main implications of land concentration for private reserve creation on rural society in the AF of Brazil might be.

Further concerns are related to the concentration of land under foreign ownership. This can lead to private conservation being perceived as a controversial threat to national sovereignty; an impediment to development, or an attempt at neo-colonization, as in the case of Pumalin Park of Douglas Tompkins (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014; Holmes, 2014). Alternatively, it might lead to resurgence in resource nationalism, as noted in the case of Zimbabwe (Nyahunzvi, 2014). What is more, foreign ownership of PPAs is often linked to land-grabbing (Langholz, 2001; Vidal, 2008). Fairhead *et al.* (2012) define green grabbing as the appropriation of land for environmental ends, where land ownership, use rights as well as control over natural resources are transferred from the poor over to the rich and powerful. The result is a profound material as well as symbolic impact on local people, their livelihoods and landscapes (Fairhead *et al.*, 2012). However, Holmes (2014) claims that such grabs are far from being homogeneous. They are not limited only to foreigners, as believed earlier, but also include purchases by domestic as well as new actors such as conservation NGOs. For instance, he notes that while the current land transfers for Tantauco Park creation in Chile might be legal and transparent, they build on historical processes during which the same properties were appropriated in a contested manner. Thus, comprehending current land grabs for environmental ends is not possible without understanding the specific environmental histories of particular places and prior forms of enclosure and territorialisation (Fairhead *et al.*, 2012). Tecklin and Sepulveda (2014) note how several large PPAs in Chile emerged to replace contentious and failed logging projects at the timber frontier, while creating new spaces for the engagement of the Chilean business elite. Current conservation land grabs, assisted by the shift toward neoliberalism, thus might be in many cases only the extensions of such historical processes. This does not mean that all the PPAs necessarily represent green land grabs (Holmes, 2014). The links between PPAs and potential green grabbing in the

context of the AF are unknown. In what ways are PPAs created in the AF of Brazil the result of green land grabs (or not), whether current or as the extensions of historical processes?

The capacity of PPAs to involve neighbouring rural communities in the management of protected natural resources is also questionable. Langholz (1996), in his study on PPAs in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, found that their owners did not see local community involvement in decision-making processes as necessary. This was well exemplified in the case of two PPAs in Paraguay where one of the reserves adopted completely top-down management and the other, although having established a management committee, excluded the most vulnerable groups such as rural poor peasants and indigenous people from its decision-making processes (Quintana & Morse, 2005). Similarly, the ‘local’ advisory board of conservation-NGO-run PPA Kurukinka in Chile was composed exclusively of distinguished scientists, rich individuals, government officials and business leaders, while any representatives of local inhabitants were missing (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). Also, where locals are invited to become involved, their participation is commonly orchestrated to provide the ‘correct’ results (Holmes, 2013b). Yet, the result of failure to include local interests might lead to alienation, conflicts and resentment that perhaps threatens long-term sustainability, as demonstrated in the case of the Pumalín private park in Chile (Mulder & Coppolillo, 2005). Notwithstanding, Holmes (2013b) argues that local support is not essential for the success and long-term survival of protected areas. Thus, rather than focusing on how to gain local support and sympathy, attention should focus on the factors which might weaken or empower local people’s ability to shape protected areas (Holmes, 2013b). Above all, almost nothing is known about local people’s participation in the management of PPAs located in the AF or their ability to shape them. What factors determine how the local rural population does or does not participate in and shape the conservation outcome of PPAs in the AF?

Last but not least, PPAs can also have a significant cultural impact on local human populations, particularly on the way in which they interact and perceive the surrounding environment. Representatives of protected areas often deploy discourse that simplifies the impact of protected areas on rural peasant communities and indigenous communities. Also, they produce twisted representations of their socio-economic practices or changes to these. Should they change or just be different, they are often described as failing (West *et al.*, 2006). Thus, Quintana and Morse (2005) note how management of PPAs in the AF of Paraguay attributed the conflict between the existing land use and conservation to inappropriate land

use practices employed by members of neighbouring rural communities. Also, while ignoring wider socio-economic factors driving the environmental degradation, such as land and social inequality, they focused instead on technical solutions and improving ecological knowledge with the purpose of transforming agricultural techniques and local livelihood strategies (Quintana & Morse, 2005); and, just as PPAs, similar to other market-based solutions thriving under neoliberal conservation, transform the natural spaces into (ecotourism) commodities, so local people's interests are constructed as labour (West *et al.*, 2006). Brockington *et al.* (2008) note a case in which neighbouring communities in Zimbabwe became alienated from land they previously occupied that had been fenced-off for conservation and tourism purposes and were recast as labourers. Similarly, local ecosystems and economies can be reformulated such that they become unavailable to some members of a rural population, as was reported in Yucatán (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). The nature of ecotourism activities in the region changed and local people did not have the required skills and capacities to benefit from the new employment opportunities (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). Thus, PPAs reconstruct natural spaces to serve their own purposes, and impose changes on people's social relations with their environments. According to West *et al.* (2006), the resulting alienation from land and the introduction of alien land uses (tourism) can have significant consequences for some communities as it can erase their unique ways of seeing and being in natural surroundings. Above all, the few cases mentioned above show how little is known and understood about the social production of PPAs and their 'cultural' impacts on affected human populations. In particular, we know almost nothing about how new spaces produced by PPAs located in the AF of Brazil can reshape the existing social relationships and the way those people in neighbouring rural communities see and interact with them and their surrounding natural environments. Having reviewed the existing literature on PPAs, we now turn to introducing the fieldsite and methods applied for data collection and their analysis.

Chapter 2: The Fieldsite and Methods

Relations between (rural) people, nature (forest) and protected areas (private) are the central issues to this study. An understanding of what the AF is, its history, particularly its exploitation and the conservation efforts to save it from destruction is thus crucial for the analysis to be developed in the following chapters. Intrinsic to these processes and thus equally important to introduce are the human populations that inhabit the rural areas of the AF and call it their home.

2.1 The Atlantic Forest: history and conservation

The AF is one of the main Brazilian biomes, a vast heterogeneous region stretching 3,300km along the Brazilian Atlantic coast and penetrating inland as far as eastern Paraguay and the Argentinean province of Misiones. Being home to an enormous number of different species of flora and fauna, it has been recognized for its high level of biodiversity and endemism (Metzger, 2009; Tabarelli *et al.*, 2005) and along with 24 other regions of the world, identified as a ‘biodiversity hotspot’ in recognition of both its importance and current threats to it (Myers *et al.*, 2000).

The AF has been subject to centuries-long human-induced transformation that has been accelerating from at least the 16th century with the arrival of the first European colonizers, since when it has served as a source of natural resources, and been cleared to make space for agricultural production. This reached its peak in the 20th century with rapid industrialization and population growth (Câmara, 2003). As a result, only 163,175 km² or 12% of its estimated ‘original’ forested area remains (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2009, see Appendices 5 and 6). Moreover, most of the remaining area suffers from extreme fragmentation (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2009).

Pressure from agricultural production, eucalyptus plantations and the expansion of residential areas, illegal logging, and infrastructural project construction all contribute to continuous high levels of deforestation (Metzger, 2009). Consequently, the AF is currently seen as one of the most highly threatened ecosystems on the planet (Galindo-Leal & Câmara, 2003) and has attracted wide attention in the international conservation community. In 1992, it was proclaimed a Biosphere Reserve (Câmara, 2003) and began to play an important role in the conservation strategies of international environmental NGOs such as CI (2011), the WWF (2011) and TNC (2011).

Past attempts to protect the remaining forest have focused mainly on the establishment of public protected areas in the form of parks and sustainable-use reserves at the federal and state level (Rylands & Brandon, 2005). Although the numbers of such protected areas have increased dramatically over the last 40 years, they still represent only 14% of the remaining forested area (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, such public protected areas are often too underfinanced and understaffed to provide effective protection (Câmara, 2003; Tabarelli *et al.*, 2005). The establishment of new protected areas is closely linked to the strategy of increasing connectivity between the remaining forested areas through the creation of biodiversity corridors (Galindo-Leal & Câmara, 2003).

Given the high level of fragmentation, the role of the Central Corridor and the Serra do Mar Corridor (Figure 1) in the management of the remaining forest is extremely important. While the creation and maintenance of public protected areas form a central part of this strategy, the fact that most of the remaining forest remains in private hands means that current and future private protected areas are seen as crucial to the success of conservation efforts (Tabarelli *et al.*, 2005; Câmara, 2003). It is for this reason that the use and potential of PPAs in the region are currently attracting increasing attention and support from the national and international conservation community (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005).

Figure 1 Biodiversity corridors in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil



Source: Galindo-Leal and Câmara (2003)

2.2 Rural communities in the Atlantic Forest region of Brazil

The AF region has received considerably less academic attention than other parts of Brazil, for example, the Amazonia. The AF region stretches over 6 different federal states located in the south and south-east of Brazil, including São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. This south-eastern region of the country is home to 70% of the Brazilian population, roughly 120 million people (Metzger, 2009), as well as being the nation's industrial and economic centre (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005). It encompasses rural as well as large urban areas (Metzger, 2009) and includes the full diversity of Brazil's communities in terms of socio-economic and political status and conditions. The World Bank estimates that there are 2 million people in the region's rural areas living in poverty, while overall the areas have high income inequality, with a Gini coefficient equal to 0.63 (2003: 8). The World Bank (2003: 40) also notes high rates of illiteracy and limited access to services such as piped water and electricity. Thus, overall, the AF region is characterised by severe and multifaceted poverty, while remaining one of the world's regions of high biodiversity (Fisher & Christopher, 2007).

The present socio-economic and political context, as well as the relationships between different socio-economic groups in rural Brazil, including the rural areas in the AF, has to a great extent been determined by conflict over land. Rural Brazil is a place of extreme land concentration where only 3.5% of the population holds 56% of land, whilst a mere 6.3% of land is distributed among 57.6% of landholders (Meszaros, 2007). Land inequality has historically been attributed to the centuries-long process of the encroachment of public lands by the colonial and entrepreneurial elites, during which smallholders and squatters were regularly pushed off their lands and coerced into attaching themselves to larger landholdings (Dean, 1995). At the same time, rural Brazil is also home to masses of landless rural workers who emerged as a result of the profound transformation of the social relations of production that have occurred in the last two centuries (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). During this period, rural workers previously residing on large coffee or sugarcane plantations and entwined with landlords in complex client-patron relationships became landless casual workers (Martins, 2002). High land concentration in combination with this large landless rural population thus led to demands for redistributive land reform. Although agrarian reform, with the aim to provide the rural poor access to land, started in the 1980s, landless rural poor dissatisfaction with the pace of the reform often resulted in the invasions of land properties categorized as unproductive (Deer & Medeiros, 2007). Such invasions were often supported or organized by social movements, such as the MST (*Movimento sem Terra* - Landless Workers Movement),

and led to the escalation of conflict with landowners (Alston & Mueller, 2010; Deer & Medeiros, 2007). Despite the agrarian reform programme success in distributing land to hundreds of thousands of rural settlers (Deer & Medeiros, 2007), the process of land reform has also had unintended consequences, including exacerbated social conflict, increased land property insecurity and a lower tendency to agricultural contracting by larger landowners. These, in turn, are seen as significant determinants of the present socio-economic and political context of rural Brazil with further repercussions for the availability of alternative livelihood opportunities for the rural poor (Alston & Mueller, 2010).

These socio-economic forces articulate with politicized representations of racial and ethnic social configurations directly connected to Brazil's colonial and commercial past. The present ethnic composition of the rural population in the AF of Brazil is understood as the result of widespread 'miscegenation'. This began with the arrival of the first Portuguese colonizers in the 1500s and their encounter with indigenous groups of Tupi-Guarani, followed by the era of African slavery. This was succeeded by a further wave of migration mainly from Europe, but other continents too, in the first half of the 20th century (Dean, 1995). The rural areas of the AF region are now home to descendants of indigenous groups, slaves and migrants as well as what are termed 'neo-traditional peasant groups' of *Caiçaras*, *Caipiras* and *Caboclos* (Castro *et al.*, 2006). Despite the image of Brazil as a 'racial democracy' where different 'racial' and ethnic groups live in harmony, racial inequality, prejudice and discrimination continue to shape everyday social reality (Lovell, 2000). While interpretations of race are often a determinant of access to employment, higher income, education and better living conditions, those most affected by social inequality are Afro-Brazilian women. Nascimento and Nascimento (2001) observe how social inequality in Brazilian society is being reproduced on two different levels, race and gender, and claim that Afro-Brazilian women who mostly hold manual occupations and earn on average less than white women as well as black men embody a feminization of poverty. That the nature of race as social concept is open to interpretation also creates a space that allows for some upward mobility, most notably of 'mixed-bloods'. This racial, ethnic, social and economic stratification is the context in which control of land and natural resources continues to be played out and forms a crucial background for the issues raised in this research.

The present rural population is involved in a diversity of economic activities, including subsistence farming and agricultural as well as non-agricultural wage labour. A World Bank (2003) study of the region suggests that farming continues to be of central importance for the

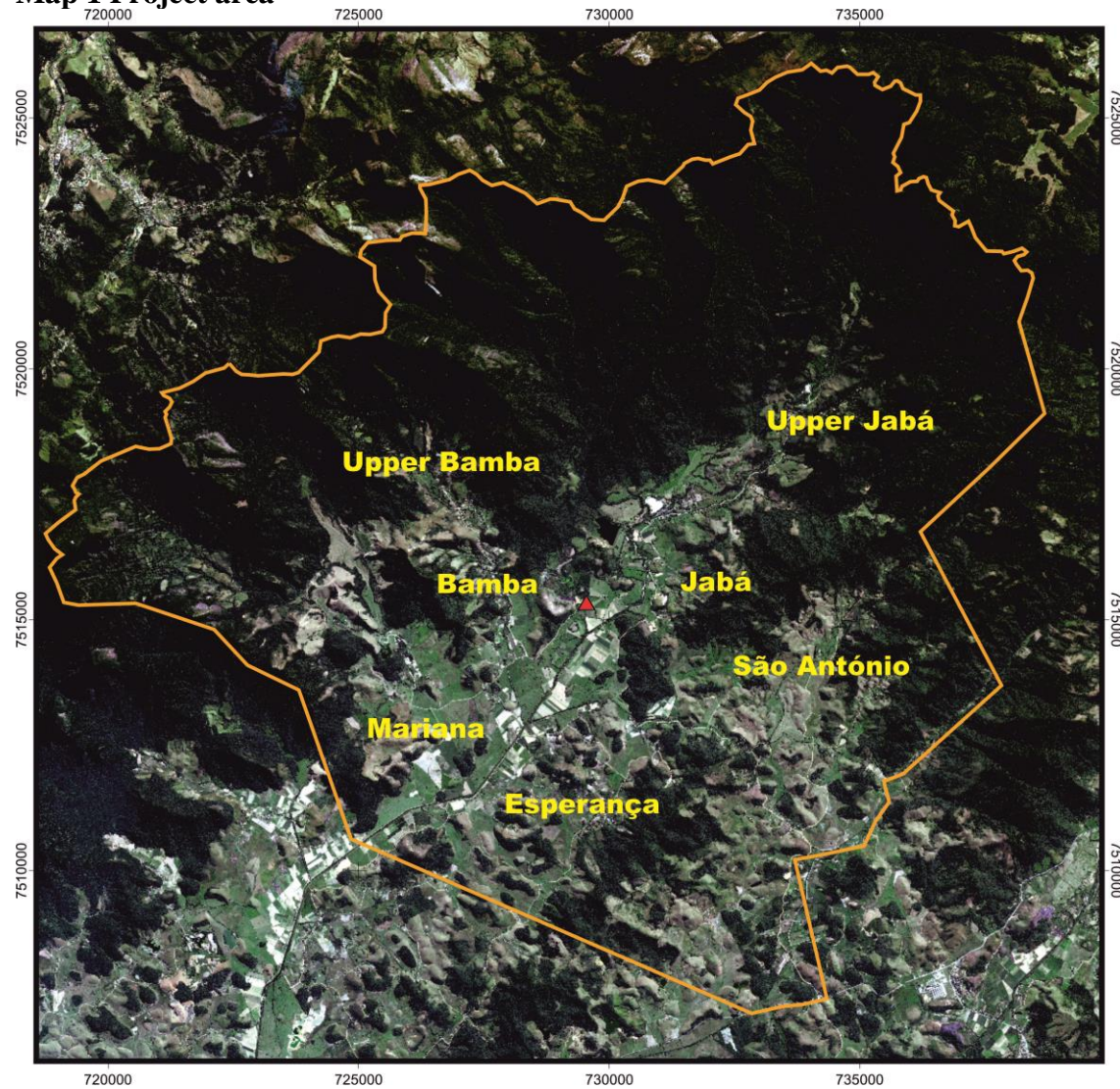
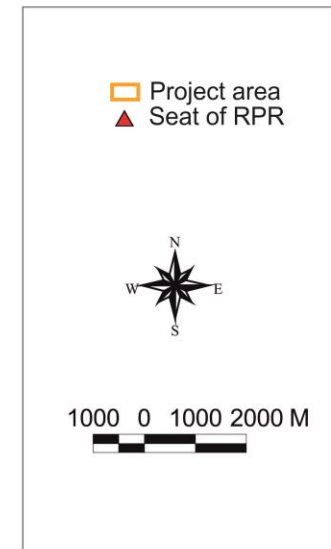
subsistence needs of the poorest households, while wage labour provides 60% of average incomes. Although some such as Pauda *et al.* (2002) claim that the majority of the rural population in south-east Brazil has no experience with tropical forest or tradition as subsistence hunters and gatherers, in their ethnographic study, Paulson & DeVore (2006) showed that the forest still plays an important role in the livelihood strategies of the rural poor who live in the remaining forested areas. In this view, rural people consider the forest an important reserve of resources, agricultural land and water sources. Besides slash-and-burn agriculture, cultivators also employ mixed agroforestry techniques, such as the traditional *cabruca*,² and use the forest as a source of food and new genetic material for planting as well as a variety of medicinal plants and culinary herbs (Paulson & DeVore, 2006). The rural poor often reside in, around or hold properties within established public protected areas preserving the remaining AF and use available forest resources to complement their other subsistence or income generating activities (Castro *et al.*, 2006; Dünckmann, 1999). Thus, access to land and forest resources play a crucial role in the relationships between protected areas and rural communities and significantly shape the context in which the issues central to this study will be researched.

2.3 Introduction to the Fieldsite

2.3.1 Redonda Private Reserve

My fieldwork was centred on the Redonda Private Reserve (RPR) in the AF, 80km northeast of Rio de Janeiro. The reserve is located in the Guapiaçu River valley under the steep peaks of Serra do Mar Mountains. Near the reserve, two larger (Jabá, Bamba) and four smaller rural settlements (Upper Bamba, Upper Jabá, Esperança, Mariana) are located. Some families still live in more isolated areas (Regatinho, São Pedro) and as the reserve continues to purchase new areas further away from its administrative centre, new communities are finding themselves living in the reserve proximity (see Map 1 for details of the area included in the research).

² An ancient agroforestry system in which productive plants are planted under the shade of native forest (Paulson and DeVore, 2006).

Map 1 Project area**Project Area**

Projeção Universal Transversa de Mercator - UTM
 DATUM HORIZONTAL - SAD 69
 Sistema de Coordenadas Métricas

Fonte: Centro de Informações e Geoprocessamento - CIGEO
 Sec. Mun. de Governo e Planejamento
 Pref. Mun. de Cachoeiras de Macacu - RJ

Map by Peter Slovak and the Center of Information and Georeferencing of Cachoeiras de Macacu

The reserve and nearby communities are located within a larger area called by local people ‘*Campo do Carmo*’. The name is probably derived from the Catholic order of Carmelites, who were the first Europeans to explore and settle this area. There were also the founders of Fazenda do Carmo, a farm but also a historic centre of power and economy in the area. Another term for this area frequently used by local people is ‘*dentro*’ (inside) as opposed to ‘*fora*’ (outside) which is used for everything which is not ‘*Campo do Carmo*’. This might have been a derivation of another often-used expression ‘*dentro do mato*’ (inside the forest).

At the present time, the forest mostly covers the hillsides and steep slopes of mountains. However, despite being repeatedly cleared and regrown, it seems that before the 1950s, the forest used to cover a larger area, including some lowlands. Up to the end of the 19th century, the only access to the area was by the River Guapiaçu, which was used to transport agricultural production and hardwoods (*madeira de lei*) to Guanabara Bay and further to Rio de Janeiro but which declined and eventually ceased to exist once the area was drained and turned (back) into farmland. At the beginning of the 20th century, the owners of Fazenda do Carmo built a dirt road to the nearby town of Japuiba, where a railway line used to connect Rio de Janeiro with Nova Friburgo, a town situated up in the mountains (*serra alta*) that is settled by immigrants predominantly from Germany, Italy and Switzerland. Until 2011, the only access to the area was by this dirt road which was then replaced by an asphalt road. At the time of my research, there was no cell phone signal in the area and the internet became available in late 2012 but was still expensive for the majority of the local population.

As I will describe the history and context of RPR in greater detail below (see 3.4), I give here a brief account only. RPR was officially established as a Brazilian NGO in 2001. Although the initiative came from two UK birdwatchers who visited the area in 1996, it was also appropriated by local farmers and conservationists Lucas and Laura. Their family acquired an extensive land area and named it after one of the purchased landholdings, Fazenda do Carmo, at the beginning of the 20th century. The family has been in the control of the land and the related natural resources since. RPR is managed on the ground by Lucas and Laura, who also act as the RPR NGO president and vice president. The main activities of RPR are protection, research, restoration and environmental education, while it provides employment for about 31 people (locals and professionals). RPR derives the necessary financial resources to fund its operation from a variety of sources. Being involved in ecotourism, it hosts researchers and volunteers and provides guided tours for birdwatchers and others that allow RPR to generate its own income. Another main source of finance is funding from a UK-based charity, New

Trust of Land (NTL). Further financial support comes from a variety of international as well as Brazilian conservation organizations such as Global Trust of Land (GTL), IUCN, CI, WWF, or SOS Mata Atlântica, among others.

2.3.2 Local Communities: Jabá, Bamba and Esperança

Jabá and Bamba are the two largest communities in the area. They are about the same size, each with approximately 300 families. However, Jabá has an asphalted road, large new school and a health centre. It is known for its clean rivers and most weekends, it receives large number of tourists from surrounding urban centres. It hosts an annual festival that was originally dedicated to ‘Our Lady’, a tradition that dates back to the arrival of Carmelites in the area and is well known among the population of the surrounding area. The town has a large number of weekenders (*sitiantes*) purchasing properties to build their second homes (*sítios*) and new parts of previously farmed land are still being parcelled out to accommodate the demand for new houses. Thus, Gupiaçu can be considered the historic, cultural and economic centre of the area.

Although about the same size, Bamba lacks many of these facilities and has smaller number of weekenders (*sitiantes*). However, the number of houses in the community is growing. Larger parcels of land are being divided amongst the members of numerous extended families where their children usually build houses and live near to their parents. Some of the families who used to live on larger farms bought some land and settled down in Bamba. There are also two communities living in small valleys right under the steep slopes of the mountains. There are approximately 30 and 15 families living in Upper Bamba and Upper Jabá, respectively. In comparison with Jabá and Bamba, the houses and yards here are more reminiscent of villages in Europe. Some houses and yards, more in Bamba and fewer in Jabá, often appear to be ‘disordered’ and run-down, and rubbish is to be seen in gardens near to the houses. In Mariana (15 families), people usually live in houses, or their clusters, for the most part distributed among the large landholdings. A similar description, but covering a considerably smaller area, could be attributed to Esperança (30 families). Also, there are several places where a few families would live in isolated forested areas that were abandoned once the banana boom was over (Regatinho, São Pedro). In comparison with other settlements, these communities have no electricity and difficult access to other amenities such as health centre, schools, public transport or shops.

On arriving in the area, I was interested to discern where people's ancestors came from in these communities. People in the area describe themselves broadly as '*pessoa da roça*' (people from the interior, rural area); however, there seem to be some differences between the communities. Those from Upper Jabá and Upper Bamba might appear (to an unfamiliar observer) as very 'European' and many have strong family ties to people living further up the mountain (and on the other side of hill top - *serra alta*). Also, a certain degree of self-recognition as being 'different' from the members of other communities, particularly from those of dissimilar ethnic origin, exists among them. This is not the case amongst the members of other communities where, in Bamba and Jabá, people are of a more mixed origin. Mariana and Esperança are then mostly dominated by people of more African appearance, and also often identify themselves as such.

Yet in talking to people, many in Bamba, Jabá, Mariana and Esperança understand themselves to be descendants of '*índios*' (Brazilian Indians, hereafter Indian), who mixed with migrants from Europe and Africa. My grandmother³ was an '*índia pega no laço*' (Indian woman), several elder people told me in a joking way and smiling. Also, their beliefs regarding the forest are shaped by the stories of '*Inhangoçu*'⁴ (the great spirit of the forest, the master of the forest), who often plays with those who walk in the forest at night. Stories about '*Inhangoçu*' are passed on in oral form from one generation to another. However, such stories and beliefs are becoming rather taboo as the power and influence of the Evangelical church advances. "*Inhangoçu* is a bad creature, I do not want to talk about it, this was past, and I'm now evangelical," several people said to me. Beliefs about '*Inhangoçu*' are also seen as something 'evil' and related to '*macumba*'⁵ or '*candoblé*'.⁶ The minority who are 'white' and rich are usually Catholic, whereas the poorer majority, more ethnically-mixed, have adopted more evangelical religions.

³ In most cases a distant female ancestor.

⁴ *Inhangoçu* – also known as *Anhanga* the '*dono do mato*' (master of the forest). Cascudos (2012) in his study assigned local ideas about *Anhanga* to Tupi mythology and the incorporeal and terrifying being *Anga*. He suggests that this being was then conflated with the African, N'bunda word '*n'hang*', meaning 'a hunt'. This 'verbal confusion' is assumed to lead to *Anhanga* being later attributed the role of divine being, the protector of wild animals. Other alternatives of the word *Inhangoçu* often used by the members of local communities were also *Anhangoçu*, *Angoçu* or *Aengoçu*.

⁵ *Macumba* – an animistic and fetishist cult. Syncretism of African, Catholic and Spiritistic influence, practised in buildings called *terreiros* or open-air spaces through singing, dancing and offerings (Larrouse do Brasil and Carvalho, 2009).

⁶ *Candoblé* – Afro-Brazilian religion and cult worshipping *Orixás* through singing, dancing accompanied by percussion and offerings (Larrouse do Brasil and Carvalho, 2009).

Those aged around 30 and 40 usually come from large families of 5 or more children. Many of them have worked in the fields since they were children and some of them still cannot read and write. However, the situation is different in the case of younger people, who are mostly formally educated and would have fewer (two or three) children. In families, the stress is on education rather than physical work. Many of the children study English and learn how to use a computer.

The local economy is based on agricultural production. This focuses on traditionally grown plants such as *inhami* (yam), *aipim* (manioc), *quiabo* (okra), *jilo* (scarlet eggplant), *milho* (corn), among others. However, most of the land is used as pasture for beef cattle. The region has been through various historic economic cycles of agricultural production such as, for example, the sugar cane and coffee boom production in 18th and 19th century, respectively. However, both crops were grown in the area until the early 20th century. The most recent one was the production of bananas. In some more isolated areas, banana is still grown and harvested to be sold in the market. Parts of hills used to be clear cut to plant banana trees. Coffee as well as banana would usually be planted and grown on slopes of forest hills. Harvested hardwoods were sold in the market, while the rest was used for making charcoal, another source of income for farms and people living in the area. In the last two decades, as the banana boom declined, the government began stricter enforcement of environmental laws, and people have started to abandon the forested hillsides and move to villages in the valleys or to larger urban centres. At the same time, many subsistence activities such as wood cutting, charcoal production or hunting have become clandestine. People often commented that forest cannot be cut anymore and pasture, fields or banana plantations are kept only where they have already previously existed. Since then, many of the hills that had before been partly or completely deforested and used for agricultural production have regenerated back to forest.

A significant portion of local people still work in agriculture as sharecroppers, day labourers, or as *caseiros* (caretakers) taking care of farms, *sitios* (small rural properties of weekenders) or *condominios* (the large rural properties of wealthy people from urban centres). However, agricultural employers complain that the number of people willing to work in fields is diminishing. “Soon there will be no people to work in the fields,” one of the local large landowners told me. Those working in fields are often perceived and talked about as lacking education, and as unintelligent and dirty. Thus, the aspirations of the majority of local people are linked to employment in local factories or services in nearby towns. “Nowadays

everything is about study; young people do not want to work in the field,” one of the farm sharecroppers complained to me. Work in the fields is also often described as hard work, which requires a person to wake up very early in the morning, sometimes at 4 a.m., to avoid the midday sun or afternoon rain. “When I started to work in the fields 20 years ago, they told me that I would not last long, but I am still here. But not everyone can work in the fields,” the same sharecropper told me. He used to work as a bus driver before he switched to working in the fields.

Local people sometimes abandon their fields or plant crops that only complement their main income from other economic activities. Many jobs in agriculture are informal (*sem carteira assinada*), without entitlement to sick leave, holidays or pension. These people prefer employment in the mineral water factories, brewery or ornamental fish production supplying their goods to usually more distant and urban markets. The main reason is that they provide cleaner, 9-to-5 jobs, social benefits and a stable income. All in all, this demonstrates how larger global processes are able to shape the aspiration of local people and deeply penetrate and transform their life even in such very isolated rural areas.

Most of the land has been owned by large landowners. They are mostly ‘white’ and descendants of wealthy European emigrants from Portugal, and later Germany and the UK. For instance, the elder people use the term ‘*Alemão*’ (German, foreigner) when they talk about foreign owners of Fazenda do Carmo. These families often used to live in Rio, other larger towns or even abroad and would have an administrator/manager to manage the *fazenda* (large landholding, farm). In some cases, this could also be a foreigner who would run the farm with the help of other locals. The largest such farm used to be Fazenda do Carmo. “As far as your eyes could see, everything used to be the Fazenda do Carmo,” one of the elders told me.

Most of the land that is now owned by the reserve used to belong to Fazenda do Carmo. However, the reserve has also recently purchased properties that used to belong to other large landowning families. The reserve is around 4,000 ha, but it also co-manages another 3,000 ha of former Fazenda do Carmo that was sold by one of the family members to the local brewery. This keeps the property closed and uses it as a source of water for its beer and soft drinks production. Most of this area was, until about 10-20 years ago, used for intensive agricultural production and some of the population in two of the larger communities (Jabá and Bamba) used to live and work on these farms. “Almost 400 families used to live there,

....it was a village, you should see how happy we were there,” one of the locals told me when he reminisced about the area now owned by the brewery.

In the past, large landowners (*fazendeiros*) did not limit access of people to the forest and some people would spend weekends and sometimes whole weeks in the forest hunting and fishing. People would also harvest palm hearts and fruits and depended on the clean water brought from springs and streams in the forest. In some cases, after but often before the land was purchased by RPR and the brewery, their inhabitants were financially compensated and moved to rural settlements or larger urban centres nearby. Thus, the establishment of these two areas of restricted access even prior to the establishment of any RPPN itself represents a change in the life of local people, which forced them to relocate, find new subsistence activities and which prohibited access to previously and traditionally freely accessible forested hill areas. There is a certain feeling of nostalgia and quiet resistance, towards the restrictions imposed and new forms of land use introduced, in the way people talk about these areas where they used to live and work and which later become protected. “People in Jabá do not like the reserve; some do not respect me because I work there,” one of the reserve administrative staff who lives in one of the communities complained to me. Thus, the relocation of land from agricultural production to other (conservation) purposes has resulted in new socio-economic realities bringing about important changes in the life of people from the local communities.

2.4 Methodology

I was familiar with the reserve, its management, local communities and the natural environment from having worked there as a volunteer. Early in 2008, just before starting my studies for a master’s degree at the University of Sussex, I went on a trip to Brazil where I was planning to spend some time travelling around the country, visit a friend and for the rest of time to work as a volunteer on an unspecified socio-environmental project I was to find in his home town. However, things did not work as planned. A few days before my departure for Brazil, my friend wrote to me about his decision to move to another part of the country following his new job, and three weeks after my arrival there I lost some of my valuable personal belongings when robbed in Misiones, an Argentinian province bordering Brazil. Slightly traumatized by the course of events and without sufficient finance to continue my travels, I was left with the option of returning to the UK or finding how to spend my time meaningfully over a further two months initially planned for a stay in Brazil. When I received

a positive answer from a conservation project in Rio de Janeiro, accepting a postponed payment for my stay as a volunteer with them, I did not hesitate and went to RPR.

I worked here for two months as volunteer, passionately helping to plant trees, walking trails and maintaining the reserve headquarters. Allured by the conservation project and the mesmerizing beauty of the tropical forest, I returned to the UK to begin my master's studies in Environment, Development and Policy, already resolved to focus on private protected areas in the AF. Later, I conducted my short preliminary research as part of my MA dissertation (Slovak, 2009), during which some of the local people I was previously acquainted with willingly collaborated. More importantly, they, as well as the RPR management, continued to indicate their interest in cooperating in this project.

I began fieldwork in March 2012. Initially, I visited three other private reserves located in the south of Brazil: RPPN Rio das Lontras private reserve, in Santa Catarina state (RPPN Rio das Lontras, 2017); RPPN Salto Morato private reserve in Parana state (Fundação Grupo Boticário, 2017) and RPPN Encantos de Jureira private reserve in São Paulo state (Escola da Terra, 2017). I made an initial contact with the Instituto Socioambiental, the CI and SOS Mata Atlântica, created with the purpose of promoting the conservation of the AF. I linked with Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro.

Within a month, I had decided to focus only on RPR. Limited time for fieldwork, bureaucracy, great spacial distances between the different projects and principally, the apparent distrust of local populations towards me as well as the remoteness between locals and the management of the reserves I visited led me finally to decide to abandon the alternative of making a comparative study that I was at that time also considering as an option.

I lived at RPR for six months before I moved to the village nearby. After arriving at RPR, I was immediately assigned the role of a volunteer. People from the communities as well as the reserve management would often talk about me as a volunteer and introduce me to others as a volunteer. As a volunteer, I was able to work alongside the people from the communities working at the reserve as rangers, planting trees, working in the tree nursery, kitchen or maintenance. However, I had only limited access to the everyday life of people in the community. This changed once I became a close friend of some of the families, started to teach English and was thus able to adopt different roles.

2.4.1 Participant observation

I used participant observation as my main methodological technique throughout the fieldwork, among both members of the local community and in the reserve, focusing attention on situations and places where representatives of both interact. Given the social and racial inequality that shapes the relationships between different socio-economic groups in rural Brazil, my background as a white, educated European inevitably played into relationships established and at times, into suspicion and antagonism regarding my presence and activities in the village. However, my Slovakian nationality distanced me from other white Brazilians or tourists predominantly from Western Europe and North America. Moreover, being an ‘outsider’ allowed me to benefit from adopting the role of ‘acceptable incompetent’ and thus learn through participant observation about the social structure, settings and the culture of the participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Bernard, 2006).

Participant observation initially focused on how rural people, from different socio-economic groups, use, manage and think about forest resources as well as the role these resources play in their livelihood strategies. For this purpose, I observed and participated in their everyday productive activities, such as the cultivation of plots, harvesting wood, fruits or plants used for subsistence needs or to be sold in the market. Particularly, I was interested in those that were directly connected with the use of forest resources. Given the limited time for the fieldwork, I concentrated closely on four households from dissimilar socio-economic and racial backgrounds. Although studying these more intensively, I did not neglect other households. Throughout the time of my fieldwork, I maintained constant awareness of the aspects related to the gendered nature of the use of natural resources, endeavouring to access women’s spaces, and talk to women.

As a volunteer, I could observe the patterns of their relationships with the reserve and participate in the activities of the reserve’s representatives directed towards members of local communities, including meetings, events and other occasions. Also, I was able to take part in other activities at the reserve’s headquarters and thus engage with the top management of the reserve and observe how their conservation agenda is conceived and transformed into practice. Here, my previously gained familiarity with the environment, reserve’s employees and activities during my time as a volunteer was important. However, while benefiting from access to information by adopting the role of an ‘insider’, it was important for the purpose of the research to retain a critical perspective as well as to avoid being too closely associated

with the representatives of the reserve as this would have limited and jeopardised my rapport with the people from local rural communities.

The data gathered through participant observation were concentrated in my fieldwork journals where I would record my observational notes on daily basis, or as soon as it was possible. This information was then analysed by coding. The preliminary coding was already done during the fieldwork. Commentaries about the emerging patterns of behaviour were recorded at the free spaces reserved for this purpose in the journal page margin (Fife, 2005). The main analysis was conducted after leaving the fieldwork, when the raw fieldnotes were categorized to create analytical concepts with the purpose of producing analysis that is firmly grounded in the primary material collected through participant observation.

2.4.2 Ethnographic interviews

Alongside informal interviews in the form of everyday conversations, I systematically deployed unstructured and semi-structured ethnographic interviews to triangulate the data obtained through participant observation. Unstructured interviews were conducted with those local men and women who still use forest resources and whose livelihoods have been in some way affected by the establishment and activities of the reserve to explore their narratives regarding their interactions with the forest and the reserve. Such interviews allowed me to guide the conversation towards the focus of the research, while creating space for interviewees to open up and let them express themselves in their own terms and at their own pace (Bernard, 2006). ‘Snowball’ sampling captured variation by class, gender, age and ethnicity to achieve saturation within the immediate vicinity of the PPA. I also did regular interviews regarding the use and perception of forest resources with the people from rural settlements located further from RPR, but still in the vicinity of Três Picos State Park (TPSP), to allow for comparison between the impacts produced by public and private conservation initiatives.

To address the question regarding the motives and incentives behind the creation and proliferation of private reserves in the AF, I conducted semi-structured interviews with members of the reserve’s top management as well as donors, sponsors and owners of other PPAs. I found that semi-structured interviews are more suitable in dealing with elite members of a community and in situations where there is limited time for mutual interaction, as is also claimed by Bernard (2006). Semi-structured interviews could demonstrate my preparedness

and competence without attempting excessive control of content of the interview and create space for respondents to expand freely on their answers.

Hence, a series of interviews with the representatives of the reserve, including owners, managers and councillors, enabled me to discuss the issues related to reserve management, conservation strategies and practices, relationship with men and women from local rural settlements, as well as to explore further the discourses employed to portray local rural people and their interactions with the forest. Similar issues as well as the motives and rationale to support or be involved in private conservation were at the centre of semi-structured interviews with donors, sponsors and the owners of other PPAs. I conducted further interviews with representatives of TPSP as well as a variety of state environmental institutions to allow for a comparison between the public and private approaches to conservation in the AF. Bernard (2006) states that snowball sampling is suitable in the case of a population that is relatively small, hard to find and when their members are likely to be in contact with each other. This was certainly the case. Scheynes *et al.* (2003) recommend cultivating and using networks of contacts to overcome obstacles in achieving access and gaining cooperation with elites. Respondents were actively sought out and interviewed as opportunity emerged such as, for instance, during their visits to the reserve.

Interviews have a performative character and cannot be divorced from the social context of their construction (Bevan & Bevan, 1999). Being aware of this, I not only took notes but reflected on the process and interactions between myself and the respondents, and the social context that shaped these. Given that many interviewees were from both marginalized and privileged groups, particular attention was paid to power relations in this (Davies, 1999) and I was careful to set interviewees at ease and try to present myself as much their equal as possible in any given setting. Once the fieldwork was concluded selected interviews or their parts were transcribed and analysed by coding.

2.4.3 Life stories

Some interviews with specific members of the local community took the form of short topical life stories. These were collected towards the end of fieldwork during a series of encounters, and stories recorded were reviewed after each session and respondents re-interviewed over time. Such an approach is a good way to obtain the social construction of the past in a situation when historical documents are scarce (Nygren, 2000). I focused life stories on two issues: narratives and historical memory concerning the transformation in the social relations

of production and changes in cultural perceptions of forest resources due to the establishment of RPR. Hence, potential respondents were found, for example, among elders and hunters-turned-rangers. This collection of life stories was applied to triangulate and explore further questions regarding the wider contextual factors that have shaped relationships between people and the forest as well as between people and PPAs in the AF, and the changing conceptualizations of forest and the use of its resources. Finally, I interviewed the founder and owner of the reserve with the purpose of exploring the motives and rationale behind the involvement in private conservation. Besides the intersubjective issues of social context and how the interaction between researcher and respondent affects the content of life narratives, attention was paid to potential cultural differences in thinking and presenting life stories (Davies, 1999), as well as to the issues related to memory and how social events from the past are remembered and stories reconstructed (Nygren, 2000; Plummer, 2001).

2.4.4 Household survey

In cooperation with the RPR, and at their instigation, we designed a questionnaire for a household survey. Its formulation involved various professionals working at the RPR who were invited to comment and give their suggestions for the final version. The survey concentrated on four main areas: personal, social and economic characteristics of the respondents; local perceptions of the RPR; local perceptions of the RPR activities; the RPR community newsletter. The questionnaire was answered by 155 residents from local communities near the reserves. On the ground, the questionnaire was conducted by myself, assisted by the RPR management and administration staff and participants of the New Forest Rangers education programme run by the RPR. By designing and conducting this household survey, I aimed to explore the RPR perspective on the people from the nearby communities further as well as to collect important socio-economic data on the communities that otherwise I would not have access to. Attention was paid to intersubjectivity and power relations that might have affected answers of the respondents. The results of the survey are presented in Appendix 6.

2.4.5 Ethical concerns

Prior to fieldwork, the proposal for this research project underwent a full review by the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Sussex.

During fieldwork great care was given to obtain informed consent from all research participants. Whenever possible and appropriate participants were presented with the project Information Sheet (Appendix 7) and asked to sign the Consent Form (Appendix 8) elaborated for this purpose. A Portuguese version of both was available to non-English speakers. Written consent was thus secured for all formal interviews conducted with the following groups of people: RPR management, representatives of the RPR sponsors and donors, other owners of PPAs, officials of other public conservation units and government representatives.

However, the majority of this research was based in a rural region where many participants have low levels of formal education and literacy. Many also had a distrust of official forms such that asking them to sign forms would have raised suspicion, alienated them and, thus, made gaining their confidence impossible. In such cases individuals' voluntary and informed consent was negotiated and obtained through repeated discussions. During this ongoing process, I verbally, and in the most appropriate language, provided the study participants with all the information necessary for them to gain a conscious understanding of the goals, methods, funding, expected outcomes and possible implications of this research. Whenever they expressed discontent or wished to withdraw from this project, this was fully honoured.

The names of all the people appearing in this work are pseudonyms. Special attention was paid to protect the identity of the potentially most vulnerable members of the rural population participating in this research. While striving to remain faithful to occurrences observed and utterances recorded, whenever it was possible I have carefully altered some additional identifying details of the study participants (which, for obvious reasons, I have decided not to describe further). However, it was not possible to change all the further details included in this study, such as some specifics related to the history and geography of the study and the names of all the public institutions. Withdrawing these pieces of information would inhibit linking this study to other literature and thus impede the contextualization of this study and development of its main argument, while offering only minimal extra protection to participants from the rural populations under study.

In relation to the RPR itself while the applied measures to anonymize the project should be sufficient to protect its identity in relation to the wider, general public, they will not provide the reserve with the same degree of protection within the relatively small and interconnected Brazilian conservation community. However, it is possible to ask whether this might be an attainable task at all, particularly without excluding information vital to the analysis itself, as

in the course of my fieldwork my connection to the RPR project were widely known among the members of this community and beyond and thus anything I write will be associated with the specific reserve under study. Finally, the issue of the restricted ability of this research to completely anonymize the project was discussed and acknowledged during the fieldwork by the members of the RPR management, who still gave their permission for the project to be conducted.

Ultimately, while this research strives to avoid its participants ever being exposed to any possible harm through the publication of its results, it also aspires to advocate the voices and views of those in this work who emerge as less privileged. In this context, the decision to use the above-mentioned information, and the risk of the RPR identity being revealed to some, is weighted against the obligation to expose to critical inquiry any adverse impacts that this conservation project and its activities might inflict on the marginalized rural population, while relying on funds raised from the public. All in all, the project also seeks to support and encourage the wider positive change that conservation activities can achieve by contributing to reflection and analysis of those activities, an aim which RPR members themselves also held and encouraged in relation to the project.

Last but not least, ethical dilemmas also arise around how the results of this work should be disseminated among the study participants so that they do not provide unintended benefit to one group, the RPR management, for example, over another, the rural population living in the reserve vicinity in particular. No major obstacles exist for the research results being immediately available and easily accessible to English-speaking study participants, such as the RPR management, donors, sponsors, government officials, some other PPA owners, and so on. However, I have been in discussion with local participants about the most appropriate and effective way how to share the research results with the local men and women from the studied rural settlements. This is likely to take the form of a community meeting or presentation.

After discussing the main factors shaping the wider context of this study, methods used to explore its central issues and considering the ethical issues related to it, in the following chapter we examine how social relations over land and forest are constructed and interpreted by the different people from the rural settlements located near RPR.

Chapter 3: A History of Social Relations over Land and Forest – Perspectives from the Wider Community

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the social and economic world in which private reserves have been established. Whilst it is rooted in part in the literature, I mainly rely on representations of that world by my local informants. It focuses on discussions that I had with local people to build a local history of the region and the creation of the park. It aims to understand the very varied and at times contradictory perspectives of elites and others, whilst avoiding essentializing stereotypes, to capture the social relational world and the way it is interpreted and represented by different people. To do this, I build up a picture of the social relations in the area through the words and observations of individuals to capture their social relational world. Rather than simply compile a history, the strategy is to see how locals and elites engage with the history of forests and reserves ‘as lived’. Through this, we can also better grasp who the local people ‘are’ through their own reflections and their relation to discourses on being ‘traditional’ or indigenous; and the questions around land use rights and the symbolic and material appropriation of land and natural resources that this raises. It identifies how RPR is not an entirely novel creation, but rather reflects longer socio-economic processes and histories.

Although I made every effort to cover and interview as many distinct people, representing the variety of different strata of the local society, as possible and to consult all the relevant literature that I was able to detect and obtain on the issues discussed in here, I feel it is important to acknowledge at this point that this work would have surely benefited from more prolonged and profound archival research. Alas, I was constrained by the time limit set for the fieldwork. However, even if it had been otherwise, it would still not make any difference to my proclamation that all the errors of fact or interpretation to be found here, as well as all this work, are only mine.

3.2 Rural communities as complex societies rooted in history of slavery

Reflecting on the early stages of my fieldwork when I was an observer unfamiliar with the reality of this part of rural Brazil, I often had a feeling of being lost in the profusion of various tonalities of skin colours, quality of hair and body types found in the area of my research. This impression was often reinforced by local people, my Brazilian friends and

colleagues who were trying to convince me that whoever their ancestors might have been, what matters now is that they are all Brazilians. During the time I spent in Brazil, I was able to observe how little attention is actually paid and value given to historical monuments, buildings or stories that are being lost every day, although there is a growing trend to change this. The overall impression is that the emphasis in the society is on ‘today’ and the discourse of ‘modernity’. However, as has been already noted by Darcy Ribeiro (1995), what Brazilian society lacks is a clear understanding of the history lived by people and the conditions in which it took place.

One evening during the first month of my fieldwork, I participated in a community gathering in Bamba, located near RPR. It was the occasion of the inauguration of a new health centre and its official transfer, together with a newly-renovated local school, from the county government (*prefeitura*) to the community. A small square in the middle of the settlement filled up with people from local communities, accompanied by local entrepreneurs, some weekenders (*sitiantes*) and politicians from the county capital. In evening darkness, illuminated only by feeble public light, I was standing in a local bar sharing a bottle of Brazilian beer with a few slightly befuddled local men. After talking for a while about the usual football, beer and so on, I tried to shift the conversation to something I was more interested in. I wanted to ask them who the people living in this area are. They talked about themselves as people from the rural area (*pessoa da roça*) and people from the interior of Rio de Janeiro state (*pessoa do interior*) as opposed to *carioca*, a common name for people from the Rio de Janeiro city. Then they concluded their explanation by simply stating that above all, they are all Brazilians. Whenever the subject matter appeared again, the conclusion would be always the same.

Besides this shared feeling of being rural dwellers and Brazilians, however, there existed among the local people a further self-recognition or sense of belonging to the area. This was commonly expressed in various everyday situations when local people would refer to the area, a place where they live, as *dentro* (inside). For example, one day, Jessé, a 30-year-old man from the Esperança community, tried to explain to me why he does not like living here by saying that “*aqui dentro não tem nada, só mato*” (here inside there is nothing but *mato*⁷).

⁷ *Mato* – Paulson and DeVore (2006) analysed the use of the term among small family farmers settled in an agricultural community. They notice how they may, even in one sentence, attribute to it multiple meanings. It could have many forms, from the forest to savanna, or even weeds. It essentially means vegetative growth and its use by small farmers will depend on how different vegetative forms are valued differently in their

Dentro or *dentro do mato*, meaning a rural wasteland with uncultivated, wild vegetation, was often used by the local population interchangeably, as opposed to *fora* (outside), meaning any other place, including the towns or more distant rural areas in the province. Thus, irrespective of their racial historical or social background, the members of the local population living around RPR would commonly express a shared feeling of being the same kind of people belonging to one nation or to one place.

Yet, Darcy Ribeiro (1995), in his theory about the formation of the Brazilian nation, calls Brazilians a new nation (*povo novo*) that emerged through the fusion of three formative ethnic matrices: Native American, African and European. He argues that despite existing regional variations, representing the adaptation to different regional ecologies, Brazilians feel, act and think about themselves as one nation, belonging to the same ethnic group. According to him, Brazilians emerged through the annihilation of the original ethnic identities and new forms of ‘mestization’. However, these processes have been accompanied by violence and brutality that resulted in the social and racial inequalities that remain a characteristic of Brazilian society. Thus, to see through the veil of a shared identity and beyond the unfamiliar visitors’ blurred impression of racial democracy and peaceful social coexistence, we need to penetrate deeper into local formative processes where the roots of social reality and the matrix of social interactions that have been determining the local distribution and control over local natural resources are embedded. These are the same natural resources such as land, forest and water that at the beginning of the 21st century have become the centre of growing private and public environmental protection.

I found many fragmented representations of this process, particularly in the stories of the elders from the area. Within the time limits set by their age, their narratives go as far as the first half of the 20th century. By this time, several decades had passed since the so-called crisis of slavery and the complete abolition in 1888⁸ that ended the slave-based agricultural production, and the Brazilian monarchy became a republic (Skidmore & Smith, 2001). Even afterwards, the Brazilian economy continued to be mainly agricultural, dominated by the export-oriented cultivation of agricultural products such as coffee, sugar cane, rubber and

environmental and productive strategies. According to them, *mato* is “...a powerful, polysemous term that connects people to their ecological environments” (Paulson and DeVore, 2006: 39).

⁸ Abolition – Skidmore and Smith (2001) note that abolition in Brazil was a seventeen-year process marked by three laws. The first law *Lei do Ventre Livre* passed in 1871 freed all children thenceforth born of slave mothers. However, it gave slave masters the right to retain labour rights over these children until the age of 21. The second law *Lei dos Sexagenários* was passed in 1885 and freed all slaves of age 60 and over without any compensation for slave masters. In 1888 came the *Lei Áurea* that finally brought the end of slavery in Brazil.

others. The power was still concentrated in the hands of large landowners and the majority of the Brazilian population was living in rural areas (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009).

To narrow down and focus on the region incorporating the area under this study, we can refer to the work of Amador (2013). He analyzes the interplay between wider socio-economic and environmental factors and their impact on the region around the Guanabara Bay (*Recôncavo de Guanabara*). He describes how the combination of various factors, including the legal abolition of slavery and the consequent transition from slave to paid labour, together with exhausted soils and increasing competitiveness of sugar and coffee production units from other regions, contributed to a gradual decay of the coffee aristocracy and of their political and economic dominance in the area. They became substituted by an emerging new capitalist class composed of a rural oligarchy and urban entrepreneurs, including foreigners who came to dominate the economy and the pro export-oriented coffee production in Rio de Janeiro.

These aspects of larger processes were further assisted by the construction of a national railway system that paradoxically contributed to the economic stagnation in the region. Railway transport introduced in the second half of the 19th century ended the dominance of fluvial transport that since the 16th century had played a crucial role in the occupation of the area and its connections with Rio de Janeiro. Many intermediary towns prospering from commerce thus lost their significance. The decreasing importance of fluvial transport, until then representing the only way to transport wood, sugar, coffee and other agricultural products to Rio de Janeiro, also led to the abandonment of river and channel maintenance previously conducted by slaves. Furthermore, the expansion of coffee plantations occupying principally higher-elevated areas resulted in soil erosion and river sedimentation. Consequently, the levels of river waters increased and larger proportions of low-lying lands (*baixadas*) became affected by seasonal flooding and abandoned by large landowners.

In the second half of the 19th century, the whole area witnessed a population decrease. First, the economic downturn led to the migration of population to Rio de Janeiro or other areas (Amador, 2013). Second, epidemics such as that of *Febre Macacu*,⁹ repeatedly reappearing since the 1820s, contributed to the reduction of the area population, and sometimes even in the extinction of whole intermediary small towns (*vilas*) (Forte, 1934). All these processes

⁹ *Febre Macacu* – the valleys of the rivers Guapiaçu and Macacu used to correspond to the area covered under the historical district (*município*) of Vila de Santo Antônio de Sá. This region suffered from a succession of cholera, malaria and yellow fever epidemics. Also, transformation of large portions of land into seasonal wetlands created favourable conditions for the dissemination of diseases (Carneiro *et.al.*, 2012).

have had profound and long-lasting effects on the region under the study, its economy and the life of the remaining population.

Carneiro *et al.* (2012) note that such a combination of factors relating to socio-economic transformation and environmental change did not entail a complete depopulation of the area or decay of agricultural production. Rather, the focus shifted from pro-export oriented plantations to agricultural production destined for the internal market and complemented by pasture and orchard expansion as well as fuelwood extraction for ceramic production, civil construction and charcoal production. Also, subsistence farming by smaller landowners and the rural poor increased in importance (Amador, 2013).

Yet, as Garcia and Palmeira, (2009) note, large agricultural properties continued until the middle of the 20th century to represent not only the basic units of agricultural production but also the basis for social, cultural and political life in the Brazilian rural world. Here, the system previously based on forced slave work was replaced by a system of forms of employment based on clientelistic relationships (*parceria*, *meia* – sharecropping arrangements). These forms of labour recruitment allowed for the reproduction of the power of large landowners in a new context. Thus, newer socio-economic relations were still resonating with a social organization formed on a unique Brazilian colonial economic model founded on large monoculture production and forced slave work. This dominant economic model is considered by Gilberto Freyre (2006) as a fundamental element of Brazil's national formation as it has contributed to what he calls the most dominant, general and profound of antagonisms in Brazilian society (Freyre, 2006: 116). This is the antagonism between the master and slave (*o senhor e o escravo*).

It is in this context that the stories of local elders need to be placed. They represent subjective constructions of local history; a history lived by people from the same area but from different socio-racial backgrounds because, as Skidmore and Smith (2001) note, in Brazilian society, where most of the social and political elites are white and most blacks are on the bottom rung, there exists a strong association between race and social status. I want to present the stories in a complementary fashion to provide a more complete representation of local social reality and expose the subtle differences that are not immediately evident and comprehensible to an unfamiliar observer. As fragments of local social reality, they illustrate the complex and heterogeneous character of the racial and ethnic background of local people fused during the 'mestization' process. Furthermore, they demonstrate the related social inequalities

represented by differentiated social status embodied in unequal distribution of land and power. They set the background for further analysis by putting the emphasis on the necessity of seeing and interpreting the control of local natural resources in the area such as land, forest and water as larger historical socio-economic processes through which local social reality has been forged. Above all, a consideration of local history and its actors allows us to place the private conservation embodied in RPR into the matrix of social relations. It lets us escape the symbolic confinement of ‘modernity’ and interpreting the privatization of natural resources as something ‘new’ and isolated from the past, but to see it as the continuation of larger socio-economic processes.

3.2.1 Dobregas and the origin of Jabá community

I was already several months into my fieldwork when I was introduced to the 81-year-old *senhor* (Mr) Nelson, from Jabá. Nelson is an elderly man of predominantly European appearance. He is vigorous for his age, still riding a horse and working on his plantations most days. On several occasions, I found him very early in the morning cutting and cleaning (*roçar e capinar*) unwelcome vegetation at his property in Jabá. As one of the oldest living members of the Dobrega family, he enjoys the respect of the whole community. He is proud of being born and bred (*nascido e criado*) in Jabá, one of the local communities located in the vicinity of RPR.

The community of Jabá is situated on the upper part of the River Guapiaçu. Hidden in a small valley, it stretches along the river banks and starts where the expanding hills and slopes of surrounding mountains begin to narrow down the lowland that disappears completely further up the stream. It is here the asphalted road, built in 2011 to connect the area with the county capital, ends. From here, only a dirt road leads further up the valley, to the small community of Upper Jabá and a few houses sparsely distributed in the surrounding forests. RPR lies to the west, on the other side of the river, where it shares the ownership of forested slopes of the Serra do Mar with the local brewery.

Local residents’ houses are distributed along the last 3km of the asphalted road. Entering the valley, on both sides of the road, unpainted brick-built houses, giving the impression of being in a never-ending process of their construction, start to appear. A steep hill on the right is covered by houses forming a dense cluster. Its top is often being burned to clean it of undesired grass vegetation (*capim*). On the left side of the road, a provisional poster announces more construction plots being for sale. As the road advances towards the centre of

the community, agricultural land planted with manioc, yam, corn, chilli and pasture alternates with dispersed houses, agricultural utilities, a construction material shop, a local school and land parcels with newly-built houses of well-off locals and weekenders.

The centre of the community is dominated by a small square, with two bars playing loud traditional music (*forró*) at night where local men and young people like to come for drink and play cards. There is also a community health centre, a Catholic church and a small bakery. Two Evangelical churches are located at opposite ends of the community's centre. Finely-painted and decorated, spacious houses belonging to well-off locals and weekenders contrast with the small and simple houses of the poorer local inhabitants. While the houses of the local elite often have large yards or a plenitude of adjacent agricultural land and pasture, the houses of the local poor are frequently squeezed into a compact area and built right next to each other. Their yards are often shared and filled with litter and discarded items. One such neighbourhood that has been constructed in the last decade backs onto the river and thus runs the constant risk of being flooded. On the right side of the community square, in the middle of an extensive green pasture, sits the last standing manor house (*casa grande*)¹⁰ to be found in the area (Image 1).

3.2.2 The story of *senhor* Nelson

We now turn to the story recounted by one of the interviewed local elders recapturing the local history through the representations of social world as lived and seen by a person from a particular group in the local population.

The house of *senhor* Nelson stands in the small cluster of houses belonging to his closest family and surrounded by several smaller agriculture constructions. Adjacent, in the direction of the River Guapiaçu, is a small pasture with a few cattle and horses roaming around and some rows of corn surrounded by majestically high coconut palms. The property is cut by a stream that fills a small artificial fish lake. In addition, Nelson is the owner of small agricultural properties (*sítios*) and banana plantations (*bananeiras*) in an abandoned forested area further up the valley.

¹⁰ *Casa grande* – the rural residency of a large landowner during the colonial and imperial period, usually accompanied by slave quarters called *senzala*.

Image 1 *Casa grande* in Jabá



Photograph by Peter Slovak

When Nelson was still a little boy, there were only a few houses in Jabá. People who used to live here were all locally born and bred (*nascido e criado*). He knew them and could easily count them all.

“The largest family from here is already mixed. But, it is Dobrega. Among the olden population (*antigos*) who used to live here, the majority was Dobrega. It is an old troop (*tropa antiga*).”

Back then, Dobrega was the biggest family and it was common for a cousin to marry a cousin. Other families that used to live here were not very numerous. Most of them moved here because of the yellow fever epidemic killing people in the lowlands (*baixada*). One was the Teiro family who left behind a large landed property (*fazenda*) further down river and moved to Jabá a generation before *senhor* Nelson was born.

Nelson's father was born and bred in Jabá. He was a white (*claro*) and strong man who used to like dancing to *fado*¹¹ at a nearby Fazenda de Agua Clara. Nelson did not know his grandfather. Yet, he remembers his father referring to him, saying that they are descendants of the Portuguese. Although his grandfather was married and had a family, he had other female-friends (*amigas*) he had children with.

His father used to talk about a *fazenda* (a large landed property) in Itapera owned by a captain Dobrega, the great-great grandfather of Nelson:

“My father used to say that they did not have any (aristocratic) title. So, what was he was a captain of? He must have been in charge of slaves. And, it is there (Itapera), where a big family Dobrega still lives. They are black (*escuros*), all of them. So, my father used to say that this is their family. A family started by his great grandfather back in the times of slavery that I did not get to know. And so, his great grandfather used to choose the best, most beautiful female slaves to have children with. He had the right to do so, as he was in charge. So, the family that now lives there; those blacks, are our family. However, the issue is that they are the descendents of slave females.”

Nelson's mother was also born and bred in Jabá, but her father came from a nearby Upper Bamba where the Souza family still lives. Her father died because of yellow fever when she was 13. Shortly after, she decided to marry Nelson's father, who was 25, and whom she had already been seeing for some time. Thus, Nelson knew only his grandmother: “My grandmother was the sister of Maria Souza from Upper Bamba. The owner of Upper Bamba.”

His mother was a daughter of *neto do indio* (grandson of an Indian). She was *morena* (lighter dark skin) with dark black hair and sharp sight that used to help her when she was knitting their clothes. His mother used to say that, “... her great grandmother, I think, was caught by lasso. It means she was an Indian. It must be. I do not know how they used to catch people by a lasso. I only know that what you catch by a lasso in the forest is opossum (*gambá*).” His father did not use to say anything about Indians living in the area but she was not from here as she was from a place where they used to ‘rear’ (*criar*) Indians.

¹¹ *Fado* – a type of music popular in Portugal as well as Brazil, usually a song with a melancholy theme, accompanied by guitar.

Nelson's grandfather was the owner of a larger property in the upper Guapiaçu River valley. His *fazenda* started right at the mountain peaks and some of his land would extend further down the river beyond the point where the valley begins. On his property, he used to harvest wood (*tirar madeira*) and plant (*fazer lavoura*) corn, manioc and beans. When he passed away, the property was divided in two, Fazenda de Mata Grande and Fazenda de Upper Jabá, between *senhor* Nelson's father and his brother.

Dobregas always worked on the land. They used to have a mill (*moinho*) to process corn into corn flour (*fubá*) and a mill (*engenho de mandioca*) to process manioc into manioc flour (*farofa*). They always had lots of people living on their land: "... my father used to say that there in Mata Grande, on their land used to live a lot of people...there was a sawmill and they lived and worked there."

These people who lived there would give his father one third (*terça*) or half (*meia*) of their production. If his father needed to clear the land (*roçar*), they gave him a half. Yet, if they cleared the land for themselves, they needed to give him a third of their production only. While his father was alive, many people used to live at Mata Grande. It was when his father used to plant a lot of manioc. Once he had passed away and the *fazenda* came to be run by his brother, something went wrong and most of the people left the property. At the time, the whole property was sold as one, there was almost nobody living there (it much later became the property of RPR).

However, wood became the principal income for the Dobrega family. The grandfather and later *senhor* Nelson's father used to harvest it at Mata Grande. Wood used to be taken by oxen or donkeys from the sawmill at the *fazenda* down to the river port. Pieces of wood were tied together to form a raft (*balsa*) and attached to a canoe (*canoa*) and taken down the river to Porto da Madama¹² in São Gonçalo.

"I got to know the place where they used to lay (*embarcar*) the wood and make the raft they used to attach to a canoe. They had canoeists, not a motor. The canoe was moved by the strength of people and a wooden pole. There used to be a master canoeist at the front guiding the canoe. They used to say that the river did

¹² Amador (2013: 77) based on his research of earlier writings mentions Porto da Madama as one of the 13 principal ports that in 19th century existed in the Niteroi-São Gonçalo littoral area of Guanabara Bay.

not have any force and would flow down very slowly.¹³ Although it was deep, it could not flow fast...”

Back then, the return journey would take 15 days and they would need to cross the sea waters of Guanabara Bay. The wood they used to sell was not just any kind of wood as it is now. They used to look for quality wood (*madeira de lei*)¹⁴ that was sought by their customers in Rio de Janeiro.

“They did not sell inferior quality wood. As there (in the port) they already had buyers, but...I remember what they used to say it was. Here, in this forest they used to look for...*tapuiã*.¹⁵ It was very highly regarded wood as they could leave it in water for as many years as they wanted.”

His uncle from the Souza family, who worked some time in Rio, used to deal with the buyers. He would get on a train in Japuiba and travel down to São Gonçalo where he would wait for the canoe to come. This was before Nelson was born and he remembers his father as the owner of a general store (*armazém*) in Jabá. At this time, the buyers would come to Jabá and his father started to sell more manioc flour (*farinha*) nearby.

At their *fazenda*, they used to harvest a lot of corn, beans and manioc and take it by a herd of donkeys (*a tropa de burro*) to the neighbouring province of Teresópolis. They used to sell a lot as anything would sell there, including poultry or pork they also raised at the *fazenda*.

Nelson did not study much as he started work when he was 14. He has only learnt how to sign his name and count. He has worked and suffered a lot. There were 25 children, but many of them died and the elder ones of his siblings moved out from home early. His father used to divide the work between the children. Nelson worked on his own with his father’s donkeys transporting the products to the market in Teresópolis.

There was a time when the fever killed a lot of people. When he was a little boy they lived where the port on the River Guapiaçu used to be.

“Before the river was dredged, there was lots of stagnant water here. When it rained, the river used to fill up. Water moved very slowly. We used to live down

¹³ He is making a comparison to the current fast flow of the river.

¹⁴ *Madeira de lei* – a kind of wood that thanks to its quality of being tougher and more resistant to weather and termites was used in the production of luxurious furniture as well as the construction of ships and houses (Larrouse do Brasil and Carvalho, 2009).

¹⁵ *Tapuiã* – local name for canela-tapinhoã (*Mezilaurus navalium*).

by the bridge.¹⁶ This stagnant water was a home to many mosquitoes. If we had not moved further up here, we would have been dead already.”

Nelson stopped harvesting and selling wood about 10 years ago. He still has two employees who help him to take care of his banana plantation. He thinks that selling banana is still a good business as he can harvest banana almost all year round. However, it is not permitted to fell the forest anymore and thus to expand the plantation further.

3.2.3 ‘Traditional’ families

The story of *senhor* Nelson as well as the information from other interviewed local elders is important for an understanding of local rural society, the evolution of its different strata and consequently, the forms adopted for the appropriation and control of local natural resources. In the story of *senhor* Nelson, in the first half of the 20th century, Jabá appears to be a place constituted of a few rural dwellings and occupied by members of a few extended and interrelated families. It is important to note that similar community descriptions, in particular the communities located at the foothills of the Serra do Mar and neighbouring RPR, were also given by other interviewed elders. This suggests that these local communities, which at the time of fieldwork comprised several hundred inhabitants, have emerged in places that, in the first half of 20th century, were occupied by a few, sparsely distributed families. For example, 89-year-old *dona* (Mrs) Marlen from Bamba, neighbouring RPR to the west¹⁷ (Map 1), described how the whole area, now occupied by more than 180 families, was home to barely 100 people before the 1950s. These families, each with ten or more children, were distributed sparsely across the landscape.

Nelson talks about the Dobrega family as an ‘old troop’ (*a tropa antiga*), the most ancient (*os mais antigos*) of all, a term often used by locals interchangeably with ‘traditional family’ (*família tradicional*). This ‘antiquity’ or ‘traditionality’ is usually attributed by locals to families who established themselves on the land in the area before other people, usually

¹⁶ He means a simple suspension timber bridge that used to connect the Fazenda do Carmo with Jabá, back then a small agricultural settlement, on the other side of the river. The original wooden bridge was replaced in 2011 by a new, steel bridge.

¹⁷ While Jabá and Upper Jabá border RPR from the east, Upper Bamba and Bamba are its neighbours to the west. Bamba begins at a crossroads with a small market (*mercado*) where many local people come to do their weekly shopping. Here the dirt road that connects the area with the main asphalted road splits in two different directions. One way leads first to a stretched-out community, Mariana, followed by the smaller and more distant settlement of Regainho hidden in a mountain pass that in the past was used by locals to transport their produce to the nearby town of Teresópolis. The other way enters the valley of the River Bamba where, only a few meters from the market, the first rural dwellings of Bamba start to appear. Further up the dirt road, locked in a small valley at the foot of mountain, and divided from Bamba by a steep hill, is Upper Bamba located (Map 1).

migrants from other areas, settled in the area. According to Nelson, both of his parents came from families who once controlled significant portions of land in the upper parts of two neighbouring river valleys, the River Guapiaçu and the River Bamba. In a similar way, Marlen also talked about herself as a distant descendent of the ‘traditional’ Souza family that once used to control the land beginning in Upper Bamba and extending as far as the crossroad where Bamba now begins, approximately 3km away. This also suggests that *senhor* Nelson and *dona* Marlen are distant relatives, partially sharing ancestry.

Another common characteristic among the ‘traditional’ families would be to trace their origin to Portuguese descent. Their ancestors would be usually of Portuguese descent, coming directly from Portugal or alternatively from other parts of Brazil but born to Portuguese migrants. However, it was not rare to find families who would recount stories of their mixed Portuguese and indigenous origin, where a distant female ancestor would usually be described as ‘caught by lasso’ (*pego no laço*), meaning to be of indigenous descent. Similar to Nelson, other local elders would also refer to physical appearance or qualities of their ancestors, thus invoking their indigenous roots. While Nelson claims that his indigenous ancestor came from another province, 88-year old *dona* Julia Souza from Jabá believed that her father was a descendant of *caboclo do mato*¹⁸ who were local.

This is important, as in the following chapters, I show how people conceptualize their claim to land and related natural resources. Although they do not consider themselves ‘indigenous’ or traditional *caiçaras*, *caipiras* or *quilombolas*, they often refer to their ‘indigenous’ roots or to being ‘traditional’ when they make actual or symbolic claims to land and the related natural resources in the area, particularly when they position themselves in relation to ‘foreigners’ from the reserve or distant urban dwellers from public conservation units. For more on the discussion about ‘traditional populations’ (*populações tradicionais*) in the context of conservation in the AF of Brazil, see Adams (2004), Castro *et al.* (2006) and Idrobo *et al.* (2015).

It was when I was asking Nelson about the descendants of former slaves in the area that he told me the story about ‘a captain’ Dobreaga, the slaveholding property as well as his distant Afro-Brazilian (*escuros*) relatives still living there. All the interviewed elders of ‘traditional’ families mentioned former ownership of slaves working in agriculture, wood harvesting or

¹⁸ *Caboclo* – according to Gomes (2012) the original meaning of this word is mestizo, a descendant of Brazilian Indian and white European or black African. In the earlier period of colonization, the term was used predominantly for Indians dominated through violence and settled in the proximity of early colonial settlements.

households. Some indications suggest the important contribution of slave work to a family's 'wealth'. For instance, 91-year old *senhor* Elson Diniz from Upper Jabá recalled his grandfather owning slaves (*os nego*) working in his sugar and manioc flour mills as well as harvesting and transporting the wood down the river:

“...my grandfather used to sell wood in Niteroi. He would travel down the river. ...and those who used to transport the wood were slaves, genuinely strong blacks (*negros*) of brute mass and a thin shin¹⁹ good for brute strength. These were genuine blacks (*pretos*) whose feet would become swollen. They were very strong people...”

Thus, pre-abolition slave ownership seems to be a common characteristic among 'traditional' families from the area who used slave labour for various economic activities.

As described in the narrative of Nelson, at the beginning of the 20th century, economic activities among 'traditional' families focused on the selective extraction of timber from the surrounding forests as well as subsistence farming. According to local elders, wood represented an important source of family income, at least in the first half of the 20th century, while subsistence farming would meet most of their sustenance needs. They sold their agricultural surplus. In the case of the Dobregas, as mentioned by Nelson, to assure productive use of their land, they used to employ a sharecropping system on their properties.

It seems that 'traditional' families have always had a privileged position in local society and been the dominant force in local commerce. The land and forest in their ownership used to allow them to harvest wood and crops and they owned small processing units, such as mills. Many described themselves as being from families who have 'always' been involved in trading or owned a small general store (*venda, armazém*). In their stores, they would sell almost everything, such as material to make clothes domestically, agricultural tools, and foodstuffs. They used to provide credit to other members of the local population by allowing postponed payment for their purchases (*vender fiado*), a practice that still exists today. Besides their own production, they would trade agricultural products purchased or received as payments from others, or as shares from their sharecroppers. While earlier they would transport agricultural products by boat on rivers or by donkeys, later with the construction of the first dirt roads in the second half of the 20th century, they would become the first owners

¹⁹ In the past, thin shins were considered to be a sign of a slave's strength and thus suitability for hard work in the fields or forest.

of trucks (*caminhão*) in the area. By making the most of their social networks, reinforced by strategic marriages, they would sell their agricultural products in Rio de Janeiro or the neighbouring provinces of Teresópolis or Nova Friburgo on the other side of the mountain. Also, their social standing in rural society would be further reinforced by their common employment in the administration (*administrador*) of neighbouring larger agricultural units or by providing specialized services such as the construction or maintenance of various processing facilities, for example, mills, or small infrastructure such as bridges. As we shall see later, members of these families are also now on the Board of Councillors (*conselho fiscal*) overseeing the RPR activities. Above all, as continues in the present day, members of these families have always stood economically and socially above the wider masses of the rest of the local, rural population composed of the descendants of former slaves, landless migrants and agricultural day workers (*diaristas*).

Their social status has resulted in a situation where their descendants are often those who belong to the current local elite. Through land ownership, they still control an important share of local agricultural production, dominate local commerce and services and due to a better education, have higher social standing and connections with urban elite, and more often benefit from existing public jobs. It is also important to note that members of these currently prodigious families are commonly interrelated through a complex and multi-generational matrix of marriages. As shown in the case of *senhor* Nelson and *dona* Marlen, their ancestry can often be traced to a few ‘traditional’ families that were settled or moved to live in the area at the beginning of the 20th century. However, their better social standing is not to be confused with the larger landowners involved in the commercial production of sugar or coffee based on slave work, as described by Gilberto Freyre (2006).

The narratives of these families are also commonly dominated by the precarious conditions of their existence that contrast starkly with the opulent lifestyle of the imperial landed aristocracy and republican oligarchy that lived closer to the coastal ports and urban centres.²⁰ The middle and upper part of the Guapiaçu River valley and its tributaries are represented as a place that remained fairly isolated and accessible only by river or muddy donkey paths (*trilha de burro*) long into the 20th century. In their stories, local elders often stressed the lack

²⁰ Fausto (2013: 72) describes the sugar producing properties (*engenhos de açúcar*) in the first centuries of colonial Brazil. He states that their owners, called ‘the mill owners’ (*senhores do engenho*), did not used to live in isolation on their rural properties but rather close to ports in contact with the urban world and interational markets. Amador (2013: 93) describes how the coffee aristocracy (*fazendeiros de café*) from Rio de Janeiro, besides their rural properties, used to also have luxurious urban residencies in Rio de Janeiro.

of medical help, very limited access to education but abundance of food. For instance, *dona* Julia Souza said that for most of her life, Jabá was a “...place where there was nothing, no light, no road, only a donkey path, just as an entrance into *mato*” (rural wasteland with uncultivated, wild vegetation, or forest). Although they always had an abundance of food, even for their employees (*empregados*, *lavradores*), she was brought up without any comforts, often sleeping on a heap of corn. She recounted how her mother, who gave birth to 17 children, never saw a doctor. To seek any medical help, it was necessary to travel by horse or donkey to the nearest urban centre, a journey that might become complicated particularly in the rainy season. Disease made life harder still. Marlen recalled the time when almost in every house someone felt ill with fever or passed away. Although some access to education seemed to exist, most of these people would get very limited access to schooling or no education at all. As narrated by Nelson, they were obliged to start working at a very early age, helping on the family farm or in commerce.

Another indication of the ‘traditional families’ being a different social group from the owners of latifundia involved in commercial production is rich anecdotal evidence among local elders on the whereabouts of the slave quarters (*senzala*) or slave cemeteries (*cimentério dos escravos*) of the manor houses, of which there is now little trace as over time, the lands in the area have changed ownership. The remnants of these constructions are often located on the now forested hill tops where, in the past, they would have been protected from seasonal inundation that used to affect the lowlands during rainy seasons.²¹ For instance, according to local oral tradition, the area where the centre of RPR is located today (and where large areas of agricultural land have been reforested and turned into purposefully built artificial lakes with a system of trails and observation towers to accommodate the needs of birdwatchers) used to belong to a large landed estate (*fazenda*) belonging to Joaquina Neves. Marlen recalls how all the hills at the *fazenda* used to have their names, and on the other side of the hill that still divides her property from the reserve, there used to be a small settlement of slaves (*aldeia de escravo*) working on a sugar plantation or harvesting timber on the forested slopes. A separate large house (*casarão*) of Joaquina Neves, infamous for her dreadful treatment of

²¹ The study area is part of a larger transitional region between the Serra do Mar Mountains and the sea waters of Guanabara Bay. This region is categorized as coastal lowlands with characteristic topography composed of lowlands covered by small isolated hills or their groupings. Until the dredging of rivers occurred between 1930 and 1960, the rainy season between October and March used to see extensive flooding of the valley floors. This seasonal flooding made the establishment of permanent human settlements and agricultural production difficult. Moreover, such wetlands were home to disease-transmitting mosquitoes. Thus, establishment of human settlements was, in the past, often restricted to higher elevated areas, such as hill-tops (Cabral and Fiszon, 2004; Cabral, 2007).

slaves, used to be located close to the current reserve headquarters. With the exception of the *casa grande* in Jabá, only stories, ruins and scattered artefacts have remained of the other ‘traditional *fazendas*’ that represent the slaveholding *latifundio* in the area, such *Fazenda de Carmo*. This suggests that the ‘traditional’ families’ previously occupied and controlled lands (not always in their legal ownership) next to large *fazenda* existing at the time in the study area. Above all, ‘traditional’ families’ self-recognition as different from large *fazenda* owners only further reinforces the idea that we should look for their origin in a social group called by Brazilian historiography as ‘*homens livres pobres*’ (‘poor free men’), representing an imprecise middle stratum of earlier Brazilian society.

Although Garcia and Palmeira (2009) consider plantations to be the fundamental units of the social formation processes in Brazil, they warn against considering them as isolated rural communities. On the contrary, they were surrounded by numerous small farms and connected with small towns and villages inhabited by large portion of population that cannot be classified as owners of large agricultural slaveholding units (*senhores*) nor their slaves (*escravos*). Castro (2009) notes that these ‘poor free men’ existed in Brazil both as colony and empire, and describes them as a diversified group of ‘free men’ that used to encompass almost all Brazilian society found in between the so-called ‘dynamic centres’. Ethnically diverse ‘poor free men’ often lived at the limits of large *fazenda* and exploited land not always in their legal ownership. Contrary to the owners of large commercial agricultural units producing for export (*fazendeiros*), the surplus production of ‘small farmers’ approximating the conditions of subsistence agriculture was commonly destined for local and regional markets and thus domestic consumption. Unlike the *fazendeiros*, they would live in thatched-roof houses and their possessions would be limited to few objects of monetary value and mostly domestically produced goods. Still, they were often owners of smaller number of slaves.²² As strict barrier between farming and commerce did not exist; some of them were also owners of small stores (*vendas*), operating from simple houses supplying small subsistence farmers with all necessities, financing their production through credited purchases, and playing an important intermediary role between them and regional markets by providing outlets for their surplus production. According to Castro (1988, 2009), the free population in the central-south region of Brazil grew during the 19th century and particularly in areas with relatively easy access to often only nominally appropriated land. What is

²²According to Castro (1988), slave labour was the foundation of wealth generation in the pre-abolition Brazil. As such, slave ownership was common and far from being restricted only to commercial agriculture.

important is that these details allow us to understand where the origins of the ‘traditional’ families are better.

A point perhaps still requiring clarification is the importance of wood extraction in local livelihood activities which seems to have a long tradition in the area. Amantino and Cardoso (2013) note that the Fazenda de Papucaia de Macacu²³ belonging to Jesuits, present in the area since the end of 16th century, also produced wood alongside manioc flour for internal markets. However, the forest under Jesuit ‘ownership’ remained largely intact (Amantino & Cardoso, 2013). Cabral (2004, 2007), in his analysis of the wood industry at the end of the 18th century in Guapi-Macacu River valley, provides evidence of ethnically diverse ‘poor free men’ working in selective extraction of valued woods, attributed in historical sources with a variety of names, such as *serradores*, *lenhadores*, *mateiros*. According to Cabral, these people were smaller agricultural producers or subsistence farmers living at the edges of forests and larger agricultural units. Their work consisted of harvesting and transporting wood whether with slaves or paid labour. Overall, he argues that wood extraction represented an important complementary activity to agricultural production or subsistence farming. In a similar fashion, Junior and Cesco (2013) also describe the ‘poor free men’ living in the Guapi-Macacu river basin in the 19th century. In accord with Castro’s (1988, 2009) Capivary,²⁴ they note a significant population of ‘free men’ living in the former county of Santo Antônio de Sá.²⁵ While they describe them as small farmers producing for Rio de Janeiro’s domestic market, they also analyze the historical records related to their selective wood extraction activities. Wood extraction was an important secondary economic activity for these small farmers. According to them, favourable environmental conditions represented by the seasonally occurring high water levels on the Guapiaçu and Macacu Rivers and their smaller tributaries facilitated the hard work of transporting a large quantity of wood to Guanabara Bay. Thus, the availability of resources, favourable environmental conditions and

²³ Fazenda de Papucaia de Macacu was established on the land donated to Jesuits by Miguel de Moura in 1573.

²⁴ Castro (1988, 2009) bases her study on a specific area, the parish (*freguesia*) of Capivary situated in the historical district (*município*) of Cabo Frio and current county of Silva Jardim located in the state of Rio de Janeiro. This is a neighbouring area of the current county of Cachoeiras de Macacu where our study area is situated. Close proximity and similar regional topography means that both areas became subject to similar historical socio-economic processes, including the land occupation and its appropriation for agricultural production (Cabral, 2007). Both were parts of so-called Sertões de Macacu, an area believed to remain sparsely populated and covered by tropical vegetation until the end of 18th century. They both belong to a Fluminense region where sugar plantations of 18th century would concentrate rather at the lower parts of river valleys and slow growth of commercial coffee production in 19th century postponed its arrival to the area to later stages of coffee production expansion in Fluminense region (Ailton and Rosa, 2013; Cabral, 2007; Castro, 1988).

²⁵ Santo Antonio de Sá – historical district encompassing the study area.

specific social-economic conditions laid the foundations for the timber extraction activities of local, ‘traditional’ families.

As we can see, both the official historiography and local oral history portray the ‘free poor men’ as long present in the area. They define them as people who occupy a particular social space in between the two ‘dynamic centres’ (masters and slaves) and explore the remaining forest frontier in the area. They provide important indications about their subsistence activities, the forms of land and forest appropriation and their ethnicity. Above all, they begin to sketch the universe where local people have, for generations, been interacting with the surrounding environment, now subject to environmental protection and regulation. However, the ‘traditional’ families represent only one of the social strata in the area. Although we suggest here that those described by Brazilian historiography as belonging to the historical social group of ‘free poor men’ are forebears of the ‘traditional’ families, they also merged with freed slaves and landless, impoverished rural migrants to form the present rural poor. Thus, excluding the growing number of weekenders, it is possible to say that the majority of local people are descendants of these former slaves and diverse rural, landless and poor migrants, as described in the next section.

3.3 The rural poor

To penetrate deeper into the matrix of the social relations between the private reserve and local people, we need also to examine the stratum located at the bottom of the social pyramid. People living in communities located around RPR are of diverse ethnic and ‘racial’ background. In this context, it is possible to observe certain occupational patterns based on the particular environmental conditions in the area closely related to race and consequently, the social status of its inhabitants. While Upper Jabá, Upper Bamba and Regatinho located at the mountain foothills are predominantly white, Esperança and Mariana situated in the lower-lying areas can be characterised as predominantly Afro-Brazilian. This, as we shall see later, has its historical and environmental origins. The communities of Jabá and Bamba are characterised for their social and ethnic diversity. All the communities have a balance of longer settled and more recent rural migrants as well as varying proportions of urban dwellers who live as ‘weekenders’ (*sitiantes*). In the following accounts, we will first turn our attention to a small Afro-Brazilian community situated in the low-lying area in the vicinity of RPR and gradually expand our focus to include the rest of local society. Through the following stories, we aim to explore the perspectives of the area’s inhabitants, and add

additional pieces to the mosaic of the social world in which control over local natural resources is embedded.

3.3.1 The Afro-Brazilian community of Esperança

Esperança is a small community located on the lowland (*baixada*) south-east of the Serra do Mar where RPR is located (Map 1). Esperança is linked by a dirt road to the asphalt highway leading to Cachoeiras de Macacu, the administrative centre of the county. The dirt road winds through small patches of forest and pastures and swiftly turns to mud during heavy rains. Dispersed small parcels planted with manioc (*aipim*), yam (*inhami*) or beans (*feijão*) are found hidden among the trees or located on the slopes of surrounding hills. Extensive areas of the lowlands appear to be abandoned but a few wandering cattle remind the observer that the land is still being used as pasture.

As the dirt road advances, a small valley opens up (Image 2). Its right edge is dominated by low hills with a few parcels of manioc (*aipim*), beyond which unfolds the Guapiaçu River valley. A section of planted land located on the hillsides gradually become pastures, banana plantations, *capoeira*,²⁶ and above them, forested hilltops. The dirt road is full of holes and protruding rocks. Shortly beyond a local garage, marked with a few car wrecks lying all around, entrances start to proliferate on both sides of the road. They lead to houses hidden behind the bushes, trees and other plants composing garden vegetation. Further down the road is a small Evangelical church, a football pitch, bars (*botecos*) and a school. Lavish tropical vegetation composed of trees, bushes and grass mingles with litter. A few lamp posts, of which only some function at night as well as cattle roaming the pastures nearby complete the scene.

The majority of houses are brick-built with glass windows. Yet, some unpainted wattle-and-daub (*pau e pique*) houses, built partly from unprocessed wooden logs and with wooden shutters, still remain from the frontier days. Houses are dispersed in a relatively small area and now and then are divided from each other by fences overgrown with bushes. The community is home to no more than 65 families, most of them interrelated through marriage or common ancestry.

²⁶ *Capoeira* – according to Larrouse do Brasil and Carvalho (2009) - comes from Tupi and means a place where forest vegetation was cleared or burned for the purpose of agriculture. During my fieldwork, people usually used *capoeira* to refer to a place that had been used for agricultural production in the past but was now abandoned and where new secondary forest vegetation had started to appear.

Image 2 The road to Esperança



Photograph by Peter Slovak

3.3.2 The story of *senhor* Lemuel and *dona* Ruana

The house of *senhor* Lemuel and *dona* Ruana sits at the end of one of the entrances. Next to the house is a yard of trampled earth surrounded by a variety of banana trees with their roots covered by litter. Right next to the house is a wattle-and-daub (*pau e pique*) construction. Although missing some walls, it is still used as a shelter for motorcycles, storage of construction materials, crops or other provisions. The remnants of an original, wood-fuelled oven (*o forno de lenha*) can also be found here. It is still used, particularly in the cold season, to heat up water for washing, and for cooking. Three other houses can be found further up the hillside. One is brick-built and two others are wattle-and-daub (*pau e pique*) dwellings). All belong to members of the family. Two little streams flow steadily down the hills planted with lime trees, herbs, grass and bushes. They create a natural division between the property and neighbours who are more distant relatives.

It is 2012 and *senhor* Lemuel is 76 and his wife *dona* Ruana is 60 years old. I would often visit their house, dine at their table and listen to their stories. The darker colour of their skin and the quality of their hair suggests African descent, while the grey in their hair suggests

their age. Ruana cannot read or write. Lemuel perhaps learnt something at school, but he claims that it was God who has taught him how to read the Bible. They are both *crente* ('believers' - Evangelical Christians). Lemuel is a functionary of the church and enjoys spending long hours talking about the Bible and Jesus Christ. They brought up all five of their children in the adjacent wattle-and-daub (*pau e pique*) construction and moved to their new brick-built house 10 years ago.

The story of *senhor* Lemuel

Senhor Lemuel was born and bred (*nascido e criado*) in Esperança. His grandfather Roberto was a tall and strong man, and together with his wife, he used to live at Sebastiana, a low-lying area nearby. At the time when they came to live in Esperança, the area was already occupied by 'the olden people' (*antigos*) from the time of slavery (*época da escravidão*). Perciliano, an old black man (*negro velho*) used to have his house in the same place where they live now. As these *antigos* passed away, some of their children married or moved away. Yet, places in Esperança continue to carry their names.

Lemuel's mother, Maria, was a daughter of José Carvalho. He was a white man (*branco*) with a beard and blue eyes. Yet, she was not his legitimate daughter as her mother was only his girlfriend (*amiga*). José Carvalho was married but had children with others.

"Back then, there used to be lots of philanderers too...who used to have other women outside of the marriage...and there is this thing ...that awkward thing. For you to see, my children are equally mine and Ruana's, but back then... Ahh, they used to live with not only the one they were married to."

Lemuel used to hear the elders saying that his grandmother was a daughter of a cabocla (*filha de cabocla*). She was very distrustful (*desconfiada*), just as an Indian (*indio*). According to this story his mother's grandmother was caught by lasso (*pega no laço*) in Pernambuco and brought here. He contemplates for a while before concluding, "...we who live here, we are not Indians (*indio*), but we do have Indian blood (*sangue do indio*)."

According to *senhor* Lemuel, there used to be Indians living here too, but it was many generations ago (*muita raça dos anos*). The Indians who used live here were understood to be 'tamed' (*mansos*), distinguished from the 'rough' Indians (*indios bravos*) in other areas. Yet, the olden people (*antigos*) used to say that they went away (*foram acampando embora*) as

they did not like the white people as those who owned the land here used to catch them. However, *caboclos* were quite rough too (*bravos*) and had to be treated with respect.

According to *senhor* Lemuel, the people who live here at Esperança are all relatives (*parente*). The land (*o terreno*) belonged to his grandfather José Carvalho and used to border Fazenda do Carmo. It was his grandfather Carvalho who put the division (*rumo*) behind the hill of Aurélio to mark the border between Fazenda do Carmo and Esperança.

Here, where they live, they do not have land title (*o documento*) but they do pay taxes (*imposto*). The official land title for the area is still in the name of José Carvalho. Lemuel's father became the owner of the land when José Carvalho, already an elder man, became ill and went to hospital and never came back. Then, his father continued paying the land taxes. Younger members of the Carvalho family had abandoned the land even earlier and went to live in Rio de Janeiro.

Lemuel, together with some members of his family, contracted a lawyer. Although they did not hold the official land title, they had been paying taxes and taking care of the land (*pagavam imposto e tomavam conta*) for long enough that they were granted '*usucapião*',²⁷ usurpation rights. It has been 12 years now since they took the case to the courts yet the Carvalho family still want to expel them from the land. The Carvalho family managed to pay some of the taxes, forcing the land to be divided between the two families. The boundary line runs where the football pitch now stands. One side belongs to Lemuel and his relatives, also known locally as *Carvalho preto* (black Carvalho) and the other to *Carvalho branco* (white Carvalho).

Senhor Lemuel started to work when he was eleven. Both his grandfather Roberto and his father used to plant lots of corn (*roça de milho*). He used to help his father harvest the corn (*limpar o milho*) at Fazenda do Carmo, where his grandfather and later his father used to work as sharecroppers (*meeiro*): "...my father used to plant a share there, and here it was our land..." and so they would work at both, Fazenda do Carmo as well as Esperança.

When he was young he used to go to cut bananas (*puxar banana*) with his father. He would need to carry four bunches of bananas (*cachos de banana*) on his shoulders down the hill to the place where the buyer would wait with his truck. It was in the times of his grandfather

²⁷ *Usucapião* – a form of acquisition of a title or right to a property through uninterrupted and prolonged habitation or use.

Carvalho when they planted a large banana plantation (*o bananal*) on the other side of the hill, at the place called Zangado after one of the *antigos* (the olden people) who once used to live there. There were ten men felling (*derrubando*) the trees and thirty clearing the vegetation (*roçando*): “It was a *mutirão*²⁸; my father would go from one house to another and all of the asked would come... a word had its value.”

At home, they used to have enough food for a whole year. His father used to plant rice and they would have lots of it. He killed a big pig and gave lunch and dinner to everyone. Back then it was different: “People were more united.”

First, they used to plant banana amongst the fallen trunks of trees and only later, they also started to take the wood to make charcoal (*carvão*). They used to make many sacks. Once they made 500 of them, some weighing 30 kg and more. His father had 10 donkeys to transport the sacks. He used to sell the charcoal to João Souza from Jabá who would then take it on a boat to Rio de Janeiro.

In those times, they did not used to buy much. They would plant and harvest a lot.

“We used to plant close to the stream that, even now, is a good place to plant rice. Before, we used to plant a lot. We did not need to buy manioc flour. We used to plant coffee, sugar cane, beans...we used to buy only some meat. There used to be a lot of fish here.”

When they needed to buy something, they would go to the shop (*comércio*) of Almeida in Jabá where they could buy things, including wheat sacks to make clothes from. There was not one doctor in the whole area. Back then, only a prayer (*reza*) and homemade medicine (*xarope*) existed. However, “life used to be better as there was more respect and more fish in the river.”

The story of *dona* Ruana

The parents of *dona* Ruana came to this area from Aldeia Velha (Município Capivary), Rio de Janeiro. She does not remember much about her grandparents but her grandmother used to tell how she and her parents moved first from Aldeia Velha to Paraná²⁹ to finally settle in Campos, Rio de Janeiro. She was told that the father of her great-grandmother owned the

²⁸ *Mutirão* – from Tupi, referring to a cooperative labour particularly in the context of agricultural activities (Larrouse do Brasil and Carvalho, 2009).

²⁹ Paraná – state in south-eastern Brazil.

land where they lived but they did not want to stay there. Her grandmother also used to tell her that many of her ancestors were ‘caught by lasso’ (*pegos no laço*).

“In my family, there are many who were caught by lasso. My grandmother used to say to us that we were born in the house, but they (these ancestors) were born in the forest. They used to live in a small cave and eat raw meat. When they killed opossum (*gambá*), they skinned it and in this way, they used to give it to the children to eat ...on my father’s side, it was his grandfather who was caught by lasso. My grandmother used to say that when they caught him by lasso, they put him into a small room where they would give him some food and water. He was rough and used to hit and bite.”

She was only seven when they came to live in this area. They were already about to leave when her father was offered a piece of land at KM 12 by one of the *fazendeiros* (large landowners). Back then, that place was forest, and now, it has turned back into forest again. Her parents did not have land; they did not have anything. The *fazendeiro* promised her father that he could stay on the land as long as he wanted. The first day, her father cleared the vegetation and made a quick shelter (*chupanha*) from the plant called *pindoba*.³⁰ It was just for the time being. In this way, they had a place to sleep until he made a more permanent one from wood and mud. It was a very warm and safe house and only hail or heavy rain would get through.

However, that first night, a leaf of *pindoba* cut her leg. When her mother went to get some water to clear the wound, she encountered a ‘dark-backed jaguar’ (*onça lombo preto*)³¹. As they lived in the forest (*dentro do mato*), lots of big pumas (*onças*) were there and, some nights, they could hear the crazy shouting of *Inhangoçu* (the master of the forest).

Her father started to put her to work when she was still very young. She was only four when he made a small hoe and showed her how to weed an orange tree (*pé de laranja*). When she was seven, she started to help her mother with the work around the house and her father to plant manioc (*rama*) and potatoes. She was still little when they started to harvest the *tabibu*³² tree which was used for making *zapatos malandrinhos*, a simple shoe with a single leather

³⁰ *Pindoba* – a popular name for a plant species of the *Aracáceas* family (*Attalea Oleifera* Barb. Rodr.).

³¹ *Onça lombo preto* – a local name for a large cat (*Puma Concolor*) of the family *Felidae* that in Brazil is more commonly known as *onça parda*. The local name is derived from its back which is darker than the yellowish-brown colour of the rest of its body.

³² *Tabibu* – a local name for *tabebuia* (*Tabebuia Cassinoides*), a species commonly found in flooded, low-lying areas of the AF.

strap that was very common in those times. Back then, it was no problem to extract wood (*tirar madeira*).

“...The harvest of tabibu started when we were still little. I had to go to find the tabibu in the marsh, with water up to here (showing to her neck), and carry it. I would carry it, and leave it at the place where the car would get it, and the buyer would pay my father...”

Her mother used to stay at home and take care of the house and children. Once her brother got bigger, her father started to take her with him to cut wood in the forest during the day as well as to watch over the charcoal (*carvão*) pile at night. Once, when she went with him, she cut herself with a big *machete* that her father gave her to carry. Yet, the next day her father was still going to take her with him to the forest. It was her mother who stopped him. She was worried. There was no doctor nearby. The nearest hospital was in the town but there was no bus to get there. People, back then, used to walk and have donkeys to take their produce to the market.

Then they moved to another place called Volta Nova. Here, they did not to make any charcoal and worked during the day only. Yet, they still lived on the land of others. The land used to belong to the family Dobrega from Jabá, who later sold it to another family. When the plantations (*a roça*) of yam, rice and banana were about to be harvested, the patron (*patrão*) asked them to leave. Her parents were very sad to leave again. They had four children and did not know where to go. Her father started to cry. When her father went to ask the *patrão* to pay at least for a car to move their things he refused. He told him to stop working immediately and gave him until the end of the week to leave his land.

“So, we did not know where to go. My father said to us: eh, children, our patron let us work here, take care of plantations and we were going to do everything..., [now, he told me] you can work for others. The day I will need you again, I will call you. He is sending us away now when the banana plantation is about to be harvested; bananas ready to be cut next week. My father cried, man. He cried. There was me, Junia, Moisés and Irene. It was four of us.”

Her father was lucky to find something not very far from where they used to live. She was ten when they moved to live in Nascente Novo. She ended up being brought up there, as all the other places were the same, properties of *fazendeiros* (large landowners).

At Nascente Novo, it was *senhor* Abrão who gave them the land and they stayed there for twelve years. They had been living there for two when the land was sold to another man. However, he assured her father that a new owner would not send them away. Ruana grew up there and moved to Esperança only when she married Lemuel.

At Nascente Novo, they lived off charcoal production. The oven (*forno*) is still there. They used to work at night. It was a hard work and one had to pay attention not to put a live ember into a sack. One night, accompanied by the moonlight only, they were rushing to load the charcoal (*carvão*) into sacks so a buyer could pick it up early in the morning. They made 100 sacks and laid them one next to each other when an ember, in one of the sacks, set everything on fire. That night they lost everything. Back then, it was a big loss.

When she got older, she started to feel she could not endure working with the charcoal (*carvão*) anymore. She was no longer able to carry the logs on her shoulders. As there were many rocks and they used to work at night, she would often fall and hurt her arms and legs. *Dona* Ruana asked her father to let her and her sister work at one of the farms nearby. They would work during the day. They used to start on Monday and stop only on Saturday at 11 a.m. when everyone would get paid. In their free time, they used to plant yams, manioc and sugar cane as well as coffee to make their own coffee at home.

Yet, her father would not let them keep the money. On Saturday, he would always wait in front of the house for them to return home and would take all the money they had earned. Only when it was two months before her wedding did her father decide to allow her to keep her money to buy a wedding dress. Yet, it was not enough. In the end, Lemuel, who felt sorry for her, bought the dress for her.

Anyway, by then, her father was not able to work in the fields anymore. When her father was a little boy, his father used to make him carry a container with manioc (*caçamba de aipim*). He would often fall as he was going down the hill and hurt himself but his father would only tell him not to be weak and to get up. He had many wounds on his belly.

“...He died maimed from carrying the manioc container his father used to give him to handle. He used to say: I will not do this with you, as this was a bad thing my father used to do with me and my siblings. My father said to us that as he was the eldest he had suffered most. His father did not use to make his sisters carry the container; he only made them harvest the manioc...”

On the day after she got married, her father left her mother. He went to live with another woman. Her mother stayed there, at Nascente Novo, with her youngest brother, who was only six years old then but the owner of the land did not want her to stay there anymore. He did not want a single woman with a child; he wanted couples only: “Thus, she came to ask us whether she could stay with us. Then she lived with us and stayed here until she died. She was 70; she was very ill. It has been five years now.”

These stories of *senhor* Lemuel and *dona* Ruana give a glimpse into the local social world through the eyes of people from a small, community whose ancestors lived or settled in the area as landless rural workers. In the narratives of the interviewed elderly couple, Esperança is portrayed as a small community of rural workers composed of closely interrelated families. In the first half of the 20th century, this place was the property of a white (*branco*) owner and settled by some ‘olden blacks’ (*negros antigos*).

Their narratives also reveal some fragmented images of their complex ancestry. *Senhor* Lemuel’s roots are depicted as local. He was born to a father whose parents moved to Esperança from a nearby area and to a mother who came from extramarital relations between the white owner of the land and a woman of partly indigenous descent. The ancestors of *dona* Ruana had come from a more distant area. She makes only implicit remarks about their possible ethnic origin. She recounts the story she heard from her grandmother where her distant ancestors, ‘rough’ people ‘caught by lasso’, who previously lived in a cave and ate raw meat were, through domestic captivity, acculturated to be transformed into rural workers. In her narrative, her parents and grandparents are described as poor rural workers migrating from one place to another in search of land as the principal means of their subsistence.

The subsistence activities of these families concentrated on physically demanding livelihood activities based on the use and extraction of available natural resources and farm work. As described by Ruana, when her family arrived, they were allowed to settle on a piece of forested land and build their shelter, making use of material provided by the surrounding forest. Her family moved from one property to another, making a living from forest clearance, wood extraction, charcoal production and crop planting, accompanied by subsistence farming. The situation of Lemuel’s family, already settled in the area, appears to be slightly different. The focus is not only on subsistence farming, but also on commercial crop production at Esperança as well as through sharecropping at the large neighbouring agricultural unit, Fazenda do Carmo. Both families, in the case of Lemuel at least initially,

did not possess their own land and resided and worked on land belonging to other local landowners.

An important aspect of their life at the edge of both the forest and larger agricultural units is the large input of their own labour and the physically demanding and often health-compromising character of their livelihood activities. They both started to work at a young age. Ruana was involved in most of the activities, at home, in the forest, or in the fields while still only a young child. Her narrative is characterised by hardship exemplified in the description of the negative impact of hard work on the health of her father and herself. Leaving charcoal production and going to work on a nearby *fazenda* is presented as an improvement. Also, in the absence of medical assistance, they depended mostly on homemade remedies (*xarope*) and prayer (*reza*).

Meanwhile, their ancestors are represented as rural landless workers, depending for their subsistence on land under the control of local landowners. Consequently, their livelihoods are impacted by the constant insecurity related to the risk of being expelled from the land. Above all, both stories merge principally in the key role of the access to land and natural resources in local livelihoods. The land at Esperança is for them the home and source of sustenance conveying the meaning of security. In the end, in this context, it is also possible to surmise that this is something their ancestors had been long striving and struggling for.

Yet, to understand the patterns of the land occupation as well as the emergence and character of the communities, including Esperança, located around the Redonda private reserve, we still need to review some important details. Here it is essential to remember that before the River Guapiaçu was dredged,³³ the low-lying lands along the river used to be affected by seasonal flooding where planting was restricted to dry season or elevated areas (Cabral & Fiszon, 2004). Grynszpan (2009) notes a situation at the turn of 20th century when large areas of low-lying lands at Baixada Fluminense,³⁴ inundated, afflicted with diseases and abandoned by large landowners, were often portrayed as frontier areas, as if they had resumed their pre-

³³ The dredging of the River Guapiaçu was part of a larger process of public works that began in 1930s and terminated in 1960. This process of fluvial system modification in the Fluminense region was composed of a whole series of works including dredging, bend-straightening, river bed deepening, river bank reinforcement and dam construction. As a result, the River Guapiaçu became a tributary of the River Macacu which empties into Guanabara Bay (Amador, 2013: 192). Consequently, the river basin has become to be called Guapi-Macacu. These works, while reducing the extent of inundated areas and the impact of seasonal floodings, allowed for the recuperation of agricultural land (Carneiro *et al.*, 2012).

³⁴ Baixada Fluminense - the Fluminense region is a low-laying area in the Rio de Janeiro state that encompasses the territory between the Serra do Mar escarpment and the Atlantic Ocean, between the Campos plain and Itaguaí.

colonization state. Yet, not being completely abandoned, according to Grynszpan (2009), these lands were occupied by diverse small family farmers (*lavradores*). This seems to be very much in line with the testimonies provided by local elder interlocutors living around RPR.

For example, Nelson, claiming to know the area well (*a baixada*), remembers how many of these lands used to be seasonal swamps (*brejos*). To escape the deadly fever, many landowners left their properties behind. Some moved to (Upper) Jabá, while others he met on his trips with agricultural production to the *serrana* (mountain) region. According to Nelson, once abandoned the lands were occupied by blacks (*negros*). Yet, Esperança has never been a good place to live:

“There were only blacks, real blacks (*preto mesmo*). Now, there is a bit of mixture, but there used to be many of them. My uncle used to say that that place is good for cattle and blacks (*negro*) only. It is a bad place, because the only water to be found there is stagnant...not like the clear water from the mountains.”

Thus, Nelson attributes the image of a ‘bad’ place to live with unfavourable environmental conditions to Esperança. I found similar representations of this community among other members of the ‘traditional’ families. For some, Esperança has always been a place where blacks used to concentrate. A similar view has become adopted by the RPR. According to Laura, a vice-president of the RPR, Esperança is the poorest of all the communities located around the reserve and was mostly occupied by Afro-Brazilians and they have never worked much with this community.

3.3.3 Indigenous origins

In contemplating the ethnic origin of people living in the area, we cannot escape considering the question of their indigenous roots. This is important, particularly if we are to discuss the appropriation and control over natural resources, whether this is material through land titles and occupations or symbolic through people’s experiences, knowledge and cultural perspectives of the surrounding environment. This is also essential if, through focusing on a specific place and the lived history of its inhabitants situated in the larger historical context of socio-economic processes, we aim to penetrate deeper into the local ethos of natural resources and thus expose the essence of modern encounters with nature, embodied in private conservation, shaping the views on PPAs in the AF of Brazil.

Based on oral traditions, *senhor* Lemuel and *dona* Ruana, recount stories about their distant ancestors born in the forest, or with indigenous roots. They were not exceptions. Remarks about ancestors being *caboclo*, Indian (*indio*) or born and brought up in the forest and ‘caught by lasso’, were common among the local population, including ‘traditional’ families and rural migrants from other areas. To support their claim, local people, would often refer to their ancestors’ physical features, such as the quality of their hair and skin or the colour of their eyes. For example: ‘a woman with dark skin and straight black hair’ (*uma morena, escura de cabelo bom, liso, preto*). They would also talk about their abilities and attitudes, such as a passion for hunting and fishing (*caça e pesca*) or being distrustful, as well their detailed knowledge of wild plants and animals. Ultimately, but less often, they would refer to the use of cultural objects such as *coités*.³⁵ Moreover, as we can see in the narratives of the elderly couple these ancestors were often described as rough (*bravos*) who required to be treated with respect. *Dona* Julia Souza, from a ‘traditional’ family who claimed to be a descendent of a local Indian, said about her father:

“His grandfather [i.e. of her father] was of Indian origin (*raça de indio*); he was *caboclo* from the forest (*caboclo do mato*), as before this everything was forest (*mato*). He came from there. These *caboclos* are a kind of people who stay only in the forest, brought up in the forest they do not have knowledge (*sabedoria*) of anything; they only work.”

Later she also recounted (without giving further details) that her grandfather died in an assault. He was not actually named Souza, and her father chose the surname of his mother, whose ancestors were from Portugal and came to hold the land on both sides of the River Guapiaçu. However, *dona* Julia Souza was the only one of my local interlocutors claiming her indigenous ancestor to be local. *Senhor* Nelson, most probably a descendant of an ‘Indian’ in the same ancestral line as *dona* Julia, does not think there were any Indians living in the area as his father never talked about them. He thinks that his distant Indian female ancestor was ‘caught by lasso’ and brought from some other area.

In a very similar fashion, Lemuel, referring to oral tradition, also claims that his distant female indigenous ancestor was ‘caught by lasso’ and brought from Pernambuco in the north-east of Brazil. Notwithstanding, it was not rare to hear stories about some Indians who used to live on the lowland (*baixada*). Lemuel mentions the elders talking about the presence of

³⁵ *Coité* – from the Tupi *kuité*, a pot made from a dried and cut-in-half nut of cuieira tree (*Crescentia cujete*).

‘tamed’ Indians (*indios mansos*) in the area who eventually moved away due to a white landowner custom to catch them by lasso. Also, *senhor* José from Esperança, remembers how his grandmother, born on the *fazenda* next to Esperança, came to see these Indians living on the lowland. They appeared in the forest and then went away. Other local elders would mention some Indians coming to “... have a chat (*conversar*), but not staying...” or seeing only their signs in the forest but never actually seeing any of them. Moreover, there were many local people claiming to have indigenous ancestors who, similar to *dona* Ruana, moved here from other distant areas or states, such as Minas Gerais, Espírito Santo, Bahia and so on.

Yet, it is crucial to bear in mind that any attempt to trace the indigenous origin of the local population is bound to face considerable difficulties. Available information is rather scarce and substantial research regarding the indigenous population of Rio de Janeiro, their demographic evolution, missionary settlements (*aldeias de repartição*) and their importance in regional economy are still missing (Freire & Melheiros, 2010). In addition, the written historical records and testimonies need to be read critically. They offer only one-sided historical perspectives, reflecting the interests of colonizers, foreign travellers and Brazilian dominant classes, while the perspectives of Indians and Africans remain absent or silent. Consequently, Ribeiro (1995: 30) expresses his concerns about the inability to reconstruct in its complexity the process in which Indian, African and European ethnic components have fused to form a new Brazilian nation.

The destiny of the indigenous population occupying our study area is closely related to the Portuguese conquest of the Guanabara Bay. The present territory of Rio de Janeiro was inhabited principally by a native population, by 1500, classified according to linguistics as Tupi and Puri (Freire & Melheiros, 2010). Amador (2013), drawing on available research, estimates that Tupi-speaking Indians lived distributed among 30 to 40 settlements (*aldeias*) around Guanabara Bay. While Tupi-speaking *Temiminos* became allies of the Portuguese, the Tupi-speaking *Tamoios*³⁶ formed an alliance with the French, their rivals in the Guanabara Bay. After the defeat and subsequent expulsion of the French from Guanabara Bay in 1567, the indigenous population became subject to enslavement and their concentration into settlements controlled by the Jesuits. The Indians were classified either as enemies, resisting the catechism and domination and thus subject to ‘just wars’ (*guerra justa*) and enslavement (*cativeiro*), or as allies concentrated in missionary settlements to serve as the sources of

³⁶ Also referred to in the literature as the *Tupinambás*.

labour and a defensive military force (Almeida, 2013). The land of indigenous populations was expropriated first through the division of Brazil into hereditary captaincies in 1536 and then, after 1567, also by its distribution through land donations in the form of *sesmarias*.³⁷ The Macacu valley did not escape this process, through which it became incorporated into the territory of the new Portuguese colony.

Amantino and Cardoso (2013) review the existing written historical records related to early European occupation in the River Macacu valley and the appropriation of its lands by Jesuits. In 1567, the *sesmaria* in the River Macacu valley was donated to an aristocrat Miguel de Moura, the secretary of the King of Portugal. When in 1571 he ceded the *sesmaria* to the Jesuits, these lands were still described as being in a state of war against the Indians, identified at that time as *Tamoios*, a group hostile towards the Portuguese. In the following years, Jesuits established an agricultural unit in the area called Fazenda de Papucaia de Macacu with manioc flour production and wood extraction, based on forced enslaved labour composed of captured Indians (*'negros da terra'*). Near the *fazenda*, further down the River Macacu and at the margins of the Guanabara Bay but still within the *sesmaria*, an indigenous mission settlement was established in 1578 called São Barnabé. The area remained under the control of the Jesuits until their expulsion from the Americas in 1759 (Amantino & Cardoso, 2013). These historical events determined the fate of the indigenous population in the area.

After this initial period, information about any indigenous presence in the area is rather scarce or very limited. Existing historical records describe the upper parts of river valleys remaining still largely intact by the end of the 18th century (Amantino & Cardoso, 2013) as sparsely populated³⁸ and being part of a larger continuous forested area called Sertões de Macacu³⁹ (Cabral, 2004). These appeared in the cartographic representation of Manoel Vieira Leão from 1767 as still populated by 'rough' Indians (*indios bravos*) (Jaccoud, 1999). Yet, any suggestions of their temporal or permanent presence in upper parts of the Macacu river basin would be speculation. I could not identify any existing research that would confirm this.

³⁷ *Sesmaria* – a large portion of land donated by Portugal to be explored, cultivated and administrated. The right to receive *sesmaria* was given only to wealthy aristocrats, and those who provided valued services to the kingdom, such as the military assistance during the expulsion of the French from the Guanabara Bay (Amador, 2013).

³⁸ Cabral (2004), based on the study of available historical documents claims that while in the 18th century the lower parts of the Macacu valley were dedicated to sugar production the upper parts were sparsely populated and mostly covered by the forest.

³⁹ *Sertão* means an area of low population density. As Ailton and Rosa (2013) note, at the beginning of 19th century the most populated region of Brazil was the coastal area often not exceeding 20km towards the interior.

However, ‘rough Indians’ (‘*indios bravos*’),⁴⁰ often portrayed and described by foreign travellers (*viajantes*), continued to inhabit other inaccessible interior areas of the Rio de Janeiro state, such as mountainous areas (*serras*) and the River Paraíba basin, to be eventually also concentrated in missionary settlements in the 19th century and finally, merged with other populations (Freire & Melheiros, 2010).

Yet, we know something about the presence of Indians identified by other contemporary populations as ‘*caboclos*’ and living in the missionary settlement (*aldeamento*) of São Barnabé. According to Freire and Melheiros (2010), these Indians, originally from diverse tribal groups, were catechised, also spoke Portuguese, and still lived in communities on lands ‘ceded’ to them by the King. After the expulsion of the Jesuits, these indigenous populations became subject to colonial assimilation policies. Control over their communities was passed over to secular administrators who often misused their power to their own benefit. Cabral (2004) reviews a historical record, according to which 430 Indians settled (*aldeados*) in this community, already elevated to a category of a small town (*vila*) and renamed São José D’El Rei,⁴¹ and in 1797 had the rights to a *sesmaria* (land donation) of 18 km² in Sertões de Guapiaçu. Yet the lands belonging to such indigenous settlements were commonly the object of fraudulent administration and were eventually lost through usurpation and invasion by other populations. Similarly, Cabral (2004) notes that Indians from São Barnabé were most probably not able to benefit from their forested lands, as their civil administrators, also noted by Freire and Melheiros (2010), were accused of stealing the indigenous patrimony by a contemporary document. Of the many missionary settlements that existed in the Rio de Janeiro state, only 15 survived into the 19th century (Freire & Melheiros, 2010) and São Lorenzo, Niterói, the last one in the Guanabara Bay region, was declared extinct in 1866 (Amador, 2013). Thus, historical research seems to rule out definitely any potential indigenous presence in the area since the second half of the 19th century, if not earlier.

The result of these processes was that Indians, or *caboclos*, became individualised, having lost any wider tribal or communal identity. Expulsed from their lands, they became

⁴⁰ The term ‘*indios bravos*’ was used for *Puri*, *Coroados* and *Coropós* expelled from their lands in the 19th century with the expansion of coffee production in the Paraíba valley. Until their catechization by Capuchins they maintained their tribal identity and autonomy.

⁴¹ To promote the assimilation of Indians settled in the missionary settlements (*aldeias*), it was common to ‘elevate’ these into category of *vilas* and thus motivate the presence of other non-indigenous population. Aldeia São Barnabé was elevated into a category of *vila* and renamed to São José D’El Rei in 1772. In the same year, this was preceded by the revolt of the indigenous population against bad living conditions and forced labour (Freire and Melheiros, 2010).

marginalized migrants (Freire and Melheiros, 2010). Cabral (2004) notes the presence of free poor workers in the upper part of the Macacu valley employed in wood extraction and processing at the beginning of 19th century. He assigns them indigenous origin and classifies them as a subaltern group that, as the industry itself, is largely omitted from contemporary official registers. Above all, Freire and Melheiros (2010) conclude that the destiny of those Indians who survived slavery and those concentrated in missionary settlements were very similar: first, the annihilation of their cultural identity and subsequently, their acculturation. After forced migration, lost liberty, conversion to Catholicism, the elimination of their tribal identity and losing their language, they merged with the neo-Brazilian mestizo population. Nevertheless, the work of Almeida (2013) shows the exceptional ability of indigenous populations settled around Guanabara Bay to withstand the violent changes they were constantly exposed to, by what she calls a creative adaptation. Despite their condition of subaltern, these indigenous populations were still able to recreate their histories, traditions, identities and cultures (Almeida, 2013). Thus, how should we explain and interpret the testimonies in which local people in the 21st century and without documented recent indigenous presence, still construct their identities, at least partially, around their indigenous roots?

Looking again at the testimonies of local people about their indigenous origin, it is possible to note that many of their foundations conform to the existing research. First, with few exceptions, the majority of local interlocutors describe their indigenous ancestors as females, again and again appearing as ‘women caught by lasso’. Freyre (2006: 108) notes a past custom of stealing indigenous women by violence or seduction. Ribeiro (1995: 146) puts forward the argument that the indigenous ethnic component has been integrated into the Brazilian nation principally through the female line. In another work, he explains this gender predominance by arguing that miscegenation with indigenous women was a very common pattern whenever the presence of other women, such as white or African, was limited (Ribeiro, 1996: 482).

Also, I need to note that at earlier stages of my fieldwork, often induced by my subjective impression of the Amerindian physical appearance of my research participants, I would sometimes ask about their possible indigenous origin, only for this to be resolutely refuted or my question just completely ignored. Then, often in situations when I was least expecting it, people would start talking about their indigenous ancestors. Later, I also realised that men and women living around RRP would more often describe their ancestors as *caboclos*, the

descendants of Indians and not as Indians, whom they would refer to, whether ‘rough’ (*bravos*) or ‘tamed’ (*mansos*), as inhabitants roaming the forested areas (*mata*). As we have already reviewed, historians noted the existence of *caboclos* in the area, living in missionary settlements or employed in wood extraction. In a similar fashion, Gomes (2012) notes that Indians living in settlements (*aldeias*) near urban settlements were called *caboclos* but that with a decreasing native population, the term has gradually expanded to include a wider range of mixed heritage people, rural poor living and providing services for large agricultural units. Thus, *caboclo* does have a wider usage in the contemporary period, while still carrying a connotation of indigenous heritage.

Notwithstanding, as I was able often to witness during my fieldwork, many members of local communities still retain very complex and intimate knowledge of forest plants and animals. As Dean (1995) notes, the knowledge of Tupi-Guarani of the AF was crucial for the survival of the neo-Brazilians at the agricultural frontier, whose lives well up to the 20th century were shaped by the traits of the preserved Amerindian knowledge and natural resource use practices. Local men and women would also exhibit many of the socio-cultural elements, such as local dialect influenced by Tupi-Guarani vocabulary, collective work (*mutirão*), exchanged labour (*troca dia*), swidden agriculture, beliefs in the existence of forest spiritual beings such as *Inhangoçu* (the master of the forest) and manioc flour cultural complex that, according to Adams (2004), connect the different communities with Amerindian cultural features, such *Caiçaras* and *Caipiras*, occupying other areas of the AF in Brazil.

What does this discussion mean for the present relation between local people and the forest? It would be very speculative to assume that the current local population could be traced to the original indigenous population. Those Indians who appeared could be the descendants of Indians from missionary *aldeamentos* (settlements), or descendants of Indians from other states. Although in some other areas of the AF rural dwellers were often characterised by ‘outsiders’ as belonging to one of the ‘traditional populations’ such as *Caiçaras*, they did not define themselves as such (Adams, 2004), but they were able to appropriate such identity when needed and turn it into their own benefit (Idrobo *et al.*, 2015). Thus, what is important is that local people also construct their identity around their indigenous ancestry and even more importantly, some of them, such as those at Esperança, claim that because of their indigenous ancestry, this land is theirs. Land is the most important question. This claim is not always territorial as it is also symbolic, shaped in opposition to how they perceive the reserve

as the land of foreigners, Portuguese, Germans, and now the English, who came again and again to dominate their lives.

3.4 Redonda Private Reserve as the reproduction of historic structures of control over natural resources

We now turn to the RPR, to examine how it came to be established and how this reproduced existing hierarchies and practices, whether over control of land and the forms of physical and structural violence relating to this, or in labour relations. Reproducing existing unequal land distribution and employing hierarchies in which managers are ‘foreign’, the members of ‘traditional’ families take on subordinate roles.

3.4.1 Early history of RPR

When I interviewed the owners of private reserves located in the AF, many would claim that the land transformed into private reserve had belonged to their family for more than one generation. This was the case of RPR whose lands were for almost a century in the ownership of the same landowning family, prior to initial steps eventually leading to the reserve foundation. Therefore, first, we need to look closely at the creation of RPR in the context of the history and eventual collapse of the large family latifundium called Fazenda do Carmo, which was the predecessor to RPR.

The farm was established by a German entrepreneur, Wilhelm, at the beginning of 20th century, and only 2 decades after the abolition of slavery in Brazil. He was the great-grandfather of the reserve’s leading figure, Lucas. In his early 50s at the time of the research, Lucas was the RPR co-founder, acting manager and its sole executive authority. In addition, he was the president and his wife Laura, the vice-president of an RPR NGO that was supposed to be the legal owner of all of the RPR acquired areas. Thus, at the beginning of the 21st century, he and his family members had in their hands concentrated most of the power to control and manage RPR in a manner that in many ways would resemble a family business. Thus, RPR’s existence was inseparably linked with this large landowning family and the history of their presence in the area.

Although some other aspects of the earlier history of the latifundium will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, for the purpose of developing our analysis of potential motivation leading to RPR’s creation, we still need to preview here some of the circumstances that preceded the reserve foundation. Historical connections between RPR and

Lucas's family are to be found in publicly available documents but in addition, I draw on recorded interviews with Lucas and his relatives, as well as the members of surrounding rural communities. Indeed, I will structure my analysis around an account of a century-long history of the family estate recounted by Lucas and his family members.

The various sources relate in unison how Wilhelm acquired the first property called Fazenda do Carmo as payment for a debt sometime during the first decade of the 20th century.⁴² A former Carmelite convent, built in the 18th century on an elevated area of the land (see Image 3, featuring its remnants in 2008), later gave its name to the whole estate as it expanded to over 6,000ha,⁴³ one of the largest landed estates in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

Image 3 The remnants of the Carmelite convent in 2008



Photograph by Peter Slovak

At a meeting with other owners of private reserves, government environmental officials and professionals, Lucas recounted the beginning of the latifundium and thus, RPR. He claimed

⁴² According to Lucas family members, it was sometime in between 1907 and 1912.

⁴³ Estimates given by Lucas family members.

that his grandfather had purchased 36 different properties⁴⁴ before uniting them under the name Fazenda do Carmo. This land was mainly acquired through public auctions of land whose owners had failed to pay tax. Wilhelm had a lawyer in Rio de Janeiro who informed him when property in the area was coming up for sale.

To own land, it was not enough to purchase it; one also needed the power to control it (Fausto, 2006). Wilhelm, most probably investing financial resources from an unknown source (omitted by the family), had made his money as a textile manufacturer in Petropolis but decided to focus his agricultural holdings on coffee production. During the early years of its existence, Fazenda do Carmo experienced a period of economic growth and prosperity, extracting timber but also producing sugar cane, manioc and coffee. According to anecdotal accounts of the local rural population as well as members of Lucas's family, the latifundium was then at its peak, employing close to 1,000 people. Among its employees (*empregados*) were some sharecroppers (*meeiros*) but most of them were residential workers, many of them rural migrants from other parts of Brazil or even Europe, who lived on the property with their entire and often numerous families. It was at this time that the latifundium merited visits from government officials, including an official visit by President Gertúlio Vargas in the 1930s.

The estate began to face a series of hardships and difficulties. First, plummeting international coffee prices in 1929-1931 (Skidmore & Smith, 2001) obliged the estate to abandon its coffee production and seek new income generating activities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the coffee plantation was burned, introducing years of hardship for people employed at the estate. Then the Second World War and the eventual decision of the Brazilian government to side with the Allies meant serious consequences for the family and particularly for their business in Brazil.⁴⁵ The estate founder, Wilhelm, a German citizen, fell from grace with a previously amicable Brazilian government. His son-in-law, also a German citizen and a financial director of the company, was imprisoned and Wilhelm was forced into hiding. In an attempt to save the family business from confiscation, Wilhelm's relatives with Brazilian citizenship swiftly took over. Still, according to the family history, they were forced to sell their most important asset cheaply, a prosperous textile factory, the profits from which were supporting

⁴⁴ The number of proprieties bought by Wilhelm mentioned by Lucas and his family members always varied between 29 and 36, depending on who and when the person was talking.

⁴⁵ In 1930s during the Gertúlio Vargas authoritarian rule, Brazil was manoeuvring between Nazi Germany and the USA with the intention to maximize the favourable foreign trade conditions and receive the best offer for its military modernization. After opting for the Allies, in 1940s German businessmen became vulnerable to persecution (Skidmore & Smith, 2001).

the Fazenda do Carmo modernization and development projects, including the construction of its infrastructure as well as imports of expensive machinery and expertise from abroad, mainly Germany.

Nevertheless, the family succeeded in retaining the estate itself. This, together with other parts of the family business, was by now run as a limited company (*sociedade anônima*) with its German managers replaced by Brazilians to avoid the possible threat of its seizure by the Brazilian government. This began the period when the farm management was unstable, administered by various, constantly changing and mostly foreign managers closely aided on the ground by members of the locally influential Dobrega family, who stayed in their positions for almost 40 years. Then, in 1953, after Wilhelm's death, the Fazenda do Carmo shares were eventually inherited by his three Brazilian-born daughters. Nevertheless, the latifundium initially remained as one production unit until its declining prosperity over the second half of the 20th century eventually led to its division. Further deforestation and wood extraction helped pay family debts, supported by increasingly lucrative banana production. However, unsatisfactory economic results delivered by various managers fuelled conflicts and accusations of robbery among family member shareholders. An attempt to eventually resolve the disagreements came in the 1960s and the property started to be managed by Wilhelm's two oldest grandsons, Albrecht and Gerald, who represented two different family lines.⁴⁶

They faced another crisis when the family estate was exposed to threats of once again being expropriated after the military coup d'état in 1964, as the latifundium was targeted in agrarian reform. According to Lucas's family members, President-General Castelo Branco signed the expropriation order for the whole of Fazenda do Carmo and others, meaning other 'foreign' owners of land in the upper Guapiaçu River valley.⁴⁷ This was subsequently published in the government's official journal (*diário oficial*). Nevertheless, the family resolved not to give up their property without a fight. Aided by an old family friend, Albrecht and Gerald wrote an official letter to be delivered directly into the hands of the President by Ernesto Geisel, then the Head of the Military House. After this intervention, the President decided to revoke

⁴⁶ The third of Wilhelm's daughters never had children.

⁴⁷ Their land was expropriated and divided among the agricultural reform settlers. However, some of the new owners were never granted legal title to their land. The case of land expropriation was brought by the previous landowners before the court and has remained in litigation. As a result, in 2013 many of these small agrarian reform settlers still feared losing their lands without any compensation for a water reservoir proposed by the state government. This would have flooded the whole lowland area to provide water for a newly-built petrochemical complex as well as for the growing population of the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro.

the previous decision and instructed General João Piris de Castro, who was in the charge of agrarian reform in the province of Cachoeiras de Macacu, to find an appropriate settlement for the issue. Albrecht and Gerald proposed to the generals that they should purchase approximately 1,000ha of the latifundium and offered another approximately 40ha for the government to use as a demonstration field (*campo de demonstração*) where agrarian reform settlers could be trained in agriculture. This was accepted, although the training part of the agreement never materialized. In official RPR history, this period is briefly described: “In the 1960s, bowing to social pressure, the lowland area of Sebastiana and Queiroz (1,000ha) was expropriated by the federal government and divided up to provide smallholdings for families.”

Once the threat of land reform was averted, Albrecht and Gerald ran the latifundium between them. Yet they advocated different, almost antagonistic visions in production and management preferences. Gerald eventually left the farm administration and Albrecht sought to divide the land. When one of the sisters who never married and who had no children died in 1978, she left her shares to Gerald’s brother Patrick, which destabilised the power balance between both family lines. Gerald still resisted the latifundium splitting up into parts. This was further obstructed by the main actors’ disagreement about who should be given what. Albrecht, representing his mother, now had only 34% of the company shares yet was managing the estate. He decided to intensify his effort to finally divide the latifundium by increasing pressure on Gerald and Patrick. Three companies were formed.

According to RPR documents relating the family history, “...the largest (2,700ha) and well-forested area with little farming potential was assigned to Patrick.” Albrecht was given the core area where the Carmelite convent and old buildings were located and Gerald remained with the smallest (800ha) but most fertile part of the lowlands. From this point in time, the three different parts diverged in approach, but would eventually be united again, although not completely, under the auspices of RPR.

Patrick, who studied abroad, left Brazil definitively in 1967. He moved to the UK where he worked in architecture, leaving Gerald to manage his part of the estate. In 1979, Patrick’s son Lucas visited Brazil to serve an apprenticeship with his uncle. A year later, after completing a farming course in the UK, he settled back on the land to run his father’s farm, but still under Gerald’s supervision. When Gerald, then only 43, suddenly died in 1987, Lucas (now married to Laura) was left with the formidable task of managing the entire family estate, except the central portion that still belonged to Albrecht. Gerald, who had no children, bequeathed his

land to his wife, who later passed her share to Lucas in return for a payment which Lucas raised by selling some of the taken-over property lands to third parties, and his mother, whose rights were eventually met through selling the shares to the RPR NGO.

In the 1980s, the state of Rio de Janeiro suffered volatile social turbulences with social movements promoting agrarian reform through organizing land occupations and increasing pressure on the government to confiscate more land for redistribution.⁴⁸ At this time, the family of Lucas was also approached by representatives he thought belonged to the MST. According to Patrick, they showed interest in purchasing part of the farm as a cooperative and turning it into a land reform settlement. Something very similar had happened with the land ‘purchased’ from the family in 1960s by the military government. However, this did not resonate well with Patrick and the rest of family. Albrecht then sold most of his land at the end of 1990s to a local brewery and other pieces later to other local farmers. In the end, he kept only a small fragment. RPR depicts this episode in its official history:

“Albrecht sold his part of what had been the core section of the original farm, 1,700ha, to the beer company who were attracted by the abundant supply of fresh water.”

Family members would frequently and with nostalgia recall the heights of the family latifundium. They, as well as the local population, would hold Albrecht accountable for its downfall and accuse him of losing its historical centre to the brewery, which later allegedly destroyed the Carmelite convent together with other old buildings. However, Albrecht defended himself by describing how he was threatened by the representatives of local government with the confiscation of his land should he decide not to sell it to the brewery, as this promised to bring eagerly desired new employment opportunities to a mostly agriculture-dependent county.

From this century-long history of the family land estate recounted by Lucas and his family members, there are several important observations. First, there is the constant struggle for land and the family’s immense interest in and efforts to safeguard and retain the latifundium. This is not just economic but a question of family honour and identity. The estate was threatened by confiscation three times over the century. To safeguard the landed patrimony meant that the family had to sacrifice some part of their business or a part of the estate itself.

⁴⁸ Contemporary articles in the newspaper *Globo* (1973, 1982, 1986 and 1997) evidence the social pressure surrounding the agrarian reforms which were characteristic of the land conflicts, confiscation, and redistribution as well as the land occupations promoted by MST or other social movements in the State of Rio de Janeiro between the late 1970s and 1990s.

Once the land was divided, Lucas's family needed to survive the turbulent 1980s. According to Patrick, it would have been a disaster to have sold the land to the cooperative, and there is little doubt that it might have been a disaster to the area from an environmental point of view. Other areas of seasonal wetlands in the region were transformed into land reform settlements and led by a hunger for land; the settlers were famed for deforesting any parcel available (Globo, 1984), with few of such new settlements obeying the Forest Code requiring the retention of 20% of their properties in woodland. Yet, this would also have been a disaster for the family regarding what could have possibly happened to the family estate in the 1980s, should an agrarian reform settlement have been established in the middle of it, particularly if we consider it would have been created on a part of the farm with low-productivity whilst surrounded by extremely fertile lowlands. In the end, this threat has never become a reality, although its spectre remains as does the wider context of social conflict over land in Brazil. Ultimately, in the 1990s, Albrecht claims that he was forced to sell his family land, and more importantly, its core part to which the family seemed to be the most emotionally attached. All in all, only by looking at RPR and its predecessor Fazenda do Carmo from this historical perspective can we decipher the motive of constant struggle to secure the landed patrimony sown into the history of the Lucas family and their century-long presence in the area.

Land reform is rarely far from political agendas in Brazil, and those families retaining latifundia have developed an ethic as well as an economy built on retaining land. This will be important for understanding how the family involved itself in the establishment of a private park, the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 4: The Accumulation of Land for RPR

4.1 Introduction

PPAs are an integral part of the neoliberal approach to conservation (Ingold *et al.*, 2010; Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Büscher & Whande, 2007). They are one of the principal tools through which nature is being appropriated, attributed economic value and converted into new ‘green’ commodities (Igoe & Brockington, 2007). It is why they are considered a potentially crucial part of market-based solutions to global environmental problems in the 21st century.

The motivation behind the proliferation of PPAs has attracted the attention of both academics and conservation professionals and they have been discussed within the global (Langholz, 1996; Mitchell, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014) as well as the Brazilian context (Pegas & Castley, 2014; Pellin, 2010; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2005; Rudzewicz & Lanzer, 2008). However, the focus of these debates is mostly narrowly limited to ‘what motivates the landowner to create a private reserve’. With the exception of a few regional cases (Barnhart, 2015; Serenari *et al.*, 2015; Shanee *et al.*, 2014), they do not deepen or expand their focus onto other aspects that are driving the expansion of PPAs around the world. Even less attention is paid to the related social, economic and symbolic impacts on the rural communities in their vicinity. Yet, these might be significant as the neoliberal commodification of nature that PPAs are part of is driving a continuous appropriation of land and its resources for green ends, or ‘green grabbing’ (Fairhead *et al.*, 2012). ‘Green grabs’ can transform landscapes, and have direct material or symbolic impacts with profound alienating effects on involved rural populations (Fairhead *et al.*, 2012). Although it might be difficult to define PPAs as being directly involved in ‘green grabbing’, many of them benefit from earlier ‘land grabs’ as extensions of historical processes of capitalist land and natural resource appropriation (Holmes, 2014), as shown in section 3.4.

The number of private nature reserves in Brazil is rapidly growing (Pegas & Castley, 2015). The heterogeneous character of their ownership, motivations and contextual factors surrounding their creation do not, perhaps, allow for many generalizations related to the appropriation of natural resources. However, the case of RPR can reveal at least some aspects of these processes. It demonstrates that it is not simply the altruistic desire to preserve the threatened natural environment that always motivates different actors to get involved in private conservation. Rather, there may be a multiplicity of other motives, concealed behind

green discourse promoting nature conservation or twisted representations of rural people that drives the proliferation and territorial expansion of PPAs, while producing potentially negative impacts on the affected rural populations through perpetuating historic economic and social injustice and further alienating them from their surrounding natural resources.

In examining this, the first section of this chapter concentrates on the theoretical foundations of land purchase as the tool of nature conservation and PPA creation. The second part looks more closely at the people behind the creation of RPR as well as their possible motives. In third section, we will focus on local contextual factors before finally turning our attention to the impacts that land purchases have on the local population.

4.2 Land purchases as the RPR principal conservation intervention

In the Guapiaçu River valley, similarly to other parts of the AF region of Brazil, historical processes of land occupation have resulted in the land being subdivided into relatively numerous and smaller private landholdings than in other parts of Brazil (Dean, 1995). According to RPR officials, every piece of land here has its private owner and without assuring control over land, through its acquisition and thus securing the related land titles or use rights, it would not be possible to guarantee its protection in perpetuity and implement other conservation interventions. The reserve's research coordinator Silvio put it as follows, during one of our frequent conversations: “[What RPR is doing is] ...the preservation and restoration of habitats. RPR could do more, but then it wouldn't be conservation.” They have a preference for those activities that could be classified as more land (protection) than people-oriented and Silvio would identify protection, scientific research and natural habitat restoration as their core conservation interventions. However, land purchases were the precondition for these activities to occur, which is why land purchases were given absolute primacy in RPR's conservation strategy and its overall aim to save and preserve the AF in the Guapiaçu River valley.

Other justifications for land acquisition were commonly used by RPR officials based on the actual state of the forest cover and its ecosystems in the Guapiaçu River watershed. They would often argue that the research conducted in the area was to prove that the valley was still harbouring high quality biodiversity and well-functioning ecosystems. Yet, these ecosystems were portrayed as constantly threatened, principally by anthropogenic pressure and thus in need of immediate protection. Also, it was argued that only a large enough area could assure the survival and good performance of the forest ecosystem services into the

future. Therefore, according to the RPR representatives, it was critical and even urgent to purchase as much land as possible of the almost 30,000 ha Guapiaçu River basin where the forest could still cover approximately 50% of the area; and, it was only by acquiring these lands that it would be possible to create a nature reserve that would be able to effectively preserve the forest and its functions.

Lastly, RPR would present such land acquisitions as a very efficient approach to tropical forest conservation, especially from a fundraising point of view, involving a wider public on a global scale. By employing donations in land purchases and subsequent conservation interventions, anyone from around the world could easily contribute to the preservation of one of the most threatened world biodiversity hotspots in the world. While allowing everyone to participate, land purchases would deliver very tangible outcomes; the ongoing protection of land, the forest and natural resources. This could be shown on images and maps, or even visited by those who financially supported the project. According to RPR personnel, such visible and immediate results were very much appreciated by RPR funders.

These were the reasons often given as to why RPR was putting such great effort into the continuous process of land acquisition and committing such a significant share of its human and financial resources to this particular activity. While they were portrayed as crucial for carrying out genuine conservation work and providing efficient protection, they yielded results that could, in turn, be very effectively used for securing existing as well as new sources of funding. However, it also suggests that RPR discourse was in many ways reflecting on the way nature and its protection were framed by their donors from where the crucial funding was originating.

4.2.1 Land purchases and NGOs' involvement in conservation

Initially, RPR gained financial support from a small number of wealthy foreigners or their charitable organizations, but later a variety of other environmental organizations and NGOs came to financially support different RPR activities. The most prominent and influential was the Global Trust of Land (GTL), a UK-based charitable organization with the stated mission to provide sustainable management of threatened world natural ecosystems chiefly through land purchase and protection. By 2009, GTL claimed to have secured 270,000 ha of threatened habitats around the world by helping to fund land purchases. In its annual review from 2011, GTL states that land acquisition is “the most direct and certain road to conservation success, saving real acres in real places.”

Direct interventions in the form of land purchases funded by GTL are depicted as protecting tropical forest habitats that perform a variety of vitally important ecological services from destruction. They claim that the devastation of tropical forests leads to a loss of biodiversity and a focus is on endangered species and highly threatened habitats such as the AF. From GTL's perspective, the role of land purchases is a critical, immediate solution to imminent threats to high conservation priority areas. RPR representatives also came to adopt and reflect on these ideas.

One of the most important arguments commonly used by RPR and GTL in favour of this approach to conservation is that lands purchased are owned by a local conservation NGO. In 2001, RPR was formally established as a local civil association (*associação civil*). According to RPR representatives, the land acquired belongs exclusively to the local NGO, RPR. "It is the property of an association whose status says what it wants and that views conservation as its main goal", said Lucas, defining the nature of the RPR legal land ownership. Lucas and Laura are the president and vice-president of this NGO, respectively, while also its project managers, and thus in reality have complete control over its activities. While specific land acquired might be re-named according to a funder's request, such symbolic appropriation by a donor would not have any visible physical materialization beyond a specific period of reforestation or habitat restoration activities. Nonetheless, this form of legal ownership by the NGO was key in allowing RPR to raise money in and outside Brazil, on the premise that the land acquired was owned and managed by a local Brazilian NGO that was protecting one of the world's most threatened biodiversity hotspots.

As outlined in the first chapter, conservation NGOs are considered to be the most prominent actors in private conservation and one of the key 'stewards' of natural resources (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Their ownership is often argued to enhance the benefits brought to nature and society by the conservation of private lands (Amrock, 2006; Kamal *et al.*, 2014; Pellis *et al.*, 2015; Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005). Such arrangements provide long term protection through legal guarantees, such as the legal obligation to follow the objectives defined in the NGO's status or preserve the conservation status of land when transferred to a new owner (Environmental Law Institute, 2003). For instance, Tecklin and Sepulveda (2014) note how a commitment to long-term protection was rarely questioned in the case of large NGO-owned PPA in Chile. On the contrary, it was assumed to be underlined by the fact that the landowners were conservation NGOs. Also, while the process of land purchases is seen as rather complex and financially demanding, requiring funding for ongoing stewardship

(Environmental Law Institute, 2003), the success of NGOs in particular is in their ability to raise funds from a variety of sources and various incentives (Stolton *et al.*, 2014). Overall, it is possible to conclude that NGO ownership is often seen as the most preferable category of private governance in combination with a conservation strategy based on land purchases.

Similarly, for the GTL, the local conservation NGO, RPR, was a strategic partner in cooperation with whom they were able to materialize their own conservation strategy, based on land purchases. In addition, despite on the ground being controlled and managed by a single landowning family assisted by their domestic and foreign allies, RPR used every opportunity to emphasize their NGO status and ownership. For instance, during one of the presentations for visiting foreign tourists, Lucas defined the character of RPR as follows:

“We are an environmental NGO located in an area of extreme biodiversity. We are in a world hotspot, the second most threatened hotspot after Madagascar. We have a vision to conserve a natural habitat of the upper Guapiaçu River watershed. That makes us a very grassroots NGO, appealing for funds from those who wish to give it to us.”

Such representations were the norm when presenting themselves to funders, in relations with Brazilian environmental or other institutions, and even when acting towards local communities, RPR would always emphasize its NGO status.

In addition to advantages for nature conservation, there are also socio-environmental benefits attributed to land purchases, as a way of creating private reserves, by local conservation NGOs. By becoming a landowner, an NGO is believed to set a conservation foothold in the area. Acting from their authority as a landowner, they can better engage local people, by sharing concerns, by demonstration and so on (IUCN NL & WLT, 2009). Having greater social representatives, NGOs are argued to partner better on the local, national or international levels (Environmental Law Institute, 2003). Land purchases and subsequent land ownership by conservation NGOs are thus believed to foster better relationships with neighbouring rural communities and have better capacity to avoid possible conflicts over land acquisition for conservation purposes. There are many aspects when they are often seen as better ‘stewards’ of natural resources than state or other private owners, such as companies or individuals.

However, there are many critical voices pointing out the shortcomings of NGO involvement in conservation on private lands. It is often argued that conservation funding is dominated by big, international NGOs (BINGOs) increasingly allied to corporate interests and adopting corporate culture (Hall, 2009; Igoe & Brockington, 2007). These have the capacity and power to set the conservation agenda and dominate the way conservation goals and values are defined globally through their spectacular and discursive representations (Igoe *et al.*, 2010). More importantly, such funding is used for green land purchases, particularly in Latin America. As the competition for funding is fierce, it leads to the marketing of ‘branded’ solutions and the application of top-down blueprint models ignoring the views and needs of local people (Hall, 2009). Thus, Amrock (2006) notes the tendency among conservation NGOs to work against local rural communities, causing their displacement, halting local development, ignoring traditional knowledge and management methods and introducing top-down approaches associated with ‘hard science’. This can act to further displace already marginalized rural communities from having their voices heard and practices taken seriously, despite conservation NGOs proclaiming otherwise.

Increasingly, land purchases for environmental purposes, including the creation of PPAs, have started to be seen as closely linked to the appropriation of land, or ‘green grabs’ (Fairhead *et al.*, 2012) and as an extension of a wider, historical process of land grabbing (Holmes, 2014). Still, such arguments are commonly questioned by the proponents of conservation on private lands. For instance, Stolton *et al.* (2014), while recognizing increasing social concerns about how PPA lands are acquired, stress the IUCN position that opposes the use of (any) protected areas’ establishment as an excuse for the dispossession of local people. They refer to the ‘ethics of land acquisition’ for environmental purposes found in its guidelines, advancing the idea of local participation, prior informed consent and respect for the land rights of indigenous and rural communities. However, they do not address the question of whether these ethical rules of conduct are applied or applicable in the reality of private conservation. This seems to be pertinent, especially if we take into account how bluntly these have been ignored even by public conservation areas around the world (Adams & Hutton, 2007; West *et al.*, 2006) as well as in Brazil (Abakerli, 2001).

GTL, between 2010 and 2014, administered about £3,000,000 a year, supporting over 23 projects worldwide. Their financial resources originate mainly from online campaigns or corporate donors. According to the interviewed GTL country officer, 65% of their funding was from corporates of different sizes, with the rest fundraised through their ‘buy a hectare of

rainforest’ campaign targeting the general public. However, GTL would strongly oppose any accusation of ‘green land grabbing’, or ‘green colonialism’, maintaining that they simply provide financial resources and assist local partners with land purchases overseas. Their main argument is that they are not directly involved in the administration of projects, but rather, that they rely on their local partners’ expertise. Management and ownership of such land is in partnership with local conservation organizations, in our case the RPR. It is the word ‘local’ that overwhelmingly dominates the discourse on their overseas projects.

Besides their NGO status, it was their ‘local’ identity that was crucial for RPR to maintain access to their vitally important funding. Although funded by GTL as well as other foreign subjects and individuals, RPR land purchases were still out on the ground carried by a ‘local’ NGO and managed by ‘local people’. “RPR is our model of how we perceive a conservation NGO to work”, GTL’s country officer told me. This was the public image, embodied in representations spread in the media or presented to partners, leaving anything else that might exist behind the curtain. This representation allowed GTL to argue that these land purchases could not be characterised as ‘green grabs’ by wealthy, foreign individuals (Vidal, 2008).

4.2.2 RPR land purchases

The first RPR purchases were executed in 2000 and 2001. While initial funding to start the project originated from the Robinson Trust, created by Brian Robinson, they were later joined by GTL and wealthy non-Brazilian conservationists such as Stephen Smith and Aristidis Kostopoulos associated with NTL (New Trust of Land). This was created in 1999 by a prominent UK conservationist Sir Gilhead Harvey as a registered charity with the sole purpose of providing financial support to RPR. The first property acquired, in 2000, comprising almost 500 ha, had belonged to a local landowning family, the Dobregas prior to the purchase. This was then followed by the acquisition of two large areas of almost 2,200 ha in 2001. These were historical parts of the Fazenda do Carmo latifundium and since the late 1980s, had been administered exclusively by Lucas as part of the remaining family estate. This initial growth of RPR was paused in the years to come. However, in 2004, in search of local partners in conservation, RPR signed a cooperation agreement with a local brewery. RPR claimed to be allowed to send its rangers to patrol and monitor the 2,500 ha large area, also historically the core area of a family estate. This almost doubled the size of land under RPR control.

A new spur to the RPR expansion followed the memorandum signed with GTL in 2005. While there had been an initial, brief period of collaboration between RPR and GTL, this was reinvigorated during Lucas's visit to the UK, in 2005, when RPR and GTL signed a memorandum of cooperation. The alliance was cemented when John, the NTL secretary since 2001, later gained a seat on the GTL board of trustees. Subsequently, in 2006, RPR completed with GTL's help the purchase of an 800 ha landed estate. Then, after Lucas's participation at an international symposium in 2006, discussing land purchases as tools for nature conservation, RPR received the promise of future funding from one of the IUCN national branches. This commenced a process during which, in the following two years, RPR was able to purchase several properties ranging from a few to tens of hectares. For the purchase of these parcels owned predominately by small local land owners, RPR attracted crucial funding from GTL, IUCN, ABC-US and the Damuth Foundation. From 2008 onwards, GTL channelled to RPR funding from sponsors such as AZA (Association of ZOOs and Aquariums) or FOREST COFFEE which were, arguably, seeking the symbolic capital of a being a 'green business'. This finance was used for the acquisition of almost 840 ha of a large landed estate owned by another local, large landowning family and several other minor properties from small landholders. RPR's expansion was very closely related to the funding made available from international conservation NGOs. RPR was able to increase its size from an initial 449 ha in 2000 to 7,500 ha in 2012, of which 4,800 ha was under its direct ownership and 2,700 ha managed in cooperation agreements with local partners. It was mainly thanks to its alliance with GTL that RPR was considerably able to improve its capacity to attract funding and thus expand its area beyond the limits of the former family estate.

In conclusion, land purchases were the principal conservation intervention by RPR. Securing land ownership through land acquisition was absolutely necessary for subsequent conservation interventions. It was crucial for achieving conservation effectiveness, while involving a wider global public that could be shown very concrete outcomes. It cannot be omitted that RPR's conservation strategy had its foundation in and was greatly driven by their main sponsors, in particular GTL. An important part of the conservation discourse on land purchases were the representations of RPR as an environmental NGO firmly embedded in the local context. While land purchases are, within the wider conservation community, seen as the implementation of a 'stewardship' approach, bringing significant benefits to nature conservation, any accusations of 'green grabbing' were, in the case of RPR, refuted on the

grounds of its NGO status and local identity. It was within this concept that RPR and its main sponsor GTL would make the arguments in favour of land acquisition in the upper Guapiaçu River valley. While RPR was able to find financial resources for its first land acquisitions, sealing the alliance with GTL was crucial. It allowed them to tap into new, mostly foreign and spatially distant, resources and in a very short time dramatically expand the area under their control. Above all, RPR was in all aspects the perfect materialization of nature conservation, emphasizing the benefits of a stewardship approach based in non-profit private ownership of land in a project with a local identity.

4.3 RPR creation and expansion

Drawing on the discussion above, in the case of RPR it is important to distinguish between those who through NTL or GTL were financially supporting the project and those who actually created RPR and were managing it on the ground. While these two groups of actors could have been sharing their concerns about environmental problems, their motivation to participate in private conservation might have been diverging in other areas. As outlined in my theoretical discussion in Chapter 1, different individuals or organizations involved in private conservation might respond to a variety of motives and incentives (Mitchell, 2005; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). The same can be seen in case of RPR. Yet, given the large pool of RPR funders and supporters involved, further exploration of their motives is beyond the scope of this work. Instead, we will focus on the motivations of the individuals at the heart of RPR, namely, Lucas and his family, with the aim to find some of the deeper motivations and realities that lay behind RPR's creation and its subsequent expansion.

Before continuing our analysis, it is useful to recall the difference between the owners' decision to create an (informal) private nature reserve and the process regulated by Brazilian law, through which part of a property can be granted the formal legal status of an RPPN, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 1. Thus, at the time of my fieldwork, only a single RPR property of 302 ha had legal status as an official RPPN. In the case of RPR, the majority of their land was according to Lucas: "the property of an association whose status says that conservation is its main goal." Thus, it was the fact that their land was officially owned by their environmental NGO that was argued to guarantee the current and future conservation of the land.

Although the ownership of the land was with the NGO, this was created, funded and managed by a specific group of individuals whose action and motivations were fundamental

for the creation of RPR. Looking at the RPR land purchases, we could divide RPR's existence into two periods: an initial one covering RPR's creation and the first years of its existence, and a second period when RPR became strongly influenced by its cooperation with GTL and increased its land-purchase-based conservation strategy.

At the very beginning of the project, Lucas and his family were local large landowners mainly involved in agricultural production. As recounted above, the family latifundium Fazenda do Carmo land was divided between family members in the late 1970s and part of it was later sold to third parties. However, at the end of the 1990s, most of the remaining lands were held or administered by Lucas and his father Patrick and it was Patrick, in his early 80s, who was commonly attributed by his family, RPR friends, and local people with the initial idea of preserving the forest.

In a recorded interview, Patrick described how he spent his early years at the farm of his grandfather where he used to commute by train and horse-drawn carriage from Rio de Janeiro. His visits were more frequent when his father became the farm manager in the 1940s. Patrick studied abroad and after spending a short time back in Brazil, then moved permanently to the UK. Later, he would inherit shares in the farm from his aunt, and once the latifundium had been divided between him and his cousins, the area that came to him was mostly forested. As he explained in the interview, he lived abroad and was not interested in farming, although he was interested in keeping the land. It was his son Lucas who eventually moved to Brazil to look after this land. As Patrick put it: "I did not want to have the forest destroyed. I wanted to have more forest grow by the riverside and that sort of thing... so, Lucas was in charge of trying to do that, under my brother." He further described how his brother was "keen on making money from the farm" and how he was horrified at his brother and other local farmer's practices of clear-cutting the forest, selling the wood to factories producing bricks and tiles located near Guanabara Bay.⁴⁹

Although not residing in the area, Patrick, as other family members, seemed to have strong emotional ties to his grandfather's land. Also, in general, he was perceived as the person who

⁴⁹ Throughout the 1970s, firewood remained an important source of energy in the industrial Southeast. In 1970 alone, 73.7 million cubic meters of firewood were consumed. Yet, only half of it was for domestic use, mainly in rural areas. Firewood from native forests and often illegally extracted even from public protected areas was commonly used in ceramic, tile and paper factories, and bakeries in Rio de Janeiro well up to 1980s. It was only in 1989 that bakeries in Rio de Janeiro were forbidden to burn wood; however, brickworks were exempted. Most of such wood was from illegal sources, though towards end of 1980s its extraction moved from Rio de Janeiro to Minas Gerais (Dean, 1995).

really liked ‘trees standing’ and who encouraged his son to preserve the local natural habitat and later vigorously supported the creation of RPR. He was called the ‘man behind it all’ who, for instance, introduced the project to Sir Gilhead Harvey, who had a pivotal role in getting other wealthy conservationists involved.

While Patrick might have been the person who planted the seeds of forest preservation in Upper Guapiaçu valley and was supporting it from the UK, the people who carried it out on the ground in Brazil were Lucas and his wife Laura. The story has it that they were administering the remaining family landholding when, in 1996, they received a visit from two UK park rangers and very keen ornithologists, who later introduced them to the idea of protecting the area that was still in their ownership. As this proposal was well received by the family, the two rangers returned to the UK to gather support there. The RPR website states: “With encouragement from Patrick and support from Lucas, they started to prepare a plan to establish the site as a (nature) reserve.” After successful fundraising, they gave up their work in the UK as park rangers and returned to Brazil to found the project. While one became the project’s first employee and the other the first NTL secretary, they both left the project very early after its initiation, by 2000 and 2001, respectively. They were replaced by other, mostly foreign conservationists. Also, by transforming a local educational NGO (*associação civil*) to RPR NGO, the project gained a formal status embedded in Brazil’s legal framework in 2001. However, local environmentalists, and founders of the original educational NGO, hopeful of playing some role in the new project in exchange, were succeeded by foreigners, family and allied local elite members, while Lucas and Laura became the RPR NGO first president and vice president. In 2006, the management of the project was officially assumed by Lucas and Laura, thus bringing together the representative posts in the NGO with the managing positions of reserve administrators. This placed complete control over the project into their hands, although something of a ‘check and balance’ was provided by a new NTL secretary John, although he did not hold any real power within the RPR NGO. This was the management structure I encountered during my first two-month-long stay at RPR in 2008 as well as later in 2012 when I started my doctoral fieldwork.

4.3.1 Becoming conservationists

During this period, Lucas and Laura claimed to work as volunteers. As a statement on the RPR’s website puts it: “Throughout these early years Lucas and Laura had worked tirelessly on a purely voluntary basis to ensure the success of the project.” Although the initial idea of

the nature reserve might have come from others, it was wholly internalized and appropriated by Lucas and his family. It would have been impossible to make the nature reserve a reality without the agreement and direct involvement of those who were the actual owners of the land where it was established. More importantly, over the years, Lucas and Laura maintained and worked further on constructing their image as passionate conservationists. For instance, Lucas described his role in the project as follows:

“I was given this existence; I’m here in the most beautiful place and the most beautiful environment I know. And I have a chance to see the most complex of life forms integrated and working... and marvel at it. It needs me and it needs my effort.”

They would always present themselves to the reserve’s visitors, partners and local people as volunteers working for a local Brazilian environmental NGO without any remuneration and just for the sake of nature, although this was questioned and opposed by their local staff and members of local communities, as described in the next chapter. For instance, even in 2013, the description of Lucas and Laura’s roles in the RPR found on the project official website stated:

“These are all voluntary positions without remuneration, but reasonable expenses can be claimed with the appropriate receipts.”

It was exactly this impression I returned home with from my first visit to the RPR, in 2008, during which I had worked there as a volunteer. But, were Lucas and Laura always conservationists?

Lucas did a year-long course on farming in the UK when he was 19. According to Patrick, he did not get good grades and “he did not know what to do with himself, so he decided to come out and work with my brother Gerald.” Lucas came to Brazil to farm and to look after his father’s land. “I came here to develop the farm that was massive and had no production,” said Lucas about his early days in Brazil. Besides the challenging living conditions characterised by poor housing, difficult access and no electricity, he was also working alongside people of ‘humble’ background and almost no education. He was planting crops and employing 10 to 12 resident workers living with their families on his property: “I cleared and cut the forest to plant a banana plantation as that was what everyone else was doing.” Banana production was the primary regional cash crop in the 1980s. “The property was so vast and I did not think it was going to make such a huge difference.” He was concerned, but he was part of the system

and he was trying to develop the farm in a way that was “consistent with the methodology that was existing at the time.”

As the story suggests, Lucas’s primary motive for coming to Brazil was farming and the forest was not one of his main concerns. As with any other landowner at that time, he would also clear and cut the forest to make use of the land and its timber. He was supposed to do so under the supervision of his uncle Gerald who, in 1984, cleared a large patch of lowland forest to create a new pasture for cattle which, in 2013, still strongly resonated in the memory of the local population recalling how many trucks the area every day loaded with wood left. Banana plantations located on forested slopes used to provide a monthly harvest of up to 15,000kg, remembered one of the Lucas’s farm workers. In addition, to make use of the wood extracted, Lucas had a small sawmill installed next to his house. Lucas was a local farmer who was just making use of the land and resources available to make his living, as was considered normal in those times. According to him, it was only later, that they realized that they can actually “make a life and sustainability project from not cutting down the trees.” Yet, what might have caused such change to happen?

After his uncle Gerald’s death in 1987, he and Laura took over the second share of the divided family latifundium Fazenda do Carmo. His uncle’s prospering farm included 800 ha of fertile and highly productive lowlands, farm infrastructure including milk production and 500 cattle. Lucas and Laura suddenly came to control an important proportion of the local land and economy, giving employment to dozens of resident workers (*empregados*) with their families occupying houses distributed around the estate, and to dozens of day labourers (*diaristas*). This early period represented a formative period during which many of the foundations of what would become RPR’s approach towards the local natural environment and rural population were formed. Most importantly, as a result of the acquisition of Gerald’s agricultural production, Lucas and Laura became less dependent on an immediately economic use of the forested lands. Meanwhile, there were other important social, political and environmental changes in Brazil.

The 1980s in Brazil represented the period of transformation from military dictatorship to civil government that began in 1974 with the gradual political liberalization under the presidency of General Ernesto Giesel.⁵⁰ This opening up of Brazilian politics and society meant new space for civil participation, networking and environmental activism and saw the

⁵⁰The same person who helped the family when the military junta decided to expropriate their farm.

transformation of older Brazilian science-based conservationism into a more politicized ‘new environmentalism’ (Hochstetler & Keck, 2007: 96). Also, new institutions such as the *Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente* (Brazilian institute of the Environment and Natural Resources - IBAMA), in charge of environmental protection, were established (Hochstetler and Kec, 2007). A new environmental crime law (*Lei Federal* n° 9605/98) was enacted to be overseen by the Office of the Public Prosecutor (Moraes, 2016). Dean (1995) describes the changes this process brought for the region of the AF. First, the AF, in the 1988 constitution, was declared a ‘national patrimony’, followed by its recognition as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1992. In addition, in 1991, loopholes in the existing Forest Code were closed. This considerably improved the legal framework for the protection of the AF⁵¹. Second, formal environmental institutional governance, including policing forces, were expanded, accompanied by an increase in spending. Although this did not altogether resolve the persisting issues of a lack of funding, corruption and the overlapping responsibilities of new institutions, it had a definitely positive impact on the protection of the AF, the disappearance of which began to slow.

This process had important consequences for land use in the area.⁵² While in the early 1980s the province was still considered to be the ‘state champion’ in deforestation, by the end of the 1980s, the process of local environmental institution building and consequential increased environmental law enforcement and monitoring bore fruit. Deforestation of the Guapiaçu River valley driven by fuel wood (*lenha*) extraction and agricultural land expansion was eventually brought to an end. Local sawmills were closed and dismantled. After this time, it was clear that the forested areas could no longer be cleared for agriculture or industrial

⁵¹ Dean (1995) describes how the previous versions of the Forest Code from 1934 and 1967 were never or very poorly enforced. It was easy to obtain permission to clear forest while such activities were almost never physically verified. Institutions such as the *Instituto Brasileiro de Desenvolvimento Florestal* (Brazilian Institute for Forest Development – IBDF) were rife with corruption and underfinanced meaning that local sawmill owners and their contractors had little to fear from them.

⁵² According to interviewed local environmentalists, the local environmental movement started towards the end of the 1970s, accompanying the political liberalization on the national level that saw the return of some of the local political dissidents. They first officially organized themselves in 1981 within the *Partido Verde* (Green Party – PV) in 1982. At this time, the province was considered a Rio de Janeiro state champion of deforestation (*campeão em desmatamento*). For instance, an article published in the national press in 1984 documents the huge scale of illegal deforestation and related illegal wood trade occurring in the province of Cachoeiras de Macacu. It accuses the Rio de Janeiro state institution IBDF and state police forces of a failure to regulate the trade and strictly enforce state environmental laws, causing the disappearance of large tracts of forest, such that only 9% of previously forested areas were reported to remain (Globo, 1984). As the local environmental movement was gaining force, the first Environmental Secretary was established in 1986. At the same time, IBAMA commenced to successfully implement the law to stop the continuing deforestation of the area and local sawmills were closed. The environmental law enforcement was further reinforced by the instalment of the first state environmental police unit (*batalhão florestal*) in Cachoeiras de Macacu in 1988.

resource extraction, forcing the landowners, including Lucas and his family, to look for other feasible economic alternatives for forested land.

At the same time, Lucas as well as other local landowners suffered from the decline in the market for bananas. The banana boom began in the 1920s, peaked in the 1950s and continued until the 1990s (Carneiro *et al.*, 2012). While some old banana plantations still survived at the time of my fieldwork, contributing to livelihoods of a few local families, there were no longer large profits to be made in this market. Unable to fell trees and with no other clear agricultural alternatives, by the end of the 1990s local landowners were struggling to find economic uses for their lands. Lucas and Laura, however, found themselves in more favourable conditions. With control of the 800 ha of fertile lowlands of Lucas's deceased uncle, they could successfully develop intensive crop production and eventually become one of the most prosperous farms in the area. However, they continued to search for some economic use of the forested land, whether through the collection of palm coconuts or bee-keeping for native honey production. Moreover, Lucas and Laura were still the same farmers in 2013. In one of the recorded interviews, he said:

“I'm in a privileged position of having bought the farm which sustains me financially and it means that I can dedicate my time to the NGO; it still does not make any profit but at least it is able to fund a number of activities which are pro-protection and I can dedicate my time to what I enjoy most which is planting trees.”

Lucas and Laura might have been conservationists in ‘heart and soul’ but at the same time, they were the products of the external conditions they had been exposed to and which influenced the way in which they started to see their forested lands. In other words, they became conservationists because they could afford to, while also facing few other alternative uses of their forested lands. Contrastingly, the official discourse promoted and widely disseminated by the RPR and their donors was dominated by the story whereby Lucas, Laura and their family were depicted as passionate conservationists, altruistically motivated by their concerns for the local natural environment.

The story of Laura and Lucas is not unique. Other landowners in the AF region I interviewed also admitted that it was economic factors that gave a real impetus for transforming their properties into nature reserves. For instance, the owner of one of the first RPPNs in the state of Rio de Janeiro recounted how on the land that he had inherited, he initially used to produce

bananas that he processed in his own small factory. Once this production became unprofitable, in 1988 he first turned the land into an informal nature reserve and then, in 1998, with the help of external funding, he turned it into one of the best known RPPNs in Brazil. Similar stories were common.

This perspective is paralleled by much of the existing research on PPAs. Although studies carried out on PPAs around the world (Langholz, 1996; Stolton *et al.*, 2014) as well as in Brazil (Mesquita, 1999; Pegas & Castley, 2014; Pellin, 2010; Rambaldi, 2005; Rudzewicz & Lanzer, 2008) often claim that the primary motivations behind PPA creation are conservation objectives, they also recognize that the concern about nature is rarely the only reason leading different actors to the creation of nature reserves.

4.3.2 Other motivations

Studies carried out with land owners, particularly in Latin America, mention the existence of motives other than conservation objectives for the creation of private reserves. The most usual incentive mentioned is the development of tourism activities (Chacon, 2005; Langholz, 1996; Langholz *et al.*, 2000a, 2000b; Mesquita, 1999). Recent studies of RPPNs in Brazil (Pegas & Castley, 2014; Pellin, 2010) suggest very low participation in ecotourism activities, yet this was not the case for RPR.

In 2013, RPR was successfully running a luxurious lodge visited by birdwatchers from all around world. It was their main income-generating activity. According to the RPR senior staff, by 2013, 75% of RPR operation costs were covered by the income from tourism, and only the remaining 25% was still covered by donations from NTL. Also, RPR was constantly planning and working on building new facilities, such as observatory towers, upgrading and extending its accommodation capacities for visiting participants of professional courses, students and researchers as, according to Lucas, tourism was the only way to increase RPR revenues. Although there was a push to boost its revenues and attain financial independence and sustainability, even in 2013 the project was not profitable. Thus, it is difficult to believe that at the very early stages of the project Lucas and his family might have been significantly motivated to establish (an informal) private nature reserve on the basis of profits generated from ecotourism. However, as noted by Langholz *et al.* (2000b), private reserves are also regarded by their owners as important investments to generate economic benefits, such as profit, in the future, and RPR was involved in high-end ecotourism, mostly concentrating on a foreign clientele, whom they regarded as the most profitable within the context of

conservation on private lands (Clements *et al.*, 2016). Although probably not the most important motive initially, ecotourism was expected to bring economic benefits in the future, and by 2013, the income from it was covering a considerable share of the RPR running costs.

The first RPPN established by the RPR NGO was recognized by the state environmental authorities only in 2013 and thus, it is not possible to state that there is any significant link between the RPPN creation and the potential for development of tourism activities in the case of RPR. In other words, the non-existence of an RPPN did not inhibit people around the RPR project from creating an informal private reserve, offering guided tours and accommodation to foreign birdwatchers and researchers. This only confirms the findings of Pegas and Castley (2014), claiming that tourism is not usually the primary motive for RPPN creation in Brazil.

Yet, if we were to believe that the altruistic desire to protect the AF in the upper Guapiaçu River valley might not have been the sole and only reason for Lucas and his family to create RPR, we are bound to ask ourselves what might have been the other alternatives. One of the former UK rangers and initiators of the project described their own initial motivation and the motivation of Lucas and his family, recounting that at the beginning, he and the other UK ranger were selfishly interested only in birds and bird-watching, disregarding any other possible aspects. Thus, buying forest or getting other landowners to let them ‘bird’ on their properties, as well as re-creating wetlands to attract birds as a form of habitat restoration, was the main priority for them. Meanwhile, this fitted with Lucas and Laura’s own concern with protecting and sustaining the land that had been in their family for years.

This emphasizes how although Lucas and his family and the former UK rangers were driven by slightly different motives to initiate the conservation project, ultimately, they unified around the common goal of conserving the natural habitat. Further insight can be found in one of the interviews with Lucas, in which he went through the various land areas RPR purchased through the course of its existence. Describing the early stages of the RPR project, Lucas said: “When we started we wanted to preserve the area that really was the basic area of the old estate of the family.” Thus, at the beginning, Lucas and his family were interested in preserving (the natural habitat of) their family estate. Having access to his uncle’s fertile land without needing to explore further the forested lands for agricultural production that were at the same time becoming the object of increasing environmental protection, their first purchases, with one exception, occurred within the perimeter of the former latifundium. It included forested lands and lands regarded by the family as less productive. Importantly, the

land was sold and not donated, representing financial transactions between the RPR NGO on one side and Lucas or his family on the other. While the family benefited financially from these transactions, they were able to retain the control over the land through controlling the NGO. In addition, Lucas often used to express his anger and regret that at the time when Albrecht sold the central part of Fazenda do Carmo to the local brewery, he did not have access to sufficient financial resources to purchase it for the reserve. Also, Lucas and Laura are naturally hopeful that their children will eventually take over from them and lead the project in the future. This all indicates that one of the key reasons behind the creation of the conservation project was the consolidation and protection of the divided family estate with additional economic benefits, for instance, in the form of cash for the land sold, additional income from tourism and then the wider social capital gained by being involved in a project that has gained a lot of visibility at the national and international level.

This also corresponds with the motivation of other nature reserve owners I met in Brazil. Among the owners of private reserves located in the AF interviewed during my fieldwork, many would acknowledge that the land transformed into private reserves had belonged to their family for more than one generation. They were not interested in seeking the agricultural potential of their land anymore, but still wished to keep the properties of their ancestors preserved for the next generation. For example, one of the owners from the State of Rio de Janeiro recounted how after studying and working abroad, he returned to Brazil to found a successful distillery on his family farm, while turning the rest of the forested land, previously used for agricultural production, into a private reserve. As the financial resources were becoming available, he was gradually turning selected parcels of land into RPPNs to legalize their conservation status. While he was protecting the AF, and his business could benefit from the symbolic capital generated by the land conservation status, he was also preserving his land heritage for future generations. Similar to RPR engaging in bird-watching, he was also assigning to land a new conservation use, able to generate new green market products, once its exploration for agricultural production was not possible or had become economically unviable.

Inter-generational conservation, keeping property in the family, accompanied by other economic benefits such as income from ecotourism, land speculations and so on, is mentioned as important societal and self-directed benefits for landowners globally (Langohlz *et al.*, 2000a; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). This further corroborates the findings of the research conducted by Pellin (2010) among RPPN owners from the State of Mato Grosso do Sul.

Here, more than 40% of the properties where RPPNs were established had belonged to landowners' families for more than 50 years. Thus, she describes the 'altruistic' decision to protect the natural heritage for future generations as the second strongest motivation after a focus on the conservation of the natural habitat. She emphasizes the personal satisfaction of the interviewed landowners in knowing that their descendants would enjoy the place they have transformed into an RPPN. However, although such studies recognize leaving the land property 'protected' for their heirs as an important motivation for PPA creation and emphasize its positive outcomes for nature conservation, they do not, or in a very limited way, address the other side of the same coin, the concentration of land in the hands of a relatively wealthy minority. Or at least, they do not regard it as a mutually interrelated issue.

4.3.3 Creating private reserves to preserve the family landed patrimony

The concentration of large areas of land in the hands of a privileged few is often mentioned in the literature on PPAs (Jones *et al.*, 2005; Langholz & Lassoie, 2001; Stolton *et al.*, 2014). As discussed in Chapter 1, in conditions of land insecurity, private reserve status can work as an effective preventive measure applied by landowners to secure their land (Langholz *et al.*, 2000a). Protection against land expropriation or land reform is also mentioned as an existing motive among private reserve owners in Brazil (Buckley & Pegas, 2015; Mesquita, 1999; Pellin, 2010; Stolton *et al.*, 2014).

Social conflict and conflicts over land in rural Brazil have their roots in wider socio-economic processes related to the transformation of relations of agricultural production (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009; Martins, 2002), linked to a history of high disparity in land distribution and relative wealth and poverty (Harris & Nef, 2008). Re-democratization of Brazil during the 1980s resuscitated the question of land reform which was first appropriated by the populist forces of Brazil's political opposition and further politicized by social movements, such as MST. The strategy of MST was usually based on the mobilization of the landless rural poor and land occupations (Dean, 1995; Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). It led to the establishment of 1,300 rural settlements with 350,000 beneficiary families settled all over Brazil (Kay, 2004). Consequently, this resulted in the exacerbation of land conflict throughout Brazil, at times leading to violence and the deaths of those participating in land invasions (Dean, 1995; Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). Inevitably, the relation between the masses of the landless poor struggling for their living in rural Brazil and the much smaller group of

large landowners holding most of the lands in their hands, among them Lucas and his family, was affected.

As latifundia were targeted by social movements, their owners worried about their land. Pegas and Castley (2016) note that by 2011, the *Instituto Nacional da Colonização e Reforma Agrária* (National Colonization and Land Reform Institute - INCRA) confiscated 6,879 rural properties with a combined extent of 302,380km². Most importantly, forested properties were not spared. For instance, Dean (1995) notes cases when private lands with preserved forest were declared as ‘underutilized’ by INCRA and singled out for expropriation. Under the ‘use it or lose it’ systems existing in Brazil, private landowners are required to make adequate socio-economic use of their lands which, in other words, means to use it for agricultural production. However, by failing to do so, their land can be considered vacant and declared as ‘unproductive’. It can be then confiscated by the government to be later redistributed among the landless (Pegas & Castley, 2016: 21). This land tenure insecurity created by land tenancy laws was accused of contributing to extensive deforestation throughout Latin America (Environmental Law Institute, 2003). The revival of agrarian reform in the 1980s meant a significant threat to the remaining AF in Brazil (Dean, 1995; Tabarelli *et al.*, 2005; Pauda *et al.*, 2002). Given the atmosphere in the country, a real threat existed that any property considered unproductive, including forest, might become the target of state expropriation for agrarian reform purposes.

Being large landowners and from the upper echelons of local society, neither Lucas and Laura nor Patrick would express sympathy or have a high opinion about social movements and land redistributive schemes in Brazil. On the contrary, they would often express their open dislike of anything that might be related to socialist ideology,⁵³ such as redistribution of land to the rural poor. Their world view and the agenda promoted by social movements were clearly at odds. There were remarks made by members of the family suggesting that the larger contextual factors summed up by the family’s past experience, as described in Chapter 2, made them anxious about the possible fate of their landholdings, including their ‘unproductive’ forest land, though often later represented simply as concerns about the forest.

For instance, as Patrick recounted when relating the history of Fazenda do Carmo, it was after Gerald’s death that MST appeared with the proposal to purchase the seat of

⁵³ Since I am from a former communist country, I was often drawn into debates about socialism.

Gerald's farm, which was later transformed into the RPR headquarters, and which was regarded by the rest of family as an area of low productivity.

“It was very difficult. I mean we had the landless (MST) at that time and they were interested in buying it; can you imagine? They would have made this sort of multi-complex living area here. They were perfectly nice people, but it would have been a disaster for the area, you know.”

One of the RPR Brazilian supporters offered this bit of critical insight:

“Why did Patrick have this idea [to set up the RPR NGO]? Because he did not want the land to be invaded by the landless [MST]. He was afraid they were going to invade his land. They created the NGO, as the land administered by the NGO is not productive, because it produces forest (*mata*).”

Similarly, many other local people describe Lucas and his family's initial motivation as fear of losing their land, though they would never deny their profound interest in saving and planting trees as well. Above all, it is not within scope and not even the capacity of this work to analyze in depth the historical contextual socio-economic processes surrounding the land reform movement in rural Brazil, and particularly in the studied region, or its impact on local land tenure. Yet, it still does not prevent us from making some observations.

During my fieldwork between 2012 and 2013, Lucas, now in his early 50s, was the RPR co-founder as well as the acting manager and its sole executive authority. In addition, he was the president and his wife Laura the vice president of the RPR NGO that was supposed to be the legal owner of all the acquired areas. Through such an accumulation of posts and related authority, at the beginning of the 21st century, he and his family members concentrated in their hands most of the power to control and manage RPR, and its land, in a manner that in many ways would resemble a family business, where the family farm and RPR would be perceived by the local Brazilian population as one, as we will describe in more detail in the next chapter.

Considering what has been discussed above, it is possible to conclude that by creating a nature reserve, Lucas and his family were seeking to find new uses for their forested and less productive lands, while also protecting themselves against their possible expropriation by the state or landless groups. From this perspective, by gradually transferring legal ownership of their lands to the NGO, they were not ceding control over their land, but rather consolidating

and protecting their landed patrimony into the future. On the ground, it was Lucas and his family who created and controlled the NGO. In addition, they were still able to benefit from it. As noted by Holmes (2015), conservation land grabbing is not always about who owns the land, but who actually controls it and benefits from its resources. This seems to resonate strongly with another argument put forward by Holmes that many PPAs benefit from earlier ‘land grabs’, representing the extension of historical processes of capitalist land and natural resource appropriation (2014). For instance, in Chile, large private reserves, involved in a new form of land use, conservation, can be understood as the successors of previous and failed forms of resource extraction. They represent spaces for the engagement of a new business elite who claim to act in the best interests of local development (Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2016). All in all, what is important in this context, is that in many ways, RPR represents and is perceived by the local Brazilian population as the successor of the Fazenda do Carmo latifundium.

4.3.4 Creating RPPNs

The fear of land confiscation is often recognized as an important motivation for the creation of legally recognized private conservation units in the form of RPPNs (Buckley & Pegas, 2015; Mesquita, 1999; Pellin, 2010). This is because the establishment of an RPPN overrides the ‘use it or lose it’ provision, by giving the landowners the right to keep their land undeveloped and devoted for conservation purposes only (Pegas & Castley, 2016). Thus, in the context of land insecurity resulting from Brazil’s land tenure framework, the conservation legislation on RPPNs is claimed to bring significant benefits for nature conservation (Pegas & Castley, 2016). Yet, it has been beneficial for landowners too.

In 2013, I happened to spend a long weekend with a few professionals from Rio de Janeiro, some of whom were working for the state environmental agency INEA (*Instituto Estadual do Ambiente* - State Environmental Institute). In contrast to the usually positive discussions about private reserves that I had encountered in such circles, I could not help noticing their rather negative stance to RPPNs and positioning themselves in favour of public parks. They would describe how only ten years ago, most of the people creating RPPNs in Rio de Janeiro were not conservationists, but simply landowners openly proclaiming their interest in protecting their land from its expropriation by the government. Later, at one of the RPPN owners’ meetings, I witnessed a conversation where an INEA professional described the contemporary situation in the following manner:

“There are landowners who create an RPPN on their property only to escape expropriation. They do so, because they believe that it will help them not to have their land expropriated by INCRA and this really complicates the process of expropriation.”

He was describing how they at INEA cannot go against INCRA but always try to negotiate the creation of an RPPN on forested parts, while arguing that redistribution could be carried out on the rest of the property. RPPN status could also help landowners to protect their land rights in the face of possible expropriation by the government, not only for land reform purposes, but in case of confiscation carried out for infrastructure construction or the creation of public conservation units. In Cachoeiras de Macacu, I noticed the case of a landowner who was interested in turning his land into an RPPN. This was located close to the area of a proposed water reservoir (*Barragem de Guapiaçu*). He was convinced that the government would not be interested in having agricultural production located on the banks of the future dam. By creating an RPPN now, he was hoping to keep the land in the future. He was worried that he might lose it otherwise, or would not be able to retain use rights to it. Also, during a public hearing held in 2013 regarding the new delimitation of the borders of TPSP, among the claimants who were present were those who had established areas of RPPN that were excluded from the park area on the rationale that they were already under conservation and sustainable use. In 2013, RPPN was still considered by landowners and environmental professionals as an effective legal tool with significant potential to increase land tenure security.

The law establishing RPPNs was enacted in 1990 and so predated the RPR project, but those founding RPR were not initially interested in using this legislation. Their interest in creating an RPPN is mentioned for the first time in an information bulletin targeting a foreign audience, in 2008. The first RPPN of 302 ha was formally declared only in 2013. According to Lucas, at the beginning they did not see RPPNs with much enthusiasm. One of the reasons is that the process is very bureaucratic and expensive; as Lucas put it, “there is a lot to comply with, meetings to go to and so on.” It gives a landowner only costs and almost no obvious and immediate economic benefits, while ultimately putting it under the legal control of the government, which can limit landowners’ options for its future use. As Lucas noted:

“One of the reasons why we did not turn this area into an RPPN was because we were developing all these wetlands and if we did turn it into an RPPN, we could not have actually done that.”

Recalling the reasons why they did not create an RPPN at the beginning, even at the time of the interview in 2013, Lucas did not sound convinced about an RPPN's economic benefits. He argued that the creation of their first RPPN in 2013 took them almost 5 years and cost them about R\$6,000-7,000 per hectare. This further corroborates the findings of other research conducted among RPPN owners in Brazil describing the process to be bureaucratic and expensive (Pellin, 2010; Pegas & Castley, 2016). Thus, one of the important reasons for RPR not creating an RPPN earlier was the high cost and the lack of economic benefit. Also, it was represented as ‘handing it over’ to the government, arguing that it would pose limits to developing the needed tourist infrastructure or to applying the necessary land-use changes, such as the creation of artificial lakes. As noted by Pegas and Castley (2014), legal restrictions imposed by RPPN status influence how tourist activities can be implemented. Thus, some local Brazilian environmentalists were doubtful, even in 2013, about Lucas creating any RPPN at all, arguing that although Lucas and Laura are conservationists, they prefer to keep their distance from the government. Nevertheless, there were some aspects of RPPN that were seen as beneficial even by the RPR representatives, specifically, the reduced pressure from land dispossession, as Lucas put in one of our recorded interviews:

“You get a lot of pressure if you are a landowner in Brazil. Especially the larger you are, there is more and more pressure because people associate large areas with generating few jobs.”

With the ownership of the RPR assigned to the NGO, applying for the legal status of an RPPN was not seen as necessary. Ownership by conservation NGO would demonstrate the purpose of using the land for conservation, while still allowing the RPR management to develop the property further without any of the restrictions associated with RPPN status. Creating an RPPN was regarded as similar to passing land to the government, while introducing a further financial burden and no economic benefits. This brings us back to the question of land tenure security. Although applying RPPN status might have been a popular solution to increase land tenure security among some of the landowners in Brazil, it was not seen as the most suitable and economically beneficial solution by RPR owners.

4.3.5 Becoming a ‘green’ businessman

As discussed in the previous section, RPR allied with GTL to help with further land purchases. While the growth of RPR was initially limited mostly to lands that previously belonged to Lucas and his family, after signing the memorandum of cooperation between RPR and GTL in 2005, land purchases, as a tool for conservation, seemed to gain a new place among RPR’s priorities. After this date, purchases would occur outside the perimeter of the former Fazenda do Carmo latifundium, and the RPR core area was enlarged, significantly.

Also, in 2002, TPSP was created by a state decree (*Decreto Estadual no. 31,343*) on 46.350 ha (Botelho, 2009) and the majority of forested lands in the upper Guapiaçu River valley, including forested lands of RPR. Suddenly, some of the land controlled by Lucas and his family was within the limits of this new public conservation unit, dramatically changing the wider political context and the possibility of further land usage restrictions or even expropriation. Now with an important sponsor financing land purchases backing them and a new public conservation unit turning the forested lands in the neighbourhood formally into lands destined for the use by the ‘public’,⁵⁴ the project objectives were re-evaluated, shifting towards a new target, which was buying as much land as possible.

In these changed circumstances, RPR now declared that they wanted to create an RPPN on all their land that lay outside TPSP. In 2013, their new target was to create 1,000 ha of RPPN. They argued that RPPN was the best legal tool at that moment to safeguard private property for conservation. In contrast with the past, in this new context, RPPN status started to be perceived as beneficial. Lucas described the change as follows:

“Five or six years back we started to see that it would be a good thing to use [RPPN] and that you can access the government funds, at least you would be considered a preferential partner within the government.”

Besides the benefits for nature conservation and improved standing in the eyes of state environmental institutions, there were several other reasons why they have started to see RPPNs in a more favourable light. One of them was that it was an effective tool for fundraising. As Lucas put it: “It means that for everybody who gives us money, we can guarantee its permanency in conservation and this is one of the things we look to offer to those who give us money”; also, Lucas believed that RPPN owners would, in coming years,

⁵⁴ The ownership of land did not automatically pass onto state but the areas within park were suddenly eligible subject to public use such as tourism or public interest such as biodiversity conservation (Botelho, 2009).

begin to receive payments for ecosystem services, stating “people are creating RPPNs to receive government handouts for protecting the forest and are preparing themselves for that.” By investing the financial resources of sponsors into the expansion of land areas and RPPN creation, RPR was making a strategic future investment. In addition, by 2012, most of the infrastructure was already built, and as Lucas mentioned in one of our interviews, the RPPN status was reducing the administrative burden related with land ownership, which was increasingly an issue for RPR which had not expanded its management team even as its land holdings continued to grow. Above all, the existing or expected future economic benefits were suddenly greater than the cost. Also, with a large portion of their forested land within TPSP or its buffer zone, the imminent threat of land confiscation for land reform purposes disappeared.

At this point, one can understand RPR as becoming a conservation project, marrying both business and conservation interests. Despite it being an NGO, Lucas argued that it should be run on business principles, trying to achieve synergy between different activities, including research, protection, restoration, tourism and education. Lucas’s aim was “to blend them into one successful push in conservation” and to create a model of conservation that is financially self-sustainable. Moreover, Lucas, as the leading figure of RPR, was commonly portrayed by others as a successful businessman with an interest in nature conservation, in other words, a ‘green businessman’. “Lucas is doing very well with his farm; he’s very enterprising, very energetic; he is a very good businessman,” was how his father described him. The WWF programme director described him in personal correspondence as “a tireless green businessman who, in the course of the last few years, has invested the wealth of his family and friends into the reserve and forest cover expansion.” Similarly, members of local communities would often describe him as a successful farmer focused on the forest: “His business is forest (*o negócio dele é mata*)” was a common comment, with the RPR NGO understood locally as Lucas’s ‘company’ (*empresa particular de Lucas*).

Despite some divergence in different actors’ perspectives, Lucas and his family were in general perceived and represented locally as people who were managing the RPR in way that was based on a search for new economic opportunities, while also conserving its natural environment. This corresponds with the approach to private conservation described by Mesquita (1999) in his study of private nature reserves in Latin America. He argues that PPAs need to be managed as businesses rather than simply seen in terms of their protection of natural resources. Only in this way can private reserves attain their conservation goals to

provide permanent protection in the future (Mesquita, 1999). RPR was very much an example of this approach.

4.3.6 The plan for ‘Future Forests’

The RPR land purchases were presented as a continuous process. Among the main RPR representatives, consensus existed regarding the way the project had been evolving, and plans for the future. First of all, they emphasized how they had, in a very short time, been able to build an extremely successful project. They had received critical funding to acquire substantial areas and had proved their capacity to manage it. In addition, RPR claimed to become an important socio-economic and environmental force in the local context and a respectable partner for the government. Therefore, they all thought that they were potentially in a situation where a significant move to the next stage was possible. “Maybe we have got the credibility now that we can actually say that what we really want to do is to buy another half million acres of land,” John, the new NTL secretary told me. Lucas also thought that it was possible to extend their protection over the whole valley:

“I would love to see this entire area, from the side of the road all the way to the top of the mountain, in complete forest with its few communities living within it, but almost something like in the German Black Forest where you have this vast forest which is still providing a safe habitat for biodiversity.”

RPR representatives, convinced of having now acquired sufficient legitimacy for their project, were thus contemplating gaining control over the entire upper Guapiaçu River valley through continued land purchases. This was perceived as an achievable objective, given the considerable number of properties on sale. All that was needed was sufficient funds. “If I had something like 30 million dollars, we could be able to do it and become the best protected area in the state of Rio de Janeiro,” Lucas told me. “The larger the RPR becomes, the better the negotiating position for forest stewardship grants that could ultimately support the RPR in the future. This will place RPR in a very interesting and respectable negotiating situation with potential bargaining powers.”

RPR was presenting its project to the outside world as a means of providing the threatened AF with effective and perpetual protection. For distant conservationists interested in saving one of the most threatened world biodiversity hotspots, the argument is that the easiest and most effective action is to simply donate financial resources to RPR that could then buy up

further land and guarantee its future conservation. By communicating its strategy, finding strategic allies and raising funds in the Western world, RPR is able to considerably expand the area under its control and protection. Consequently, it is crucial for RPR that previous land purchases in the Guapiaçu River watershed are represented as a conservation success. This was pivotal for increasing the RPR's symbolic capital and thus allowing them to advocate publicly and transform into reality their vision of controlling and conserving the entire valley. This vision of the future was publicly presented by RPR as the 'Future Forests' project, with its subtitle 'return to its origins', connoting RPR's intention of recreating the area's 'original' 'state of nature'.

4.4 The context on the ground

4.4.1 Land titles and land prices

Before moving on to consider how land purchases were carried out on the ground, and their impacts and perceptions in the surrounding communities, we need to first review important local contextual factors from which RPR land purchases as conservation interventions cannot be detached.

A key issue in this context was the complexity surrounding land tenure claims in the area. As explained earlier, securing land titles or land use rights was crucial for achieving RPR's conservation goals. Yet, at the same time, land titles and their legal status were, according to Lucas, "one of the biggest challenges" they faced. Every parcel of land in the Guapiaçu River watershed had its owner, from the bottom of the valley to the top of the surrounding mountains. However, the person inscribed on the legal title was not always the same person who actually occupied it or was using it for economic purposes. Landownership in the valley, as with most places in Brazil, was the result of a historical process of land occupation, involving an initial division into *sesmarias* (land donations), the expansion of the agricultural frontier and the creation of large landed estates (*fazendas*) as the principal units of early capitalist production. This process was, in some cases, accompanied by the occupation of land through squatting and the gradual splitting-up of properties due to inheritance as well as contestation and violence (Fausto, 2006; Martins, 2002; Ribeiro, 1995), as exemplified in the previous chapter.

Every official land transaction required a land title to be updated. This process is expensive and thus, beyond the financial capabilities of poorer members of the local society. Especially

if the land was difficult to access, forested or less productive, there was little if any incentive on the side of an actual landholder to update the land title. Also, there were parts of the valley where people would not hold any kind of official land title as they, or their predecessors, acquired the land through its physical occupation (*usucapião*). Consequently, as Lucas explained, it was usual in the area that official land titles were old documents in the name of the current inhabitant's distant ancestor or even a previous owner, if any physical evidence existed at all. Although this might complicate and increase the cost of obtaining an official, legal deed to land, it did not entail any obstacle for the land's actual control and use.

Although some of the sponsors might have expressed their concerns with purchasing land without an appropriate legal document, RPR did not see the acquisition of land bearing a variety of ownership and tenure statuses as an insurmountable obstacle. According to Lucas, this did not seem to represent an issue for the government which would accept the existence of possession rights so long as the landholder paid the appropriate taxes. RPR also claimed that land boundaries and related tenureship rights were respected by all members of local society. For instance, one of the RPR materials on land purchases stated that "a strong local social consensus is attached to private property." In practice, even informal possession or squatter rights could be, and often were, the subject of negotiation and economic transactions. Hence, while larger parcels of land bought from other local large landowners came with legal deeds, other smaller land parcels came to be controlled through the less formal purchase of existing possession or squatter rights. In some cases, where the property was already divided among heirs, RPR would acquire only the available inheritance rights. Thus, in some instances, local community members were also officially the co-owners of properties under RPR management.

Another factor in complicating land purchases was the growing value of land and associated practices of land speculation. The RPR representatives would often describe how land prices were increasing in parallel with Brazil's improving economic situation. Although there was still land available, with its rising market value it was becoming increasingly more expensive to purchase it locally. For example, in its information material published in 2010, RPR claimed to receive more funds per hectare from GTL than any of other partners, suggesting that RPR was purchasing more expensive land than other conservation projects around the world. This further emphasizes how significant the strategic partnership formed between GTL and RPR was for RPR's development.

The prices of land locally were described by RPR to be around R\$2,000/ha (about £700/ha). During my fieldwork in 2012 and 2013, local people would recount how relatively cheap land in the local area had become too expensive recently as the area became more accessible and thus sought after by urban dwellers. One hectare of land in communities with access to infrastructure was on sale for approximately R\$10,000 and could be considerably more in places popular among urban dwellers, tourists and weekenders. However, what RPR was willing to pay was considerably less. For instance, in one of our later interviews, Lucas explained that they “fixed a price of R\$2000 per hectare, but when you come a bit further down the valley, people do not want to sell their land for this price.” As he concluded, “It is quite hard to match your purse with what is available.” This led RPR regularly to describe land prices as spiralling and urge its funders to provide increased financial resources before the land became completely out of their reach. However, as PRP in its information bulletin acknowledged, land prices depend on accessibility, available documentation, agricultural potential and size and are thus subject to negotiation.

Above all, although land titles and prices seemed to be crucial factors that could considerably complicate land purchases, they were not insurmountable. What is more, such land purchases and their protracted negotiations represented a crucial social space of interaction between the reserve and its surrounding local population.

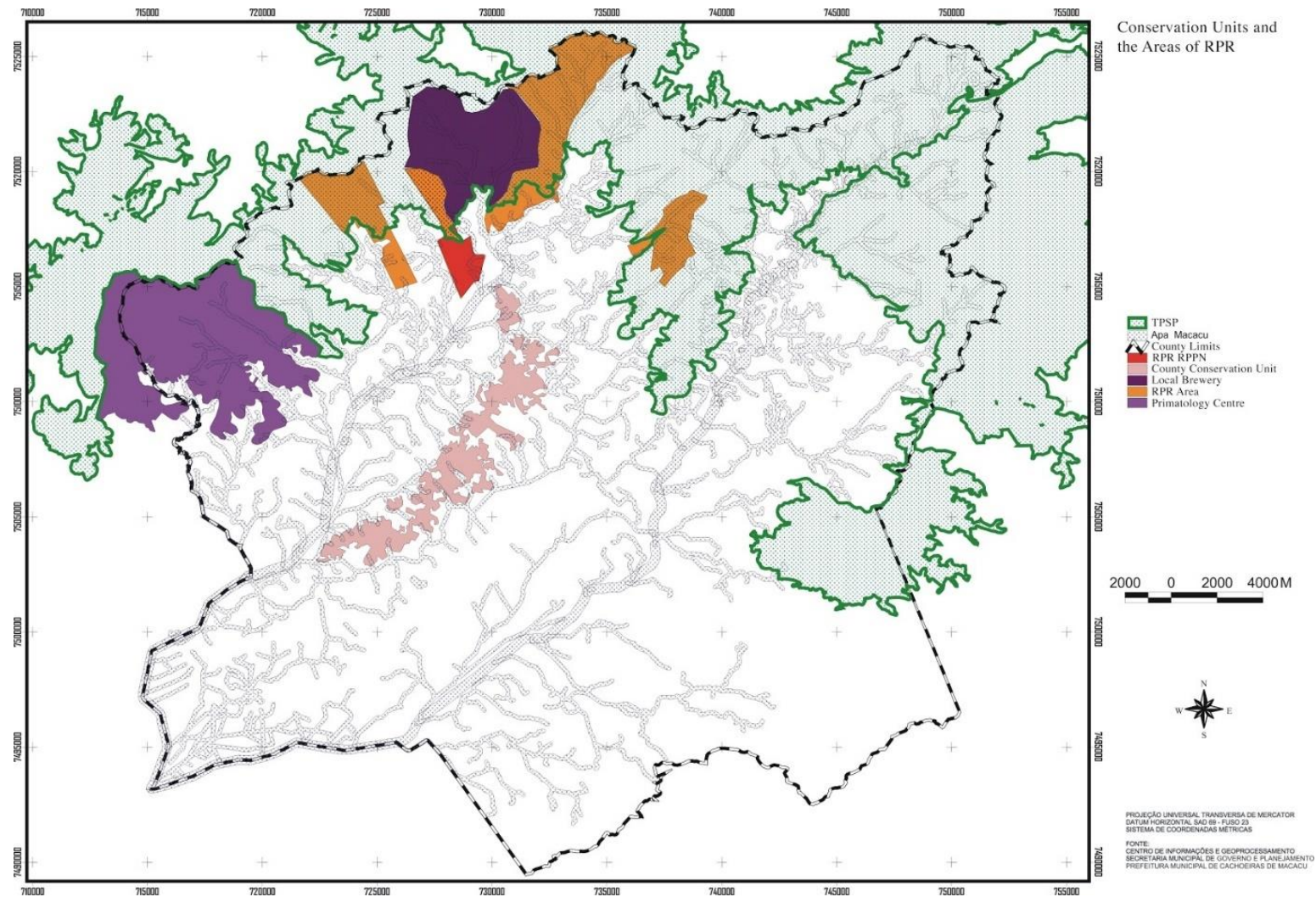
4.4.2 Private versus public conservation

Although by 2013 the RPR’s aim was to buy as much land as possible in the upper Guapiaçu River watershed, individual land acquisitions were still supposed to be governed by, or at least influenced by, conservation priorities. As discussed earlier, for GTL, land purchases were critical conservation interventions. The advantage of this strategy is its flexibility to be able to protect lands both of pre-identified protection worth as well as those deemed to require an immediate conservation intervention. During my many interviews with management and board members, as well as in a variety of publicly accessible documents, the focus was on unprotected forest lands located outside TPSP. The foremost argument put forward was that the acquisition of such lands would contribute to the consolidation of the park buffer zone, while gaining RPPN status for such land would also enlarge the legally protected land in the area. Altogether, the acquisition of new areas was meeting the conservation and economic objectives set and pursued by RPR, its founders as well as donors.

However, RPR was also interested in lands already found within TPSP. The main benefit of land parcels found already within TPSP was that they were considerably cheaper, sometimes nearing the R\$2,000 per ha spending limit set by RPR, mainly as a result of the restriction imposed on land use rights related to existing environmental regulations and the TPSP existence. That is the very limited use to which lands within the park could be put. Yet, through purchase of such lands, PRP was, in reality, establishing unofficial private protected areas within an existing public conservation unit (see Map 2 for the RPR areas overlapping the lands included in TPSP). Therefore, we might wonder why it was important to buy land that was already, at least in theory, protected. However, the rationale for this approach was very clear to the RPR's management who vehemently argued that purchasing land within the park was in the both the land and the park's best interest.

The official protection provided by TPSP was commonly described as failing to have any real impact. To begin with, the situation around land ownership (*questão fundiária*) within TPSP was similar to the state of affairs characteristic for most public conservation units in Brazil, and others in the AF. TPSP was established in 2002, apparently without any effective prior consultation of or the consent of affected landowners (Botelho, 2009), leading to a complex and contested land tenure situation. Given the lack of financial and human resources, the state government was not able to resolve the problems around contested land ownership claims or conduct any significant official state expropriations. Consequently, much of the land incorporated into the park was still legally in the hands of its private owners. According to Botelho (2009), only 10% of land was public, while 90% remained officially under private ownership. Hence, the park was commonly referred to as a 'paper park', created from above by 'drawing a line on the map'.

Map 2 Overlapping areas of RPR and TPSP



Map by Peter Slovak and Center of Information and Georeferencing of Cachoeiras de Macacu. (The areas of RPR are approximations, based on information available at the time of fieldwork. Also, the map does not include areas where RPR held shares or informal rights to land.)

In this context, RPR describes TPSP as too large and the state government as having insufficient financial resources to compensate landowners for land expropriation. Coupled with a lack of resources to regulate and police land use in the park⁵⁵ effectively, this suggests that the land is still in danger of further deforestation and degradation. Thus, RPR's rationale for buying land to protect still stood. Moreover, the park's management had little issue with conservation NGOs such as RPR purchasing such land. TPSP's priorities lay elsewhere, including in focusing on particular, strategically positioned parcels of land that would be suitable for building the necessary park infrastructure as well as smaller, isolated single house properties, roads, and communal lands that either posed more of a threat in terms of land use or would be relatively easier and thus more cost effective to acquire. Therefore, according to Lucas, RPR's land acquisitions were not perceived by government officials as being in conflict with the interests of state. Above all, the overlaying of conservation ownership and agendas was not seen as an issue but rather as an opportunity for cooperation.

"They are very happy, as we are doing what they should be doing. But they do not have the capacity to do it," stated Lucas during one of our interviews. By purchasing land within the existing boundaries of the park, they were aiming to replace the role of the government that was incapable of either policing or compensating the landowners. In this context, Lucas argued: "We all think of conservation as being a government responsibility; and, in fact, it is very easy to say that, but in fact it is a communal responsibility."

RPR administrators thus justify their land purchases within TPSP as consolidating not only the park's buffer zone, but also its main protected area. They admit that there is a future possibility, once conditions with the management and control of the park have improved, of this RPR land being donated to the state but they argue that they are ultimately operating in the 'communal' interest of all.

At the heart of their approach is the idea that private ownership of land is more respected in Brazilian society and thus provides better protection than public ownership. In reality, such public lands are often subject to squatter invasions and John, from NTL, noted that "people graze their cattle and hunt there [in TPSP]." The 'formal' protection provided by the park was, from the perspective of RPR, insufficient for its actual, physical protection. Thus, RPR

⁵⁵ At the beginning of my fieldwork in 2012, local fire-fighters were meant to double up as park rangers. It was only in 2013 that new, dedicated rangers were hired. Even then, after the new hirings spent several months in training, it was announced that there had been irregularities in the hiring process and so the whole process would have to start again.

believed that it was up to them to guarantee more effective protection of the land through the work of their own rangers.

Essentially, RPR was claiming to be a more efficient steward and protector of the threatened AF than the official state park. RPR would thus compare and contrast itself with TPSP, arguing that it is assisting and replacing the incapable state in its regulatory obligations on the acquired lands. Yet, at the same time, RPR also sought cooperation with TPSP and other state environmental institutions to gain and maintain the legitimacy of their project.⁵⁶ As early as 2002, RPR and TPSP signed a cooperation agreement that formalized and legalized their co-management (*gestão compartilhada*) of the upper Guapiaçu River valley lands and set the duties of RPR to monitor the area and inform relevant state authorities about any problems. Hence, while the absence of an effective park presence made the land within its boundaries a valid subject of private conservation interventions in the form of land acquisition, the formalization of such a relationship served to legitimize RPR's control over the land within the park and provided further justification for the purchases of new areas. This fed RPR's arguments that their land purchases as well as other actions had state institutional approval and that they were acting to assist the (incapable) state to preserve the threatened AF. Hence, RPR's land purchases can be understood to fit the definition of an 'environmental fix' (Hodge and Adams, 2012), where a lack of state competence, capacity and power, encourages the private sector to take responsibility for solving environmental problems.

4.4.3 Threats to local Atlantic Forest

Yet, what are the threats to the AF in the upper Guapiaçu River valley that RPR is aiming to eliminate and thus justify its land acquisition policy? At the time of my fieldwork, there was no longer large-scale deforestation for agricultural production, nor wood extraction which had once threatened the local forest. Drastic deforestation across the valley was eventually brought to an end by the end of the 20th century, as described earlier, through a mixture of market forces, social changes and enforced regulations. The steady depopulation of rural areas reduced pressure on the environment but ultimately, it was the enforcement of environmental regulations that would require landowners to look for alternative economic uses of the lands and forest. As a result, since the end of the 1980s, forest cover has been expanding, recovering abandoned fields, pastures and former human dwelling areas.

⁵⁶ In all TPSP official documents, RPR appears as a strategic partner. Representatives of RPR have sat on the TPSP Advisory Council (*Conselho Consultivo do Parque Estadual de Três Picos – CONPETP*) since 2002.

Although the possibility of large-scale clearing has thus been drastically reduced, there are still other, remaining threats to the forest environment.

One continued perceived threat was of land invasions by smallholders or people without any land, but also by the new class of weekender households buying up previously abandoned or underused plots of land. The expansion of this kind of property development was seen as one of the underlying reasons for the recent increases in local land prices, which were making the RPR intended land purchases more expensive. Yet, the most commonly mentioned threat was that of hunting and the extraction of forest resources by local residents. In this local context, land purchases were argued to be crucial for the success of RPR's conservation strategy. They were the precondition for habitat restoration, such as reforestation of agricultural or degraded lands as well as protection against further habitat destruction. According to Lucas, "the rangers will be able to walk the property and reduce the threat from hunting," while allowing for the new types of land-use associated with the Reserve's ecotourism activities, "permitting visitors' access to the area and offering bird-sighting potential."

RPR argued that with each hectare of purchased land, more of the valley would come under its strict protection, allowing for its study by researchers and students as well as the expansion of tourist activities. Land acquisitions were thus presented as bringing desirable conservation outcomes, reducing negative anthropogenic impacts as well as introducing appropriate, economically and environmentally sustainable human activities. As I argued above, the presentation of such land purchases as 'successful' in both conserving the environment and offering new opportunities was crucial to RPR's public image, its fundraising activities and its overall legal, political and social legitimacy.

All in all, land purchases were represented by RPR as the best conservation intervention to protect the forest in an area where every parcel of land had its owner. This applied equally to unprotected areas as well as to those formally protected by the state, by being included in TPSP. RPR was claiming to provide more effective protection than an inefficient and incapacitated state, short of the financial resources to appropriate land and protect the forest. Through land acquisition, RPR was protecting the land by removing it from potential agricultural use or eliminating its further development into weekend residencies. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, it was physically reducing the impact of hunting and natural resource extraction. Also, by purchasing land, even that already within the public conservation unit, it was claiming to guarantee its protection in perpetuity. By doing this, it

was creating opportunities for other alternative uses of the protected forest such as tourism and scientific research, all in accordance with the state-promoted conservation policy. Thus, the state was benefiting from RPR's approach to conservation, while RPR argued that it acted in the communal interest of all. Formal cooperation between RPR and TPSP further reinforced the legitimacy of the RPR purchases and as a result of these apparently virtuous synergies and cooperative endeavours, RPR was able to present their project as extremely successful which, in turn, justified their continued expansion. Yet, all this legal and economic activity, and specifically the land purchases and subsequent conservation interventions, brought RPR and its management into complex relationships with the local, surrounding population.

4.5 Local population and RPR land purchases

Local men and women were sometimes depicted as supporters, or even co-owners of RPR's land purchasing activities; however, they were more commonly perceived as the real or potential threats to the existing or imagined future protection of the natural habitat. In this context, they were usually assigned the position of being environmentally 'unaware' or 'uneducated' and as passive, or even destructive subjects to be managed, controlled or policed by RPR. We will return to the complexity of these relations in Chapter 6; here, however, I will focus on the reserve's interaction with local people in relation to land purchases.

One of the main arguments put forward by RPR in the context of land acquisitions was that the members of local communities were willing to sell them the land. It was not even necessary for the RPR personnel to seek them out as they themselves would regularly come and offer their land for sale. Lucas argued that "now people come to us and realize that, actually, it is a good way of protecting it forever,, portraying this interaction as part of local residents' support of the project and its buying up of local land. A good case study to consider whether this was the case was an area of land known as the Bamba Gap.

4.5.1 The Bamba Gap

The Bamba Gap is a forested area above the Bamba River valley. It forms a sizable mountain valley where small springs and creeks feed the Bamba River that eventually empties into the Guapiaçu River. The area is officially located within TPSP, with a neighbouring small community, divided into numerous small parcels of land, on its valley floor. The RPR

management and the members of local rural communities assigned the area different cultural meanings.

According to local oral historical narratives, this place was once owned by a family who abandoned it and left for a coastal town. The story has it that the land came to be occupied and used by one of the local ‘traditional’ families. They were owners of a small number of slaves and traced their ancestry to Portuguese migrants arriving in Brazil at some point in the first half of the 19th century. Their descendants established mills (*engenhos*) and ran general stores (*armazén*) but mainly lived off agricultural production and timber extraction, transporting their products on river boats (*canoa*) to Rio de Janeiro or by donkey (*tropa de burro*) to neighbouring provinces. As elsewhere on the agricultural frontier, life in this isolated area, affected by disease and reached by dirt roads only in the 1950s and by electricity not until the 1990s, was never easy, and up to the late 20th century, agriculture and forest resource extraction were the only available livelihood opportunities. The land was eventually divided between innumerable successors and changed hands, culminating in the complete fragmentation of the family property, while giving birth to a small community of mostly white (*branco*) landowners and ethnically diverse resident workers that slowly merged into a relatively indistinguishable impoverished, rural, neo-Brazilian population. The upper part of the valley, where Bamba community was located, was still locally called Pelúcio in recognition of one of its previous owners, at the time of my fieldwork.

Similar representations of this history were given by many in the region, yet the RPR management had its own view. In RPR documents, the place was assigned the name of the Bamba Gap, denoting a ‘gap’ between two forested properties purchased and protected by the reserve. According to descriptions that RPR provided, historically, no legal deeds existed to this land which was apportioned among the current owners some fifty years ago. In addition to its past exploitation for agriculture and timber, it was still suffering from intense hunting pressure. It was only thanks to the remoteness of the place that it had not been destroyed completely which, in turn, was making it attractive for more recent invasions by urban dwellers searching for areas with clean water and cooler temperatures. For RPR, this was a ‘squatter’s land’; in other words, anybody’s land, without a ‘real’ legal owner and thus exposed to irresponsible, untamed and continuous destruction. Therefore, despite being already located within TPSP, the RPR management saw it as essential to purchase and protect

the area to create a safe biodiversity corridor between the two land blocks RPR already controlled.

These two representations of the same place emerge from two different narratives voicing distinct visions of exactly the same place. For locals, it is a cultural space embedded in the meaning of ‘home’, ‘family’, ‘struggle’, ‘livelihood’ and ‘family history’, a site with contested but nevertheless historical social connections (cf. Paulson and DeVore, 2006).⁵⁷ Contrastingly, the reserve emphasizes the ‘unofficial’ or ‘illegal’ nature of land ownership and occupation in the area, and represents this as a threat to its natural habitat. They portray it as an area of high biodiversity and, most importantly, as a ‘gap’ between other areas, thus weakening the wider biodiversity of the region which the reserve represents itself as protecting for the wider common good. Such encounters of different representations were very common in the area, the variety of colliding and converging visions profoundly shaping the interactions and dynamics between the reserve and local communities. By following the unfolding information published about the area in the RPR information bulletins, it is possible to analyze how the threatened forest habitat and particularly local men and women were depicted in ways that justified the necessity and urgency of its purchase.

In early 2007, RPR first informed its foreign supporters about the promise of new funding from an important foreign donor. At the same time, it assured them that small local landholders were interested and enthusiastic about selling their plots in the Bamba Gap to the reserve. They described emotively how locals did not want to “let outsiders (weekenders) buy these prime sites.” Instead, local community members preferred to sell their plots to the reserve as they were concerned about new weekend houses being constructed upstream, threatening the quality of their water sources. This was, according to RPR, certain to happen if they did not conduct their land acquisition. The main argument they claimed to use in negotiations with locals was “that land would remain protected forever, that no one from RPR was aiming to live there and that the water from the streams would remain clear forever.” They also promised to protect the area from poaching and further environmental destruction through regular patrolling, not only to benefit biodiversity and assist the TPSP implementation, but also to contribute to the maintenance of local ways of life.

⁵⁷ Paulson and DeVore (2006), based on their work in a small rural community in Bahia, describe smallholders’ relationship with their land as entailing sentiments conveying the meaning of personal freedom, well-being and the source of livelihoods, as well as of a patrimony to be passed to future generations.

RPR was declaring its aim to protect the area from urban developers threatening the existing forest habitat as well as local water resources. Similar arguments were commonly made by the RPR representatives who observed the boom in weekend properties (*sítios*) as one of the principal modern threats, closely related to the improved economic situation of the affluent urban strata of Brazilian society. Most importantly, local people were initially depicted as approving of the land purchases since they recognized the benefits derived from the perpetual protection of the forest and its environmental services, such as water, fresh air, soil fertility and aesthetic value. Again, as RPR put it, “more forest means more water, more stable soil on hillsides and these people believe this is good.” Thus, local landowners were, in this context or at this stage, construed as RPR’s close allies in conservation.

RPR authorities were able to hold that the majority of local people supported their project as they appreciated that RPR was protecting existing forest and planting new trees. However, this is the point where the convergence of interests between the reserve and small landholders in the area appeared to reach its limit. This divergence can be seen as emerging during the negotiations between RPR and local landholders, when the RPR representatives started to describe local people as unable to understand the RPR objectives to offer a ‘fair’ price, while also acting to preserve the natural environment for the good of ‘all’. In its bulletin at the time, RPR writes, “[the gap] lies within the confines of TPSP yet it was being used and frequently cut and sold to small property developers with scant regard to its conservation.”

Despite the local small landholders previously being described as being concerned about the quality of their water, opposing purchases by outsiders and welcoming the land protection being offered by RPR, they were now being described as failing to demonstrate appropriate environmental awareness and an understanding of what ‘conservation’ is about. “They do not understand the conservation ethos” or “to induce locals to understand the concept of conservation is difficult,” were some of the RPR representatives’ remarks I recorded in the context of the RPR land acquisitions. Once the purchase of land was concluded, without including all the desired properties in Bamba Gap, RPR proclaimed:

“Of the remaining properties, the habitat is not threatened as they are owned by wealthier people with an improved conservation consciousness.”

Wealthier urban dwellers can thus be seen to have replaced the local landowners in their role as RPR’s allies in conservation. Here small local landholders are compared to better off urban dwellers who, despite buying parcels of land and building their weekend houses within the

park, are not perceived as endangering the forest habitat as much as the impoverished locals. Such rationalizations were often applied by RPR who would commonly describe weekenders (*sitiantes*) as better stewards of the forest, and as escaping cities precisely to find refuge in a clean and preserved environment.

Another more practical explanation for this switch was also apparent. As the RPR literature mentioned, such weekenders were observed to be making considerable investments in their new properties, building new houses as well as swimming pools and other amenities. As such, these new properties came to have a much higher market value, effectively putting them beyond the reach of RPR's financial resources. Their new accommodation and alliance can thus be understood as a reflection of a new economic and political reality. This strategy also appeared parallel to that of the TPSP authorities who also commonly turned a blind eye to the activities of urban-based, wealthy 'friends' of the park, or their representatives, who were building weekend houses within its protected zone. Although any kind of land development was undesirable due to its legal protection status, the land development by weekenders was seen as less of a threat than land use by poorer, rural smallholders.

Overall, the case of the Bamba Gap demonstrates how political the positioning of local populations could be in RPR's ongoing quest to purchase and control local land. They could be portrayed as conservation collaborators or as unconscious destroyers, depending on what was needed in terms of RPR's negotiations but also its wider public image and the need to herald its own conservation 'successes'. In this context, it was essential for RPR to be able to clearly define the 'threats' against which they were providing protection and thus justify their land purchases as the most appropriate conservation intervention. Beyond this broad perspective, however, the case of the Bamba Gap and the negotiations between local people and RPR's representatives also brings into focus some of the underlying power dynamics between these two groups.

4.5.2 Negotiations with locals

As mentioned in the previous section, negotiations relating to land were one of the principal social interactions between RPR and those members of the local population who held their own land. Such negotiations were often represented as complicated, especially those involving smallholders with informal possession rights. In one of its letters to its supporters, RPR reported the difficulties it was having in gathering the members of large families to broker land purchases. As the missive put it, "with families of 12 children each needing to

settle accounts, it has been hard to get everyone together.” Negotiations were also complicated by the fact that apparently owners were “reluctant to commit to sale for long periods of time,” often changing their opinion or withholding their decision about the sale, waiting for a better offer to appear. Allegedly, some even attempted to sell to RPR a property that had already been sold to someone else. Such experiences led the RPR representatives to describe the land purchasing process as a prolonged and tricky exercise, particularly when locals did not understand the concept of conservation, which was meant to be underpinning all RPR’s activities. Furthermore, it was precisely the negotiation that was supposed to differentiate RPR as private and community-involved conservation project from such public enterprises as TPSP. In 2013, at one of the TPSP advisory council meetings, a local resident from Tres Picos valley described publicly how even in 2005, after the park had officially been operational for 3 years, most of the people in his community did not know that it even existed, let alone that their land or residences were located within its boundaries or buffer zone. A similar situation applied to people from the Guapiaçu River valley who, although in 2013, 12 years after its creation, knew about its existence, still could not identify exactly where the park boundaries were.

In fact, its existence only really became known to individuals when they became involved in land disputes with it. An example being when forced appropriation of a small agricultural parcel in the Tres Picos valley led to a spur of resentment towards the park among community members. A park that up until then had simply existed only on paper was experienced by the local population only through the irregular enforcement of environmental laws, forced land appropriation, government regulation limiting land use and occasional violence (cf. Botelho, 2009). In this way, TPSP had become a despised institution, often perceived by the local population only as their ‘enemy’.

This hostile atmosphere on the ground was often recognized by the park and other state environmental organization representatives. For instance, in a conversation with one of the state conservation unit directors, he complained to me:

“There is a rejection [of the park] but it is perhaps normal, as we are introducing state authority (*o poder publico*) to places where people still live, cultivate the land, build and deforest at liberty (*livremente*).”

More importantly, this was supposed to be in stark contrast with the strategy applied by RPR, whose representatives were able to contrive and enlarge the protected area through land

purchases based on negotiations. In comparison with the forced appropriation and regulation exerted from above of the state park, land purchases appeared to be a substantially a more community-friendly tool for establishing a protected unit, based on a principle of financial compensation. Consequently, this allowed RPR to claim that by acquiring land, they “prove our commitment to the local community,” while also providing local employment in their wider quest to “safeguard the existing and future forests.” Negotiations were an important part of their successful community approach and thus a significant element of their ‘good’ community relationship maintenance strategy.

The key person in negotiations was Lucas. He was perceived and presented by mostly foreign and English-speaking funders as a ‘local expert’ and a ‘member of the local community’ who was ‘well connected and integrated locally’, qualifying him to be the only one who was responsible for leading and executing and purchases in the name of the RPR NGO. This portrayal fitted the broader self-purported image of Laura and Lucas as passionate ‘local’ conservationists, driven purely by their altruistic concerns about the anthropogenic impact on their surrounding natural environment. However, as we have already indicated, Lucas’s interest in creating RPR also served, at least initially, the purpose of reuniting and protecting his family patrimony, as well as other emerging self-directed benefits.

As already discussed, historically, to execute control over land in Brazil, if not sheer force, then at least power, wealth and considerable authority was needed. The proof of this was that even in the 21st century, a significant portion of land in upper Guapiaçu River valley was still in the hands of either a large local landowners (*fazendeiros*) or the progeny of a few local (white) families, many infamous for having historically gained or protected their land holdings through violence and cruelty. In our case, it is possible to argue that despite the complexity of land tenureship, RPR was able to maintain control over land, mainly thanks to the symbolic capital embedded in the local *fazendeiro* social status of Lucas and his family, a point which we will examine in more detail in Chapter 6.

I gained an insight into the circumstances surrounding negotiations over land purchases between RPR and local people and began to perceive the ongoing power dynamic through one particular situation. I accompanied Laura to a local family that, as I was about to find out, was interested in selling their land to RPR. A local man in his 50s, apparently convinced that I must be one of the *gringos* funding land purchases, wanted to persuade me to buy 8 ha of his forest threatened by ‘bad’ local hunters (*caçadores*) for only R\$20,000, depicting

compellingly how they come to kill ‘poor’ animals and it is not in his capacity to stop them. In this way, he was attempting to convince me that it was urgent for RPR to intervene and stop them. Explaining his intentions, he also added: “I would like to buy a parcel down there [in the community].” As Laura explained to me later, he did not have legal title to the land he wanted to sell. The parcel was already within the park, and relatively far from the main body of the reserve and difficult to access. In addition, the man was asking too much as they were paying only R\$2,000 per ha. However, she acknowledged that for that sum, the man would not be able to buy even a small parcel in the valley.⁵⁸ In any event, they had no immediate intention of buying this land as their priority areas had already been decided, such as the Bamba Gap, and so they could afford to wait and perhaps the man would drop the price eventually.

Lucas was the person who would decide where and which land to buy and for what price. He led related negotiations and was, after consultation with John from NTL, making all the important decisions that would lead purchases to their completion. He had introduced the fixed price of R\$2,000 in an attempt to keep prices down. However, these did not always meet the expectations of those local people who showed a willingness to sell. This seemed to be the case in Bamba Gap where Lucas found himself in a particularly complicated situation. Here he was able to buy some but not all of the informal possession or inheritance rights in the area as some landholders were holding out for higher prices, waiting for a better offer to appear, perhaps from an incoming ‘weekender’ (*sitiante*), while others saw few prospects for themselves elsewhere and were keen to stay where they were.

It is important to consider how such informal land rights might have been established, maintained and perceived by the local population. I went to visit Raffael, a local man in his late 40s, living with his wife in one of the more isolated mountain valleys. This place, named Regatinho, in many ways resembled the case of Bamba Gap. As Raffael explained, before the majority of those previously living there had left for a nearby urban centre, the valley served as an important mountain crossing for local small traders. It used to be home to many families of small farmers and during the banana boom, “a truck loaded with bananas” would leave from there almost every hour. Now, the entire valley was occupied by just a handful of families surviving on subsistence agriculture, with a few interspersed plots owned by weekenders (*sitiantes*). While this place was still divided into minor fields and pastures, its

⁵⁸ New parcels in some communities were very popular among weekenders from urban centres. In 2012-2013, parcels of 2ha to 4ha were fetching prices of between R\$30.000 and R\$40.000.

upper part was predominantly covered by slowly expanding forest already located within TPSP.

On our way to visit one of his relatives, Raffael recounted how the entire valley once used to belong to his great-grandfather. However, they still do not have a legal title (*o documento*) and do not pay a land tax (*imposto*). Whoever from the family uses (*cuida*) a particular piece of land thus occupies it (*toma conta*) and is understood locally to be its owner (*dono*). When he mentioned his interest to sell the upper forested part to Lucas, I asked him whether he would share the revenue from such a sale with his brother who lived close by. He answered that he would give him only a minor share (*um pouco*), as it was he who was ‘taking care’ (*cuidar*) of the forested parcel. As I was not entirely satisfied by his response, I kept up my questioning. To make it clear what he meant, he used the example of a small pasture we were just passing by. This particular piece of land his grandfather had left for another family to use. Thus, when his brother bought it back from its holder (*posseiro*), he became its sole owner, different from the family owned land, where the rule still applied that who occupies it is its owner (*quem toma conta é dono*).

Regatinho and Bamba Gap were only two of the many, often isolated valleys and hillsides, characterised by this informal form of landownership. As the above example suggests, such informal land tenure could be highly indistinct and fluctuating, especially for an ‘outsider’. A particular piece of land could easily change hands between competing family members, move to a third party and even back to the family or its individual members. In the absence of legal title, the whole situation is regulated by oral agreement, occasionally in a written form. At times, pieces of land could be the subject of disagreements and it was not uncommon for the harder-to-access places, hill tops, important sources of water, and places of spiritual value and so on to have never been divided among individual family members. They were perceived as the property of the entire family.

A good example of this was land at Esperança, over which Lemuel and his relatives (introduced in the previous chapter) claimed to have possession rights. While the land on the lower parts of the hills was divided and occupied by individual families, the most elevated areas were completely covered by forest that appeared to be ‘managed’ collectively, with everyone in the family-community having equal access to its resources including water, wood, medicinal plants and so on.

Such contemporary realities contrasted considerably with RPR's representations of local communities as using and respecting individual, private land ownership and their claims that RPR's intervention (in the form of land purchases) provided a broader protective approach for the benefit of the wider community. On the contrary, private just as public land ownership, and related land use rights, were often the object of contestation and the continued and shared rights of other community members needed to be respected and negotiated. This applied equally to RPR that was purchasing not only legal land rights but also inheritance rights or informal rights and thus, in fact, was often understood locally to be becoming a co-owner of local land properties. As a result, variety of competing interests including those of family members, the state or the private sector might often have been attached to such land parcels purchased by RPR, also resulting in tensions between the interests of different parties involved. Particularly in such situations, RPR could not be understood as the sole, private, individual landholder and land purchases as conservation intervention simply without any issues. Yet, as mentioned above, power, wealth and authority were critical for maintaining the control over land locally. Thus, the question of land ownership and usufruct rights cannot be simply considered separately from the issues related to local power dynamics. Especially as it was in the local context, some might wield sufficient power to override the interests of the others involved. Given all this historical, political, economic and social complexity, it is not surprising that negotiations over land acquisitions could be very time-demanding, challenging and complicated.

This complexity resulted in the RPR representatives adopting a stance that depicted many local people as 'squatters' whose 'occupation' of the land within the state park was a 'problem'. RPR even opposed the view of the park authorities who, according to Lucas, were thinking "that these people still have some rights." Therefore, as he once explained to a group of foreign volunteers at the RPR headquarters that I was among, there was a practical solution to purchasing all the land they wanted to in this area. As no legal deeds to land in Bamba Gap existed, he imagined having rangers patrolling the forest and paying taxes for the land (as no one else was paying). Then he would eventually commence the juridical process needed for a new land title to be issued by a judge in the name of RPR. In this way, he argued, he would 'persuade' inhabitants to sell their informal land use rights or draw them into a prolonged and expensive legal process that not all of them might be able to afford. Here, it is important to note that during such a process, small landholders would need to demonstrate their 'real' presence on the land and its 'real' use to be granted possession rights to the disputed land.

Many such smallholders with only informal rights would find this difficult, more so if the land was forested, located within an existing public conservation unit and on which they had not been paying the required land tax.

By depicting small landholders, especially those with only informal land rights, as ‘irresponsible’ and thus questioning the legitimacy of their presence, RPR was aiming to strengthen its bargaining position. This strategy was all the more effective because of Lucas’s status in the local context as a wealthy local *fazendeiro*, wielding considerable symbolic and material power. This status was often reflected in the everyday discourse of the local population. For instance, towards the end of my fieldwork, a local man from the affected community commented on the RPR land purchase in Bamba Gap. He noted that he agreed with Lucas’s actions because he was protecting the local water sources. As many others, he thought that local people were going to destroy everything (*acabar com tudo*) but he also immediately added that Lucas was creating (fuelling existing) conflicts in families as he was paying to some but not to others, while he was claiming to have already become the land’s owner.

I also observed a general sense of discontent but resignation among local men and women over the inevitability of certain outcomes, regarding land ownership resulting from the unequal power balances that continued to exist in such rural areas. This was exemplified in one unexpected situation. Returning from a walk in the forest with one of the rangers called Fernando, we stopped at the top of a hill offering us a spectacular view of Bamba Gap and the community below. As we looked over the vista, Fernando observed, “Before everything was fields (*roça*), but now it is forest.” He described how beautiful he felt the forest now was and reckoned that the whole area, including the remaining small pastures and banana plantations dotted across the landscape, would one day belong to the reserve and also be turned into forest. Then as we continued to walk down along one of the RPR’s recent reforestation plots and entered a small neighbouring agricultural property with a dwelling, he turned to me and said, “Lucas is going to want to buy this, too.” When I asked whether the owner was interested in selling it, he responded by insisting: “No, but Lucas will want to buy!”

In conclusion, RPR would often describe local men and women as willing to sell them their land, using this to exemplify the supportive stance of the local population towards the NGO’s interventions. When portrayed as supporters, they were described as appreciating the

importance and value of the protection of natural resources that RPR was promising to provide. Although many small local landholders were concerned about the landscape's natural resources, and particularly their sources of water, they were also interested in maximising their financial gain, and not all of them were willing to sell to RPR. When local landowners chose to negotiate with a view to maximising their economic returns on the land, the RPR representatives would switch to describing locals as not understanding or even opposing the project's 'conservation' ethos. Suddenly, they were transformed from project supporters into 'threats' from whom the forest needed to be saved. They were compared and contrasted with more 'environmentally aware' urban dwellers who, in other contexts, were themselves depicted as a problem, yet were here constructed as RPR's natural allies who, despite developing their lands within the forested areas and even the state park for weekend houses, were perceived as being less of a threat to the natural habitat than members of local rural populations.

4.5.3 Local people do not want to live there anyway

The local man wanting to sell his forest to the reserve, described above, was not alone as it was common to hear local landholders discussing offering their lands for sale, especially their parcels located higher up the mountains or further into the forest. "Everyone wants to sell us the forest and it is only a question of mapping it all out," the RPR management would tell me with confidence. Finding land was not presented as an issue as there were always parcels coming up for sale. The only question was to find sufficient funding and to get everyone involved to agree on the price. John from NTL explained:

"One of the reasons why people want to sell us land is that they don't want to be there. You know, there are people who have a little house in the forest. They want to go to the city, or they want to go to the village; they don't want to be there. People are moving to villages. You know some of these old guys who have a few banana plantations and trees, and a cow and whatever. People do not want to live like that anymore. So, they are moving out."

In this view, local people no longer wanted to live or work in such isolated and forested areas. This was particularly the case among the younger generation who were enthusiastic about moving to urban centres. For instance, a research coordinator, Silvio, was convinced that as older people gradually passed away, the younger generations would abandon, or sell off the land. They were, according to him, more interested in the internet and cell phones and

had little desire to continue working in agriculture. Silvio therefore argued that it was just necessary to endure this last period before all the forest would ultimately be allowed to recuperate, a perspective that fitted well with the RPR long-term goals.

This local reality reflected wider socio-economic transformative processes in rural Brazil, processes that have been termed ‘deruralization’ by Garcia and Palmeira (2009). Rural areas that were once relatively densely populated and used for agricultural production and timber extraction are being steadily abandoned. A reality that is attested to by the many empty houses, mills and paths that are now being covered by rapidly re-emerging forest vegetation. Raffael, mentioned above, was one example of this process. He and his family lived in a wattle-and-daub (*pau e pique*) house originally built by Raffael’s grandfather. They had three cattle that Raffael was raising to sell. He planted manioc, turning it into flour using a small water-run mill that he had constructed. He would take the flour to sell at the market in the provincial capital. On his own land, he also planted beans and other crops and harvested bananas with his brother. Any crops not consumed at home were sold to an intermediary, from a nearby rural community, who would sell it at CEASA, the central market in Rio de Janeiro. However, this income was rather unreliable. It was conditional on many factors, such as the weather or market price, and so Raffael and his wife also worked as labourers on a neighbouring landed estate (*fazenda*). While they had two motorbikes for occasional use, there was no local public transport and children had to walk for an hour and a half to get to the nearest local bus stop from which they could get a bus to the school in Jabá.

Raffael’s situation was characteristic of many small landholders within TPSP whose hardship was related to their decision to continue working their own land and live in relative isolation, distant from the larger rural settlements. They would commonly depend for their subsistence on a combination of agriculture and paid labour. Their small parcels, often located on steeper hillsides or in inaccessible places, were considerably less productive than the large latifundia further down the valley and could rarely fully support their families. Inaccessibility also made them depend more on available natural resources and more importantly, on traditional agricultural techniques, such as the burning of weeds, and their own physical labour. They therefore could not compete with the large farms occupying the fertile lowlands with mechanised production and better access to financial support and markets.

Ultimately, it is this inability to compete with large and modernized landholdings further down the Guapiaçu River valley that emerges as a significant reason why farmers such as

Raffael are steadily abandoning their lands, with local prices for cash crops making it uneconomic for smallholders like him to continue working their land. This is a situation that has steadily increased since the late 1980s with the constant intensification of environmental regulation enforcement and the outlawing of traditional practices such as the use of fire for forest clearance. For instance, during my fieldwork, I noticed how small and medium-size farmers from the area, particularly those without significant political connections, were often investigated by the environmental police unit for cutting forest, burning vegetation or using chemicals near water sources (*batalhão ambiental*) based in the county capital. Consequently, many small farmers were finding it difficult to identify any viable alternative uses for their forests and to reclaim abandoned parcels with newly forest vegetation (*capoeira*) for agriculture. As such, these lands were not bringing them any economic profit, but rather only costs in relation to land taxes and their basic maintenance.

One of the local landholders from a ‘traditional’ family expressed his anger about this situation:

“It is only *mato* [uncultivated wild vegetation, forest]. There you cannot do anything anymore. You are and are not the owner of it at the same time. You cannot deforest; you cannot harvest wood, not even cut a single piece of wood (*cabo*).”

Consequently, it is understandable why many small landholders were contemplating selling the land to the reserve as one of the few options left to them. Selling the land to someone interested in buying, and thus ‘getting rid of’ the troubles appeared to many landowners as the best solution. Yet, there were also other factors to be considered.

As mentioned above, RPR often argued that the local population was not interested in the ‘traditional’ way of living and that younger people particularly were eager to move to urban centres. However, there was often a more complex socio-economic reality behind such generalizations, as exemplified in the case of Lemuel’s family from Esperança.

Lemuel and his wife told me they were now too old to work on their family land and none of their four sons were much interested in agricultural work, seeking as much employment as they could find elsewhere and only occasionally working the family land. For instance, 38-year-old Asael first found work as a day agricultural worker (*diarista*) cutting banana and harvesting sand from a river bed. At the time of my arrival to the area, he was an employee

(*empregado*) at a local mineral water company. After leaving this, he worked for a short time on a manioc plantation before finding a more formal job on a municipal road construction team. Eventually, he turned to sharecropping (*meeiero*) at a large lime tree plantation and as I left, he was thinking of planting his own manioc fields. Lemuel's other sons had similarly mixed patterns of employment and labour and such opportunistic behaviour towards work was common for many other local men and women. They were always looking for the best earning opportunity and often, particularly in the case of men, alternating between formal employment and informal jobs in agriculture, as paid labourers or sharecroppers.⁵⁹ Many of them would work for six months of the year in a formal employment provided, for instance, by a mineral water company, and then spend the other half of the year as seasonal agricultural workers, while also receiving unemployment benefits.

In addition, it was common among local people, including the reserve employees and rangers, to maintain small crop fields, backyard gardens, or sharecropping (*meia*) with local large landowners (*fazendeiros*), where they would work in the late afternoons or on free days, during weekends and national holidays. Thus, despite the stigma of agricultural labour being a dirty (*sujo*) job only for the uneducated (*sem estudo*) and dull (*burro*) individuals, work in fields was still common for much of the local population, including RPR's own rangers, serving as an important source of the family's subsistence needs. Moreover, many youngsters would leave their schooling relatively early to start working as sharecroppers' helpers or herdsmen (*campeiro*). Thus, while the preference and aspiration might have been to be able to leave agricultural labour behind, in reality for those without further education, financial backing or political or social connections, most people were still reliant on agricultural production.

In addition, there was always a demand for agricultural labour. In fact, local large farmers would often complain that despite the continuous modernization of their agricultural production, they still needed labourers, of which there seemed to be a constant shortage. They often expressed a fear that soon there might be nobody left willing to work on their farms. Poorer members of the community would admit that work in agriculture was always easy to find. As Asael confessed: "Large farmers (*fazendeiros*) over here always need someone to clear land (*limpar*). And it is you who set the price, not them."

⁵⁹ Adams (2003) similarly notes how traditional rural populations, such as *caiçaras* living in coastal areas of the AF, are able to quickly adapt their subsistence strategies to ever-changing economy. She mentions how during the times of economic prosperity they abandon their subsistence agriculture and fishing, only to return to them in periods of stagnation.

The case of Asael is also informative in depicting the different ways that agricultural production could be structured. It was towards the beginning of my fieldwork that he told me about his plans to plant manioc on his own, using land rented from others. When I asked him why he would not use his family's land for such an endeavour, he explained that many of the places now covered by forest had been crop fields or banana plantations as recently as 15 years ago. There was also a cool place (*lugar fresco*) up there where they planted beans: "It gave two sacks of 60kg so we did not have to buy any beans the entire year." However, most of the property was composed of much 'weaker' land (*terra fraca*): "Who has the best land in the lowlands (*baixada*) are the whites (*brancos*), and the blacks (*negros*) have only the land in the hills." Thus, for his new plan to be successful, he needed to look for better land elsewhere.

His renewed interest in planting manioc was related to its recent sudden increase in price. While at the time of my arrival, in 2012, the price of manioc was only around R\$10 per box (*caixa*), a year later it was closer to R\$20 per box. Suddenly, many small parcels of apparently abandoned and overgrown land were swiftly cleared and planted with manioc. By May 2013, the smoke from fires set by locals clearing every small piece of land available would often pollute the air in the communities. In the face of such widespread activity, the local environmental police unit was virtually powerless and even some of the reserve's own rangers were apparently setting fires on lands that they controlled. It was at this time that Lemuel lamented not having planted manioc the previous year, as he told me:

"We used to plant here [on their own land] every year but it never gave any money. My sons planted some three times, but as they never made any money, they eventually gave up and now, as you can see, how much money manioc is giving. If they had planted it last year, they would have money already in their pockets!"

Such examples emphasize the economic reality and a degree of pragmatism that lie behind the decisions of local people to work their land or leave it fallow, not just those of sheer desire or traditional practice. At the same time, they were also aware of the increased environmental regulations and enforcement. As Asael also told me around the same time:

“I would like to clear the land up there [between the residence area and encroaching forest], but I’m afraid of IBAMA.⁶⁰ Now, you cannot deforest anymore; otherwise, you might go to prison. But, I will start clearing lower vegetation first (*limpar por baixo*) and then each time cut a few of the trees... We should have done it already. We might lose this land, which would be bad as this is what we still live off.”

Although aware of the environmental regulations outlawing the cutting of newly regrown forest, Asael was keen to act, motivated by the change in the market and the activities of his neighbours. He was also aware of the longer-term potential consequences of leaving land to be reclaimed by the forest in that he would never be able to open it up again. He and his brothers often discussed planting first manioc, followed by other crops and eventually replacing them with permanent fruit trees. Although their neighbours seemed to be openly clearing their fields, they were more careful in their approach and were planning on doing so more carefully, slowly and at dusk, aware of the consequences of being seen and denounced to the environmental police. Also, instead of hiring a tractor, which was expensive, they planned to use the herbicide (*roundapio, veneno, remedio*) and fire.

The role of agriculture in local livelihood strategies was not the only what contrasted with the picture presented by RPR. Local people were familiar with living conditions in urban centres. They were well aware of the fact that urban life did not necessarily offer a better standard of living. Almost all of them had relatives who a generation ago left their lives as agricultural workers on large farms, such as Fazenda do Carmo, to move to towns and cities. As I was able to note while accompanying some of them during family visits, most of these relatives now lived in the relatively impoverished and crime ridden urban shanty towns (*favelas*), lacking basic infrastructure and located on steep slopes where their houses were constantly threatened by deadly landslides.⁶¹ Despite towns and cities offering better employment opportunities, these people were filled with nostalgia when recalling their previous life in countryside (*campo*).⁶² As the man in the following example, many of them wished they were

⁶⁰ IBAMA was an epithet awarded by local population to any governmental or non-governmental environmental organization or police unit, on municipal, state or federal level indiscriminately, promoting environmental regulation, enforcing environmental law and executing related policing. At the time of my fieldwork, I did not notice any activity of IBAMA in the area.

⁶¹ In 2010, landslides killed thousands of people in the Rio de Janeiro state and put other thousands at risk. Most of them were inhabitants of the slums (*favelas*).

⁶² Garcia and Palmeira (2009) note how in many cases, former rural residents who had been expelled from large rural properties and forced to migrate to urban centres experienced this change as a downfall. For instance, Ribeiro (1995) notes that Brazilian cities were not prepared to the large influx of rural migrants, with a lack of

able to move back again. “I’m also from there...,” an elder Afro-Brazilian man told me while we were drinking beer together. “I would like to move back there, but my wife does not want to.” He recounted how he used to work with cattle. “A life there is better. There you can take a bath in a river, keep chickens, a pig... here they steal a lot.”

Thus, although there might have been many youngsters who aspired to live in cities, there were also many elders, adults and families in those cities who were keen to move back. Those who eventually decided to return, fleeing the poverty of urban shantytowns (*favelas*), were filling new jobs in the rapidly expanding water business (see 6.4.3). They would renovate the houses abandoned by their relatives or rent or even construct new ones in densely populated poor neighbourhoods of growing rural communities, thus transforming their character from rural to semi-urban settlements.

My point from these different descriptions and discussions is to emphasize the complexity of the contemporary rural situation, particularly in comparison with the simplified image offered by RPR of a local population enthusiastically abandoning their traditional livelihoods and migrating to urban centres and thus, ‘assisting’ the RPR vision of a valley ‘returning’ to its ‘natural’ origin. Arguably, the pressures were now in the other direction, as rural communities were growing in size, while agriculture was for many still a valuable and sometimes even the most preferable livelihood strategy. Therefore, the land and access to it still played a central role in the local population’s livelihoods as well as in their discourse of imagined futures, contesting the future of the area frequently presented by RPR.

4.6 Conclusions

RPR emerges as a local Brazilian environmental NGO. This is funded and overseen from abroad, but managed on the ground by a local large landowner who is the descendant of a local landowning family of mostly foreign origin. Concurrently, land acquisitions arise as the most significant conservation intervention applied by RPR to achieve its proclaimed mission, i.e. to protect and preserve the AF in the upper Guapiaçu River valley. RPR purposefully cultivates and promotes its identity as a local conservation NGO to secure critical sources of funding for its land purchases, further expanding the area under their protection.

Nevertheless, the history of the RPR establishment and growth is inseparably connected with

housing or infrastructure and subsequent increased competition for employment leading to further deprivation (*miserabilização*) and marginalization. Consequently, these rural migrants would often idealize the past as harmonious and filled with abundance in comparison to their present reality of hardship and precariousness (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009).

the presence of a local landowning family in the area whose members appropriated and adopted the idea of nature reserve creation. Although they are depicted as people with strong inclinations to natural habitat preservation, their approach to forest on their land is also the result of the wider as well as local contextual factors they were exposed to. Altruistic desire to protect the forest habitat was not the only reason for them to create RPR. Consolidation and protection of the family landed patrimony, additional economic benefits derived from land speculation, tourism income and increased social capital also added great weight to their decision to get involved. More importantly, in their approach to RPR as a 'green business', they actively explore new opportunities with the potential to generate further economic benefits, while conserving its natural environments through land acquisitions. They thus reproduce the logic underpinning the neoliberal economic model, transforming nature into tradable commodities (Igoe & Brockington, 2007), resulting in ongoing nature commodification (Büscher & Whande, 2007).

RPR land purchases on the ground were, to a great extent, shaped by issues surrounding land accessibility and land ownership as well as the way RPR would position itself to the neighbouring state conservation unit and public conservation practice and policies. RPR would present its land acquisition as the best conservation intervention available in the area, on both unprotected as well as state protected areas. While eagerly cooperating with the state and its conservation unit to assure the project legitimacy, RPR was also claiming to assist and replace the (incapable) state in its regulatory obligations on the land acquired, thus representing the transfer of power and responsibility downwards from the (incapable) state towards the private and third sector (Dudley *et al.*, 1999). Here, RPR was claiming to protect the land more efficiently than the state, by removing it from potential agricultural use, estate development and greatly reducing the impact of hunting and natural resource extraction attributed to the local population. On their land, new and more environmentally appropriate activities such as tourism and scientific research were introduced to supersede the traditional economic activities presented as contributing to forest destruction. All of this resulted in the production of social space, rich in interaction between the reserve, its management and the members of surrounding communities.

Such interaction associated with land purchases and related negotiations led RPR to portray local people through simplified representations, contrasting with contemporary social and economic realities in the study area. First, the local population could be portrayed as project supporters and collaborators or as unconscious destroyers of nature depending on what the

RPR negotiation position required, or what was needed to identify the ‘threat’ to which the AF was clearly exposed and thus, justify their land purchases as the most effective and appropriate conservation intervention. Second, land use rights in the area were often subject to contestation, and by purchasing distinct rights to lands with shared ownership, RPR was the local land properties’ co-owner, rather than simply an individual private landholder. Consequently, this required RPR to respect the shared rights of other community members with further implications for other RPR conservation interventions. As this might, in some cases, reduce the capacity of RPR to attain the proclaimed conservation outcomes, the RPR management felt prompted to impose their understanding of ‘conservation’ on the ‘unwilling’ local landholders. Third, while RPR would depict local men and women as gradually leaving the area and abandoning their traditional livelihood activities and thus unintentionally helping RPR to achieve its vision of the valley covered in forest, the number of people settled in rural communities neighbouring the reserve was expanding. In contrast with representations deployed by the RPR management, agriculture still held an important place in local livelihood strategies. Thus, land and access to land was central to their livelihoods, shaping their discourse on imagined futures, and contesting the image of the area as covered mostly by forest, as envisioned by RPR. One of the most important ways how RPR aimed to involve local men and women in their project and thus transform them into their supporters was through providing them with employment, as discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Socio-economic Aspects of ‘Modern’ Encounters between Private Reserves and Local Rural Populations Founded on Traditions Rooted in Clientelistic Relationships

5.1 Introduction

One of the important issues that preoccupies debates on protected areas is the relation between reserves and their surrounding local populations. Despite some contrary views (for example, Holmes, 2013b), it is usually held that addressing the social and economic needs of surrounding groups is vital for PPAs to gain the support of local people and to achieve their desired conservation goals (Brown & Mitchell, 1999; Jones *et al.*, 2005; Langholz, 1996; Mulder & Coppolillo, 2005; Quintana & Morse, 2005). It is often emphasized that besides the indirect benefit of protecting and maintaining healthy ecosystems, local job creation is the main potential direct positive impact of PPAs on local communities (Amrock, 2006; Barany *et al.* 2001; Bond *et al.*, 2004; Sims-Castley *et al.*, 2005). Thus, depending on the size and economic potential of the private conservation project, employment of local men and women can become an important socioeconomic factor shaping the relations of PPAs with existing local communities.

Echoing this more general preoccupation, providing employment to local people was an important consideration for RPR. When the RPR representatives presented the project to outside audiences, they regularly depicted the policy of local employment as an integral part of their conservation strategy. They described it as the most important tool of their ‘successful’ approach towards surrounding rural communities, through which they aimed to involve local people in the reserve’s conservation project and influence local natural resource use practices. At the same time, in the context of a limited regional labour market, the local population valued the existence of additional job opportunities. Besides protecting the forests and waters, they saw it as the main benefit that RPR brought to them. Most importantly, before seeing it as providing valuable economic benefits for locals or as an important conservation policy tool for PPA administration, local employment also offers an opportunity to analyze the vital socio-economic relationships established through or around private conservation projects.

In taking this position, I draw on West *et al.* (2006), who advance the idea that protected areas should be seen as spaces rich in social interaction and social production. They represent

particular ways of seeing, interpreting and producing the world. Work relations, as crucial components of the nexus of social interactions between a PPA and local communities, are part of such social production. Importantly, such relations established through work cannot be divorced from the particular socio-economic and historical context in which they are embedded. This is particularly the case in rural Brazil where, as Martins (2002) has shown, changes in labour relations have played a crucial role in the transformation of socio-economic relations. First, after the abolition of slavery in 1888, a large proportion of the rural populations were transformed into dependent resident workers and only later, after 1950, to gradually become casual wage workers; a transformation that can be understood in terms of the maintenance of control over the mass of rural poor workers who provided the necessary labour to maintain Brazil's latifundist agricultural model (Martins, 2002). Therefore, the patterns of socio-economic relations in contemporary rural Brazil can be understood to have their historical roots in the era of masters and slaves with the related social distances and hierarchies (Garcia and Palmeira, 2009).

While employment opportunities are often mentioned as one of the important direct benefits provided by PPAs for local populations (Bond *et al.*, 2004), this cannot be simply divorced from this deeper socio-economic and historical context, in which such relations between a conservation unit and involved local men and women are embedded. In the context of RPR, the relationship between the project's management and its employees was to a large extent determined by the relations between the family of Lucas, members of a local, large-scale landowning elite, on the one hand, and the local, smallholding, poor population on the other, in line with much older, clientelistic relationships. The latter were based on a reciprocal exchange where, in conditions of inequality, the protection and low recompense, often framed as the 'help' of a large landowner or latifundist (*patrão*), are exchanged for the work and limitless loyalty of a dependent resident worker.

Processes of monetization and the formalization of productive relations in rural Brazil, introduced since the mid-1950s and also accompanied by the modernization of agriculture as well as pressures from social movements, have resulted in the gradual erosion of such traditional practices and personal domination prevalent in them. Yet, they also stripped rural workers of their traditional conditions of existence and prompted their further impoverishment (Garcia & Palmeira, 2001). Writers such as Bruno (2003), Geffray (2007) or Sallinger-McBride and Roberts (1998), among others, have shown how the structures of traditional domination have been preserved and continue to be maintained through land and

social inequality in contemporary rural Brazil, where an important role is still played by large landowners (*latifundistas*). Above all, profoundly rooted in Brazilian history and as constitutive matrix of Brazilian society (Geffray, 2007), these patterns have a transcendental character and continue to shape relations in other social spheres of present-day Brazil well beyond the ‘isolated’ rural areas (Boskovic, 2005). Building on these observations, as well as some of the discussions and descriptions in Chapters 3 and 4, in this chapter I seek to show RPR as a social site, established in a particular socio-economic context, where social production is not limited to the principles of market logic, represented by modern labour relations, but on the contrary, take place mainly according to a logic of reciprocity embedded in enduring patron-client relationships, now transformed to fit the new environmentalist agenda of preserving the threatened forest habitat through a private conservation initiative.

5.2 The socio-economic and historical context of the relations between local communities and RPR

As already reviewed in previous chapters, the land on which RPR now stands was originally acquired and worked by Lucas’s great-grandfather at the beginning of the 20th century. Some of these lands, composed of forested hills or seasonal wetlands, represented a revived agricultural frontier, occupied by the mass of ethnically diverse neo-Brazilian landless rural poor. Once the consolidation of the property began, as occurred throughout Brazil (cf. Garcia & Palmeira, 2009), people occupying the area faced the choice of leaving the land and seeking land to settle elsewhere or accepting the new conditions and staying at the ‘newly’ created latifundium as its workforce, mostly as resident workers. The photograph below (Image 4) shows some of these first workers who, at that time, would have been mostly focused on coffee production.

These local people thus became the Fazenda do Carmo’s first agricultural workforce. Garcia and Palmeira (2009) argue that such forms of recruitment, established during the era of masters and slaves, allowed for the recreation of power of large landowners after the abolition. They were founded on a voluntary agreement that established the dependency of the resident workers on the latifundium owner and submitted them to his wishes. They explain that by moving to the property, a resident worker “contracted with the owner a moral debt whose value greatly exceeded the material worth of the necessities of life that he received from his new patron” (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009: 28). The relationship between the patron and his worker had a reciprocal character. Besides some degree of payment, in cash

and goods, ‘gifts’ from the patron, such as land, water, fuel, shelter and so on, were exchanged for the workers’ various labour obligations and loyalty (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). This usually involved the whole labouring family, including children, all of whom would work at the agricultural property. It was typical of such relations of production that cash payments were significantly reduced.⁶³ For example, at coffee plantations, they formed roughly one third of the overall pay received by a resident worker (Martins, 2002). Thus, such relationships were clearly biased against the economically and politically weaker party of the agricultural worker and his family (Hall, 1974). Patron-client relationships, historically established between latifundium owners and agricultural workers in rural Brazil, were also based on asymmetric forms of reciprocity (Sabourin, 2011a).

Image 4 Rural workers at Fazenda de Carmo around 1912



Source: Pacheco (2008)

While at first Fazenda do Carmo focused principally on the production of coffee and sugar cane, later the coffee plantation gave place to pomiculture, including bananas, various arable crops, and cattle breeding. Further forested areas were continuously cleared to provide timber for construction and sale, thus generating additional income which was used to serve the debt accumulated in the buying up of the land as well as later the maintenance of the farm (*para manter a fazenda*). Other productive activities included the production of orange juice and

⁶³ According to oral testimonies of local residents, workers at Fazenda do Carmo used to be paid by tokens (*vale*) to be exchanged only at the farm’s store (*armazém*). To obtain cash they would need to sell their surplus production, or any products manufactured at home.

cachaça liquor⁶⁴ (see Image 5 of the farm distillery). As the latifundium grew, foreign managers were hired to manage its everyday running, while administrators (*administradores*) were hired from among members of the local ‘traditional’ families, such as Dobregas (described in previous chapters) and they were usually the ones to interact directly with the estate workers. In this way, Fazenda do Carmo, and its owners, can be understood to have continued and reproduced the existing socio-economic inequalities and hierarchies established during the era of slavery, with local labour used to exploit available natural resources for the accumulation of wealth and the maintenance of prosperity. Above all, it is in this context that we find the roots of the relations, including the labour relations, between RPR and the local people whose families have often been working for Lucas and his family for several generations.

Image 5 Partial view of the seat of the Fazenda do Carmo featuring in the foreground the farm’s aqueduct and distillery, around 1912



Source: Pacheco (2008)

⁶⁴ *Cachaça* is a traditional Brazilian liquor produced from sugar cane.

5.2.1 The story of Valnisete

To demonstrate these long-term connections, we turn now to one of the RPR's employees, Valnisete, a cook at the reserve, whose family has been working for Lucas and his family since the beginning of the 20th century.

Valnisete is a 36-year-old woman with a 'lighter dark skin' (*morena clara*), who has worked for over a decade as a cook and cleaner for RPR. According to Valnisete, her mother was a *cabocla* with black straight hair (*cabelo preto liso*), whose parents came from Minas Gerais and lived and worked at the Dobregas' *fazenda* (farm) in Jabá. Her father was a black (*preto, escuro*) and descendant of people (*os antigos*) who once worked at the Fazenda do Carmo as slaves (*pegou a escravidão*). While the mother of her father was a *morena* (dark-skinned) with thick red hair who worked in the fields (*trabalhadora de campo*), his father worked around animals and was well-known for working leather.

Once Fazenda do Carmo was divided between Wilhelm's heirs, Valnisete's father decided to work for Gerald, while his other siblings moved to nearby urban centres. He and his family lived in a small house with two rooms, close to the place where the former slave barracks (*aldeia de escravos*) used to stand. She thinks it was a good house, made of bricks, despite being without any electricity. Her father worked as a herder (*campeiro*) and was apparently one of Gerald's favourite workers. Valnisete recalled how Gerald used to pay for a doctor when some of the children fell sick or how he used to bring them food, clothes and shoes:

"Perhaps he saw many children and wanted to help. He was a good person (*gente boa*). But my father also never took holiday; he worked straight. He used to wake up at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning every day to milk the cows and then he would go to work in the fields (*roça*). He was his [Gerald's] first employee (*empregado*)."

When Gerald died, Valnisete and her family, as well as many other workers, continued living and working at the *fazenda*, mainly working with Lucas's cattle and milk cows. When Lucas sold the farm to the reserve, he sent most of the people living there away (*mandou embora*), offering only a few new jobs. This was when Lucas offered Valnisete the new house that she still lives in and she started to work for the reserve.

At that time, her youngest son was still only a one-year-old baby. Yet, she used to get up very early in the morning and ride her bicycle to a distant part of the property that at

the beginning, served as the accommodation for tourists. Here she would serve breakfast to foreign birdwatchers, who frequently wanted to leave for the forest before dawn, and Valnisete would also frequently stay until late into the night to attend to their needs. Before this, she had mainly been staying at home to take care of children and the household and so she told me she was happy to have an opportunity to make some extra money.

This was at the beginning. Now, she works in the kitchen at the reserve headquarters where she prepares food for tourists, staff, researchers, volunteers and other visitors. After serving the breakfast, she cleans rooms and prepares other daily meals. She still often works until very late to serve dinner for the foreign visitors at the tourist lodge.

She smiles when she talks about her salary. She earns well, better than a fixed forest ranger (*guardas*) wage of R\$760 per month. She makes R\$50 per day and another extra R\$30 if she stays to serve the dinner. It is much better than a daily wage (*diária*) of R\$30 that a woman can earn working in the fields (*na roça*). Yet, when the lodge fills up or a colleague is sick at home and she is asked to work many consecutive days without any break, she starts complaining about not being able to see her children, wash clothes or make dinner for her family. Also, she cannot speak English and if there is no one to translate for her, she finds it difficult to communicate with the tourists and attend to their requests.

Her husband Renato is a tall and thin Afro-Brazilian man, who works maintaining the headquarters. They are what Brazilian people call *caseiros* (caretakers), living and working on the property, in a house owned by their employer (*patrão*). They live in a double-apartment house, originally built by Lucas's deceased uncle Gerald as a place for him and his wife to stay when they were visiting from Rio de Janeiro. They do not pay any rent and Valnisete earns extra from renting out a house she built in the neighbouring community of Bamba. Her daughter became pregnant at 16 years of age and moved with her boyfriend to work as *caseiros* at another small rural property.

Valnisete's son learned how to ride a horse when he was 4 years old and now works for Lucas as a herder (*campeiro*) just as his father and grandfather did. With his young wife and a small child, they live in a house given to them by Lucas on his farm. In fact, Valnisete and Renato are not the only members of their families who work for Lucas. Others work at the reserve or on his farm.

In her narrative, Valnisete describes how she continues working and living on the same estate where she was born and how she is employed by Lucas, a member of the same landowning family as her ancestors once used to work for. Besides her, Lucas also provides work and shelter for her son's family as well as other relatives. Thus, what comes out as crucial in the narrative about her work at RPR is the continuity of the social connections that exist between her family and Lucas's family, established by means of work and residency at their estate through several generations. Above all, this was a common pattern for local men and women who understood their relationship to RPR primarily through the lens of their enduring and multi-generational relations with Lucas and his family.

5.3 Local interpretations of RPR embedded in the traditional social structures of socio-economic relations

I often encountered such representations demonstrated when meeting someone for the first time. First of all, during these encounters, local people would never forget to mention that Lucas and Laura are good people (*gente boa*) or friends (*amigos*). Then, in subsequent conversation, they would regularly try to find out more about my association with Lucas and his family: Are you their family member? Do you work for them? If this did not work, they would try to link me to them through supposition about my German or English origin. As a rule, they would add an eloquent comment praising Lucas, his family, his farm or the reserve's work, often evoking in an unfamiliar observer the impression of intimacy and affability of the local population with the family and their activities. For example, one of the frequent foreign visitors to the luxurious lodge at the RPR described to me how she witnessed local people smiling, inviting Lucas for coffee and calling him a friend, concluding that local people must like him very much. For her, Lucas was clearly a 'community man'.

However, once I moved away from the reserve and started positioning myself outside of the accustomed social structures, I provoked suspicion among some of them around the purpose of my presence in their community and even to accusations of spying for the reserve and for Lucas in particular. In their social world, I was perhaps a bit different from other visitors but still 'the foreigner from the reserve' (*o gringo da reserva*), where the reserve stood for Lucas and his family. From this new perspective, Lucas was understood less as a 'community man' than as a wealthy landowner (*fazendeiro*) who locals were respectful of but also apprehensive about falling into his disfavour. While local people would demonstrate their affinity and

loyalty to Lucas and his family by calling them friends (*amigos*) and good people (*gente boa*), they most frequently referred to them as their patrons (*patrões*).

Near the end of my fieldwork I visited the house of one of Lucas's sharecroppers. I went there with the purpose of conducting an informal interview related to local history with the man's elderly father, not directly related to the reserve and the contemporary situation. As usual, I was offered a cup of coffee and patiently waited for the elder man to begin our conversation:

Father: "I have worked at Lucas's fazenda. I worked for his uncle Gerald, too."

Son: "He has got reforestation, didn't he? The protection is good. People from here were going to destroy everything. Now, there are many animals, aren't there? I always used to hear about killing an animal here or killing an animal there, but this is over."

The conversation continued along these lines for quite some time, with the elder man declaring to me at some point: "Is it that Lucas would like me to tell you these stories?" This framing of the conversation suggested that I would struggle to get beyond these basic platitudes that day. My interpretation was later confirmed by one of my other, key informants who told me that my interlocutor and his family had been worried about saying something that Lucas might not have liked. Such demonstrations of loyalty towards Lucas and his family, representing a form of 'gift' in the reciprocal exchange relation between patron and client, was a common pattern.

An important determinant of these traditional social structures is the unequal distribution of land, wealth and power, characteristic of rural Brazil (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). In the study area, where most of the land was still divided into large agricultural properties, the destiny of the majority of local families was still in one way or another, at least indirectly, related to one of the large landholdings and their owners. While 'traditional' families owned some land, many landless rural poor lived under the control of local large landowners, on whom they depended for shelter, work and so on before purchasing their own small plots, building their houses, and moving to newly formed communities.

In the local discourse, Fazenda do Carmo was described as the largest and most important of the local latifundia existing in 20th century in the upper Guapiaçu River valley, where many of the local people or their ancestors had worked and lived. In this context, Lucas and his

wife were perceived not in terms of RPR and its current conservation project but rather, primarily, as the heirs of the former Fazenda do Carmo. As noted by Garcia and Palmeira (2009), belonging to such a landowning family is an important determinant of symbolic capital for establishing one's authority in rural Brazil. At the same time, they were still the owners of a large and prosperous local farm (*fazenda*), even if that was much reduced from its past, full extent. However, such a combination of roles de facto put them in control of a large area including productive agricultural lands, forests as well as a recently created 'wilderness' composed of artificial lakes and reforestation plantations, with related natural resources, such as water, and infrastructure. In addition, they employed local men and women not only at RPR, but also at their farm and household. Such a concentration of symbolic capital and command over local productive resources, including land and labour, gave them a clear social and political position in local society.

In his definition of the traditional patron-client relationship, Hall (1974) notes that they developed particularly in rural areas where land was concentrated in the hands of a small number of powerful people able to monopolize wealth and power. He links the persistence of such relations in rural areas with the conditions of isolation characterised by poor communications and limited social mobility. The local area of my fieldwork could be characterised in such a way at the time of my arrival, in early 2012, with historically rooted racial and social division, limited literacy of the economically active population and inadequate public transport and infrastructure. Although the 20th century brought tremendous economic and political change to Brazil, Sallinger-McBride and Roberts (1998) argue that this transformation did not depose the landed elite from their privileged position in the Brazilian social and economic order. Modernization in rural Brazil was not accompanied by changes in social and economic relations. Land inequality and the traditional social structures that maintain and preserve it continue dominate rural Brazil (Sallinger-McBride & Roberts, 1998). Sabourin (2011b) goes even further and argues that traditional social structures of domination are firmly anchored in the subconscious of the Brazilian rural population. Paternalistic and clientelistic relations of subordination, representing the social structures of asymmetric reciprocity, were recreated even within the most successful of Brazilian social movements the MST (*Movimento sem Terra*). Thus, local interpretations of Lucas as (*patrão*), a local wealthy landowner (*fazendeiro*), as well as descendant of former owners of Fazenda do Carmo (*descendente de alemão*), were thus inevitably social factors representing a foundation around which the social relations between RPR and local population were

constructed and where the logic of asymmetric reciprocity characteristic for traditional patron-client relations, still preserved in rural Brazil, played an important role even in the early decades of the 21st century.

5.4 Workplace '*fazenda*'

In addition, there was another factor that further reinforced the local understanding of RPR as a traditional landed estate. Most of the local population were either directly employed or had close relatives employed on the estate, whether that was as a ranger in the reserve, a domestic cleaner at Lucas's house or as a labourer on the still agriculturally active farm. Within these circles, people made little distinction between which part of the '*fazenda*' operations they were formally employed in. In other words, RPR in the local discourse was not a separate unit from the farm or Lucas's household. Everything, altogether, was from the local perspective part of the '*fazenda*'.

For example, during the survey I conducted among the members of the local population, one of the participants made the following comment when I asked her what she thought of RPR: "My husband works there; for us it is the *fazenda*, but they [Lucas and Laura] say it is an NGO." Another participant commented similarly: "It is Lucas who gives orders there. I cannot see any NGO. For me it is theirs [Lucas's family]."

"I'm going to the *fazenda*" or "he's working at the *fazenda*" were very common phrases for describing any work related to Lucas and his family's operations. The same word *fazenda* was frequently used for both, the farm as well as the reserve. This meant that particularly at the beginning, I found it quite difficult to distinguish whether local staff were talking about something happening at the farm or the reserve.

This confusion also reflected a practical reality. RPR and the family farm were in everyday life intertwined on organizational, personnel and financial levels. The RPR headquarters and the administrative centre of the working farm was the same place. Visitors involved with both RPR and the farm: for example, academics, government officials and tourists for RPR, and local workers, trading partners and regional politicians for the farm would come here to look for Lucas and Laura there. Vehicles and labour were regularly used interchangeably between the farm, the household and the reserve. Also, in some cases it was not entirely clear, even to the administration staff, whether a certain activity constituted an income, or a cost, for RPR or for the farm. Thus, although questions about financial transparency arose frequently, they

would be countered by the argument that ultimately it was Lucas who was sustaining both RPR and the farm. Although the differences existed officially and on paper, on the ground and in the day-to-day reality a clear line between RPR and the farm, as well as Lucas's family household, did not exist.

Very demonstrative of this as well as suggestive of the ongoing power dynamic, embedded in traditional social structures, were the contradictory positions of the lower management staff. Silvio, a non-Brazilian research coordinator, thought that "the reserve mixes too much with the farm and this is a problem." He thought that RPR should have a separate, professional administrator. By contrast, Leonardo, a member of a local 'traditional' family closely associated with the family of Lucas, who worked as a farm manager (*administrador*) and the RPR NGO treasurer concurrently, vehemently insisted that "everything is separated and there aren't any links between the farm and the reserve," arguing that they had distinct accounts and that all of their accounting was done separately.

For all such contestations, however, it was clear that for the local population, there was no real separation between Lucas and his family's different activities and that they were all understood as continuous with the longer-term, multi-generational presence of the latifundium (*fazenda*) in the area. In a similar manner, Lucas's primary position in the area was as a wealthy landowner, a *fazendeiro*. Most importantly, such local representations of Lucas and interpretations of RPR as a '*fazenda*' incorporating traditional social structures had a profound impact on the relation between RPR and its employees and subsequently, the majority of the local population.

5.5 Reciprocal relations as the underlying logic of social relations between the RPR and its employees

In everyday life at the RPR, it was possible to observe many features of social relations embedded in the traditional social structures; this was epitomised by the case of Valnisete and her family, described above. As I noted, Valnisete and her husband were *caseiros*, i.e. resident employees, a common form of employment in rural Brazil. By living and working on their employer's property, such employees carry out agreed tasks but also provide a more general service of being present on the property and being its more informal guardians, particularly during the owners' absences.

Such informal services were not formally recognised or financially remunerated, but it was understood locally that such workers could count on their patrons for help and favours. For instance, Valnisete and Renato depended on the sporadic local bus service if they wanted to travel outside the immediate area as they did not have official licences to ride their motorbikes. Therefore, one day, when their youngest son suddenly became ill one afternoon, they turned to Laura to set aside all of her work and take him to see the doctor in the nearest town. On another occasion, Lucas lent money to Renato to purchase a new motorcycle and agreed to be paid back later by deducting small amounts from his wage. Valnisete used to say that she is one of the best earning members of staff at the reserve as she works more extra shifts than any other cook, but that the flip side of this was that she was also able to take days off whenever she needed to. Shelter, help in the case of emergency, financial assistance, preferential treatment at work, these were only a few examples of the numerous, mostly non-financial recompense and favours that Valnisete and Renato received from Lucas and his family. Thus, the relationship between the couple working for RPR and Lucas's family as their patrons (*patrões*) was principally constructed around the rationale of reciprocal give-and-take, where work and loyalty were, besides the wage, rewarded with 'gifts' from the bosses.

5.5.1 Reciprocity exchange in the local context

Indeed, the exchange of small 'favours' was one of the fundamental characteristics of local social relations and a common practice among members of local communities. I began to perceive the weight assigned by local men and women to this practice very soon after my arrival at the reserve. One of my first cultural encounters with such exchange commenced when I realized that to carry out my work in this extensive agricultural area where communities and isolated small settlements were spread around and public transport was limited, I needed to have my own means of transport. A motorcycle seemed to me the most affordable, economical and practical form of transport to be used on local dirt roads. It was also the most commonly used means of transport by locals, and by driving one, I hoped to come closer to their way of living. Once I started to ask around, Valnisete, whom I knew from my first visit to RPR in 2008, offered to sell me her oldest son's motorcycle. She seemed very eager to sell it to me and we quickly agreed on a price.

I did not know much about motorcycles, but it appeared to be 'OK'. Yet, the following day after the purchase, I had a problem with the rear wheel. Without knowing what to do, I went

back to Valnisete to ask for help. Her husband Renato gave me a spare part and easily fixed the problem for me. In the following six months, the same situation would happen again and again. Something would break down and a member of Valnisete's family would always help me to fix it or gave useful advice on how to resolve it.⁶⁵ In addition, they taught me the basic maintenance necessary to keep this vital means of local transport working on the dirt roads. They also taught me other essentials, such as how to ride it, how to avoid or negotiate with the road police and helped me to go through its official registration. Even so, I still seemed to constantly need spare parts and spend extra money and time repairing it. While some of my friends would comment on the motorcycle's condition relative to the amount that I had paid for it, Valnisete and her family were always willing to help me with it and over time, I came to appreciate their support for more than just the bike. As a foreigner (*gringo*) with limited Portuguese and minimal knowledge of the local social world and its rules, I often felt lost and frustrated by the way things in the everyday reality of rural Brazil 'worked'. Yet, this family knew all the tricks to make things work more quickly and easily. Thus, I came to feel profoundly indebted to them for their help and often expressed my wish to pay or at least compensate them for the expenses and time they might have incurred. However, they never accepted money and always assisted me without question.

It was only with time that I began to understand the nature and rules of our relationship. Much later after that initial transaction, Valnisete praised me for giving her cash in hand as well as for registering the motorcycle in my name straightaway. As I learned from others, it was common amongst locals to pay in instalments (*parcelado*), to have the motorcycle for a trial period and return it and not to pay at all if not satisfied. In other words, I was a good, or perhaps inexperienced, buyer. However, the 'favour' I unintentionally did was later repaid by other 'favours' and as such, the purchase of the motorcycle initiated a cycle of exchanges that came to underpin an enduring relationship. It allowed me to enter into reciprocal relationships with Valnisete and her family, where various small favours and presents in different spheres of life would be exchanged on an everyday basis.⁶⁶

During the course of my fieldwork, I learned that this mutual exchange of 'favours' was the most common way for local people to relate with those outside their family. For example, the

⁶⁵ With more time in the field the motorcycle became an important instrument of my research. I could not even imagine how to function without it. It gave me the freedom to move around, an easy subject to talk about with local people and means how to participate in their everyday life.

⁶⁶ I gradually and intentionally began to imitate the behaviour that I observed between the members of Valnisete's family, such as buying beer, visiting, lending my motorcycle and so on.

local owner of the general store refused to take immediate payment for items, preferring instead to keep a ledger of purchases that would be paid for later. Immediate payment was also rejected by a local electrician who asked instead for me to help him in the future with his computer. Many local people looked to establish relationships with me through providing small favours, intentionally delaying or omitting a monetary transaction. Thus, later they could ask me for a favour, too, or more often, just call me a friend (*amigo*). While the length and intensity of such relationships with different local people varied greatly, only with Valnisete and her family did it reach the extent that they started to introduce me to others not as a 'foreigner' (*gringo*), but rather as a member of their family (*ele é da família*). Although the initial transaction represented an exchange of goods with the purpose to meet our interests, it also established a relationship based on mutual friendship and confidence.

In his work *Essai sur le Don*, originally published in 1925, Mauss separates the exchange of 'gifts' from the market exchange of commercial goods. Through the triadic obligation of giving, receiving and giving back, he places notions of reciprocity at the heart of such relations (Mauss, 2002). Sabourin (2008) explains that an exchange could be called reciprocal if it satisfies the interests of both parties involved. Yet, such an exchange seeks only to satisfy immediate interests. Contrastingly, Mauss's emphasis on reciprocity is different as it implies the preoccupation with the obligation of the other to give back, in Mauss's words, to establish *mana* and thus produce ethical values, such as peace or confidence (Sabourin, 2008). Looking at my relations with local people, it is possible to suggest that local men and women were offering 'favours' to draw me into reciprocal relationships. Although the transactions might have often initially represented a relatively simple exchange of goods or services where I would offer to pay, they were by local people transformed into 'gifts', by refusing or postponing the payment. Then, such an initial 'gift' given could be invoked at any time in the future through them asking me for some material or symbolic value in exchange, for example, help with a computer or being able to call me a 'friend'. More importantly, the purpose was just to establish a more enduring relationship, rather than only immediately to satisfy an economic interest. In the case of Valnisete, where I became to be called a member of her family, a high intensity of 'favours' exchanged would then indicate the sentiment of friendship where the produced ethical value would be trust. Above all, this implies the importance placed by local population on reciprocity in their social relations.

Yet, as Gouldner (1960) states, the obligations related to reciprocity might vary with the social status of the participants. For Valnisete, as well as the majority of the local population,

I was a '*gringo*', a wealthy person from Europe; if not, how could I be able to live there for so long without having a 'proper' job, it was commonly reasoned by local people. As a member of their family, with some rights and duties, I was invited to participate in family visits, which were an important leisure activity and significant mode of reinforcing family-bonding and solidarity. I was also offered 'unconditional' hospitality, often expressed by the assertion that I was there, at their house, at home (*aqui você está em sua casa*). In exchange, being friends with a 'wealthy foreigner' could increase their prestige. In addition, I was expected to give presents of higher material value or financially participate in their inter-family solidarity.⁶⁷ Our different social and economic standing meant that we had faced different expectations as to the nature of our 'favours' yet, as argued by Sabourin (2011a), reciprocity can assume different forms, embedded in various representations while still retaining a sense of egalitarianism. What is more, our relationship was for both sides the source of 'some', more or less important, material as well as symbolic value.

Similar, yet often a lot more complex and enduring, relationships based on mutual exchange mediated social relations among members of the local population. Moreover, if such reciprocity was an important aspect of relations between local people, it was a particularly crucial aspect of their relation to local, large-scale landowners (*fazendeiros*).

5.5.2 Reciprocity in labour relations between the RPR and local community members

Although the nature of 'favours' exchanged might vary, a parallel relationship existed between the majority of local employees and Lucas as RPR's principal representative. Thus, Izaquiel, a 40-year-old bird guide at RPR, told me that he had bought his first car, only thanks to Lucas letting him plant manioc as his sharecropper (*meeiro*) on a parcel of RPR's land. As a bird guide, he was often called to work mornings, weekends and so on, which required flexibility but also gave him extra wages. Thus, while representing RPR, Lucas was very much acting in accordance with local understandings of his position as the local *fazendeiro* (large landowner), calling on an individual for extra work above and beyond normal working conditions but also rewarding the loyalty of one of his long-term employees. In relation to the manioc, it was never clear whether, once the harvest was sold, it constituted income for Lucas as *fazendeiro* or RPR as an institution, while it made little difference to Izaquiel under which official organization he was being supported.

⁶⁷ For example, when the son of Valnisete's sister got engaged, I was told that as a 'member of the family' I should choose and purchase for him one of the more expensive items from the list of engagement gifts that would demonstrate the importance of our relationship as well as my affinity to Valnisete's family.

This form of reciprocity was also important for Lucas. As Garcia and Palmeira (2009) describe in their work, providing living and working conditions for families lacking the means for survival used to be essential for an estate owner to be recognized as a protector and a ‘good boss’, in our context a ‘friend’ (*amigo*) or a ‘good person’ (*gente boa*). Thus, based on the logic of asymmetric reciprocity (Sabourin, 2011a), gifts from Lucas would be transformed into his increased prestige and authority. The great importance assigned by local men and women to these aspects of their relationship with Lucas and his family were best demonstrated in their interpretation of the past and their projections of desired or imagined futures.

5.5.3 Past and future in RPR labour relations

First, the relationship between RPR and its employees was in many cases founded on a multigenerational relationship. Thus, in her story, Valnisete describes how her father was one of Gerald’s first and most loyal employees. In exchange, he was appointed to a position of trust and bestowed with help and favours. She would often relate how at staff meetings, Lucas himself would use her father as an example of a good employee for others to follow. Such histories of exchange between landowners and resident workers is an important factor for understanding traditional clientelistic relationships (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). The significance of this became apparent during an episode involving a number of small-scale thefts at the reserve.

The first instance involved money being stolen from the room of John’s daughter, followed by the disappearance of the volunteers’ laptops. Then some money was taken from a Brazilian researcher’s rucksack as well as more substantial savings that an employee had kept in a suitcase. While in such instances it was rare for people to think of involving the mostly absent and ineffective local police, as the cases mounted, many of the non-local staff thought that the police should be informed. Lucas, however, did not take this course. This, together with his more general failure to intervene, resulted in a spiral of speculations among all the employees that the thefts had been invented by those who claimed to have been robbed or, alternatively, that the culprit was Lucas’s young nephew, which would explain Lucas’s reluctance to call the police. At first, none of the staff members would accept that the thief was one of them, but then Lucas and Laura started to take the money from their tips or deduct it from their wages to compensate the victims. “If we do not know who it was, they all have to be held

responsible for the villain. Neither us, nor the reserve is going to pay for it,” Laura explained to me. Consequently, this caused discontent and led to conflicts among the local employees, who started to blame each other for being negligent or even responsible for the theft. On one such occasion, Valnisete complained to me about one of her colleagues whom she also blamed for the stealing.

“I’m going to speak to Lucas. I’m going to leave this job (*serviço*) in December. I can’t take this anymore. Liliane always humiliates us. I think she does not like us [Valnisete and her family]. She must be jealous as Lucas always says that we are the most trusted (*de maior confiança*) [members of staff] as we were born and bred (*nascido e criado*) at the *fazenda* [family estate].”

When I contradicted Valnisete by saying that Liliane’s grandparents also worked at Fazenda do Carmo, she argued that Lilian’s grandfather had originally come from another part of Brazil and was ‘only employed’ (*empregado*) at Fazenda do Carmo. In contrast, her grandfather and father were born at Fazenda do Carmo before it was divided. Also, her father worked as the head man (*encarregado*) for Gerald, the uncle of Lucas, at his *fazenda* where she was born and which was later transformed into the reserve. Thus, in her narrative, Valnisete places the emphasis on the continuation of the relationship between her and Lucas’s family, established long in the past when the *alemães* (Germans) bought the *fazenda*, and then re-established with each following generation. In her view, this makes her and her family more loyal and places her in a more favourable condition.

Second, such representations were not restricted only to the past, but also played an important role in narratives about possible futures. Another woman, Rosa, also working at the reserve, told me how her 14-year old son was not interested in studying and wanted to become a tractor driver at Lucas’s *fazenda* (farm). She did not seem to be pleased with his choice saying that “before, people at least used to get a house with the job, but now it is different” and adding, “the work at the *fazenda* has no value... people earn very little.”

Notwithstanding, she concluded: “My grandfather used to work here, my father used to work here and now I work here too. Perhaps my children will work here [in the future].”

Thus, even though she might not think that the job at the farm is that good and that the conditions of employment have deteriorated, her narrative still suggests the stability of the relationship with her patron conveys a sense of security. Valnisete made a similar argument when her older son decided to move out to live with his partner and she went to ask Lucas for

a house for him. When we talked about it, she made this comment: “He is his employee (*empregado*), and Lucas is obliged to give him a house.” When I asked why he should do so as her son is paid for his work, she replied that “he always used to give houses to his employees (*empregados*).”

All in all, the relationship between RPR and its employees was primarily understood by local people as an interpersonal relationship with their patron (*patrão*) with mutual ties of obligation.

5.5.4 Patron as a debtor

Yet, within these traditional social structures, it was also common for Lucas to be portrayed by local people as their ‘moral’ debtor or a subject with unfulfilled obligations. For instance, Arnaldo was a 60-year-old man who belonged to one of the local ‘traditional’ families and who had worked for Lucas for more than thirty years.

“He had nothing when he came over here,” Arnaldo said about when Lucas had first returned to Brazil from the UK and slept in a small room on the farm now used by the staff. “His father was going to sell the *fazenda*. He was lucky that I started to work for him.” At first, Lucas only ran his father’s *fazenda*, relying on the older, more experienced farmhands such as Arnaldo. Later, he also took over his uncle’s part of the farm to run the *fazenda* where the reserve is now located. When his uncle passed away, his widow decided to sell the *fazenda*. As Arnaldo tells it, Lucas thought that he would not be able to run it by himself (due to lack of experience) and also did not have money to buy it. “I advised him to sell part of the *fazenda*... and pay the rest in instalments... I already knew someone who was going to pay \$R250,000.” In the end, he sold it for \$R350,000. “Lucas gave this money to the widow and paid the rest from what the *fazenda* used to make.”

In this narrative, Arnaldo portrays himself as helping Lucas to secure the source of his wealth and power, i.e. the family’s land. He describes how he was running the farm of Lucas’s father and later came up with the solution as to how to buy his uncle’s farm. The significance of his help is further underlined by his description of Lucas’s humble living conditions as well as the lack of self-confidence and financial resources at the time of his arrival in the area.

Ultimately, Arnaldo’s reward would come in the form of a house in one of the rural settlements and a stable employment on the farm. Such an account was by no means rare on the *fazenda* and among local people and staff, it was common to demonstrate and stress the

weight of the services, favours and loyalty offered to Lucas or his family over the years. The purpose of such narratives seemed to be to accentuate their affinity and demonstrate the strength of their interpersonal relationship by stressing his indebtedness to them.

Yet, not always and not everyone from the local staff was rewarded for work and loyalty with the help and protection of the patron that this traditional understanding of the relationship prescribes. Such was the case of Liliane.

Liliane, a 40-year-old woman with four children, worked as a cook at the reserve. She had a problem with the fingers on her left hand. While Lucas and Laura would let her go on unpaid leave, she could not afford to stay at home and lose the income as she had debts to pay and needed the money. She regularly visited the doctor in the county capital but the problem was not disappearing and surgery was necessary. However, the doctor told her that no public surgeon was locally available and that unless she could move to another region, she would need to register at a private health institution, where some payment was required. “The doctor said that the surgery would be R\$3,500. It is a lot of money, but if this was the price, Lucas was going to help,” said Liliane.

Six months later, however, one day at work, with sadness in her face Liliane told me that “Lucas is not going to help; he was only saying so” and she decided to ask for help from a local politician. Much later, when I went to visit her at her house, she raised her voice and anxiously commented, “I did not need to ask the deputy; they could have helped; they have lots of money. I have been working for them for ten years, but they did not want to help.”

In her story, Liliane describes her health problems and emphasizes how this further negatively affected her already difficult life situation. She hopes and expects that Lucas, the patron she works for, will help and support her financially but although at first Lucas promises to pay for the surgery, he later apparently reneges on this. While we do not know the reasons for his decision, it is apparent that he as a patron has the absolute power to decide to whom and to what extent he will exert his protection. According to Sabourin (2011b), the asymmetric reciprocity represented by the ‘gift’ can be transformed into submission and dependency of the receiver and the prestige of the giver. Lucas and his family’s dominant position in reciprocal relations with the local population allow them to redistribute ‘gifts’ according to their own criteria and thus, establish relationships of personal dependency with

their employees and other local people. Liliane did not seem to have the power to change Lucas's decision and had to accept it. In the end, she resolved to ask for help from a local politician instead. Her expressions of discontent with Lucas reinforce her position of subordination and submission to the apparently arbitrary decisions of her patron. She was frustrated and disappointed by his behaviour because from her point of view, he failed to fulfil his obligations to her, derived from the nature of their relationship and based on her understanding of reciprocity, where work and loyalty is exchanged for help and protection, particularly in situations of need and emergency.

5.5.5 Traditional clientelistic relationships as a foundation for reaching out to communities

From the other side, the perspective of the patrons (*patrões*), the importance of these relationships was also recognised particularly in terms of their underpinning of their wider relations with the local community as a whole. Thus, one day, Laura decided to comment on the changes that had occurred in the area where the RPR headquarters is. She recounted how the place once used to be a farm with buildings and a corral to keep their livestock, and how they used to feed many of the local people such as Valnisete's father and his relatives with the milk produced at the farm. They could not be there all the time to oversee it and thus many local people would come there and get milk for free. These people were poor and did not have money to pay: "People here are very generous with food, but it was a loss for us."

In this context, the food is constructed as a 'gift' from a landowner to their resident workers and other members of the local community. As such, they were conforming to wider, local social norms of generosity with food. Yet Laura's account also carried a sense of them being unwillingly drawn into giving away something as a 'gift' that she perceived as a monetary loss for their farm. Most importantly, the narrative stresses her and her husband's primary social position constructed in the local context as wealthy landowners. Besides that, it also further emphasizes the continuing asymmetry of the relationship, based on the dependency of resident worker on the landowner, characteristic of rural Brazil.

This relationship would sometimes be stated quite explicitly by Lucas. For example, during one of the interviews he described his relationship with the local population as deeply ingrained "because my family has been employing them for more than 100 years." Then smiling he added "that's what I'm using to establish this institution [RPR] in this community," thus, recognizing the importance of these enduring relationships in allowing

him to establish RPR in the area. It is interesting to note in this that ultimately, Lucas and Laura were originally both outsiders to this area, with Lucas having grown up in the UK. The manner in which they were drawn into them, however, was best explained by Lucas's father, Patrick. According to him, it was through his brother Gerald, who was very popular locally, that Lucas was initiated into local society and its customs: "He [Lucas] got into local habits, into people's knowledge, into local people and how to deal with them." Patrick saw that it was this knowledge that was crucial to the effective management of the *fazenda* (family estate). As he explained, the problem that previous outside managers of Fazenda do Carmo used to have was that "they could not talk to the local people. They used Portuguese, but they did not know what they were talking about."

Lucas and Laura were able to build on the relationships that already existed between their relatives and the local population, turning them to their own and ultimately, RPR's benefit. The importance of these local connections was also recognised by RPR's sponsors, in whose view, it was in part due to Lucas's family's historical presence in the area that the project was able to bridge the gap between their 'internationalist', conservation agenda and the local world. As John, the UK based RPR fundraiser and its key figure, put it when I interviewed him:

"Lucas and the fact that his family has been there for... he was always one of the bigger employers because of his farm. So, he is in it with the locals; so, he has helped to bridge the gap."

Their understanding of Lucas as their local intermediary was regularly based on the idea that he was born and educated in the UK, but has now lived most of his life among the people in rural Brazil and thus understands them. In the end, he had knowledge of both social realities and was able to translate between them.⁶⁸ Therefore, besides the control and command of local natural resources and the local labour force through his family's symbolic capital, Lucas also dominated the communication through which the local social reality was presented to the outside world.

In the local social world, where reciprocity is the essential principle for establishing social relationships, local people relate to RPR through their representatives who they perceive as

⁶⁸ Similar to John, most of the foreigners, visitors, sponsors or researchers did not speak Portuguese and the majority of local employees did not speak English. Also, locals working at RPR, of course, besides usual social communication, never directly talked to John or other sponsors. While locals seemed to think it was not appropriate, the other side, for example, John, did not seem to be very interested, both relying in Lucas.

their ‘patrons’. They construct their relationships with the RPR representatives on reciprocal *quid-pro-quo*, where their work and loyalty are rewarded by various ‘gifts’ representing favourable treatment, security and protection. They are commonly interpreted by locals as part of a continuum of traditional reciprocal relationships established in the past between their relatives and the landowner family. Re-established through employment at RPR, they also play a crucial role in local men and women’s interpretations of the future. While the degree of mutual indebtedness indicates the importance of such relationships, the relationship in itself remains asymmetric.

Although Lucas was not actually born and raised in Brazil and came to live here later, by taking over the family landholding and accepting his locally assigned social role with its related obligation, he and Laura became an integral part of the local social order. What is more, they also, implicitly (and sometimes explicitly), recognized their social positions as ‘patrons’, and acted accordingly, both genuinely helping local people but also using them to further their own desired social and economic outcomes. This is, in turn, recognized and welcomed by the RPR sponsors who depend on such skills and knowledge to guarantee the ongoing management and apparent success of the reserve and its aims.

Above all, we can conclude that the asymmetric reciprocity, between Lucas and his family on one hand and local people on the other, is the rationale that dominates the construction of social relations between the reserve and local staff, through whom the reserve’s representatives claim to influence the environmental perspectives and practices of the local rural population.

5.6 Local perspectives of the employment at RPR

Once we have decided to see employment at RPR through the optic of the local population and a broader history of social relations in the area, the boundaries between the reserve and the *fazenda* (farm, family estate, latifundium) suddenly fade away and we begin to see how from the local perspective there is little difference between working for the reserve or any other large landowner.

5.6.1. A good job at the reserve

In the course of my stay between 2012 and 2013, on average, around 25 local people were working at RPR. However, the continuous purchases of more land, expansion of reforestation activities and a constantly increasing number of visitors meant that the workforce at the

reserve was progressively growing. It was common practice at RPR that local staff would be first hired informally for a specific task or employed on a part-time basis before being finally offered a formal and a full-time position. One such example was Luana, who was also employed as a cook at the reserve. She had been working informally for the reserve for one year when Lucas decided to finally sign her employment card (*assinar a carteira de trabalho*),⁶⁹ at which point she started to contemplate how to ask Lucas for her first ever paid holiday.

When I told her that I did not think it was fair to work the whole year without having her employment card signed, she explained to me that “there aren’t many jobs for women. If it was not for the reserve, there would not be anything.” After she moved in with her life partner (*marido*), Luana had given birth to four children and for most of her life stayed at home. She was now 40 and before starting to work at the reserve, she would only occasionally do some cleaning jobs (*fazer faxina*) or make traditional manioc flour (*farofa*) for sale.

For Luana, similarly to Valnisete and other local women, employment at the RPR represents a valued job opportunity and their first experience of ‘formal’ work. As Luana explained, there are not many such job opportunities in the area and that is why she was willing to have her employment not being formalized for a year. During my fieldwork, the reserve employed six women: five worked as cooks and cleaners and one in the tree nursery. This did not include Laura, who acted as the RPR NGO vice-president. Most of the employed women could not read and write and the work at the reserve was an opportunity to receive remuneration comparable with other similar cleaning and cooking related positions as well as occasional financially attractive tips from foreign tourists. Thus, the women’s earnings at the reserve might have been in some cases better than elsewhere locally. In addition, this was frequently their first formal employment with entitlements to work-related social benefits.

Although in the past women regularly worked in agriculture, at the time of my visit it was rather rare to see a woman working on one of the local plantations.⁷⁰ Most local women stayed mainly at home to care for their house and family. Those who wanted to work could usually find jobs as cleaners (*fashineira*), carers or cooks with one of the local better-off

⁶⁹ The distinction between formal and informal work in Brazil is drawn by possession of a *carteira de trabalho*. This booklet represents a kind of labour ID containing all the important information regarding its holder employment history (Noronha, 2003).

⁷⁰ According to the survey I conducted among the local population, only 24% of the whole population was directly employed in agriculture (see Appendix 6 for the survey results).

households or in government run services such as local schools and health centres, but it was understood locally to be difficult for women to find ‘good’ jobs. According to available statistics (Pacheco, 2008), the lack of employment was commonly perceived as one the major problems by the residents of the county of Cachoeiras de Macacu, mentioned by almost 37% of respondents. These results also indicate a low incidence of formalized employment at the county level, only 24% of all respondents (Pacheco, 2008). In the area of my study, this was further aggravated by its isolated nature, limited public transport and the poor educational level of the local population. For instance, the survey I conducted showed 8.4% of local people as acknowledging being illiterate and 66.8% claimed to have fewer than 9 years of study (see Appendix 6). Thus, these factors would only further limit the number of jobs available in the area as well as the employability of local men and women. Therefore, while 66% of survey respondents claimed to have employment, similar to Luana, many local men and women often expressed difficulties with finding a job and the widespread informality of local employment.

Consequently, in the everyday discourse of the local population, their job at RPR would be often compared to other existing employment opportunities in the area. Thus, for instance, during our conversation that day, Luana compared her work at the reserve with job opportunities offered by a local mineral water company:

“There is also some work at the mineral water company, but it is a kind of slavery. In the summer, people have to work there for long hours and get paid only R\$2.5 extra for an hour of overtime.”

The local mineral water company was the largest single local employer in the area. During the 6-month-long hot season, it would provide employment for up to 200 local people out of approximately 2,125 in the area, as registered by the local health centre in 2013. It offered monthly wages of approximately R\$850. However, while in the hot season, the bottling plant required people to work for six days a week and twelve hours a day with little extra financial compensation, during the other half of the year it would temporarily dismiss half of the workforce until they were required the following year. The local population vented their annoyance that the company refused to offer any support to its employees who, in this way, commonly referred to it as ‘modern slavery’.

Luana also talked about her friend who was employed at the nearby guava plantation. At length, Luana described how her friend was working without any employment card, starting

very early, in any weather conditions and earning only R\$20 per day. Thus, in comparison with the mineral water company or other locally available jobs, RPR was frequently depicted as the most attractive employment opportunity, offering better working conditions and earnings, particularly for women.

The official status of RPR employment, with a signed, official employment card, also brought the RPR employees further benefits, such as paid sick leave, holidays and so on, that rural workers in Brazil have long fought for. Rights such as minimum wage, paid leave and formalized work contracts were first granted by law to urban workers towards the end of the first half of the 20th century, which were only extended to rural workers in 1963. Until then traditional practices and forms of dominance were understood to prevail in the countryside (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). Nevertheless, as we have already noted, the incidence of formalized work at the county level was still low and it was not rare to find informally employed local people in the study area. Moreover, the transformation of productive relations and the modernization of agricultural production in rural Brazil eventually led to the eviction of resident workers from large landholdings, removing the role of the landholder as ‘protector’ and ‘provider’ and forcing their former dependents to create their own existence (Garcia & Palmeira, 2009). Landholders were unwilling to register the resident workers as waged workers for economic reasons and often expelled them from their lands. Thus, in many cases, rural workers lost access to land, faced periods of seasonal unemployment and were forced to migrate elsewhere in search of work (Martins, 2002). This was, for instance, depicted in the narrative of Valniseite when she talked about only her father staying in the area, while his other siblings migrated elsewhere. According to Sabourin (2011b), the new situation of rural workers was often much worse than their previous life at a large rural estate (*fazenda*). Besides losing land to work, they often faced hunger and lost their dignity. This was all frequently reflected in local narratives about their life and work in the rural area (*na roça*). More importantly, it also illuminates the way Lucas as a local *fazendeiro* and the work at RPR were often represented by locals.

For instance, Fernando was a forest ranger who had been working for RPR for more than ten years. Before getting job at RPR, he always used to work as a day worker (*diarista*) in fields (*roça*). We talked about his job when, during a walk in the forest, we stopped for a break at a place that now is RPR property but used to be a banana plantation. He told me how the land once belonged to a large local landowner who he used to work for clearing the forest: “We cleared everything and burned it to plant banana.” He described how they used to come here

early in the morning, before sunrise, and harvest banana for a buyer (*freguês*). The work on the plantation (*roça*) was hard and dirty (*sujo*), he commented, noting that “the work at the reserve is better.” At RPR, he begins at 7a.m. and finishes at 4p.m. Also, he never had his employment card signed when he worked on the plantation.

As a forest ranger, Fernando walks in the same place where he once used to work as a daily agricultural worker (*diarista*). He is now protecting the forest that he used to clear. Recalling the past, he compares his previous work conditions on the banana plantation with his current job at the reserve. He describes the work on the plantation as demanding and without any glamour. His job at the reserve is better. It offers better working hours and conditions and more importantly, the years worked at the reserve will count towards his pension. Similar to Fernando, many other men who previously worked as casual agricultural workers or sharecroppers would also describe their former occupation as insecure, hard and dirty. The stability of their income was seasonal and often affected by the weather. To sustain their families, they would need to work even in harsh and adverse weather conditions without knowing whether there would be any work the following week. Although not all of the forest rangers would have the same perspective on their job at the reserve, and I will talk more about this in the next section, it is still clear that the reserve offered better employment opportunities, considerably more stability of income and security than the traditional forms of employment in agricultural production.

As the employment at the reserve was socially constructed by locals as an interpersonal relationship between employees and Lucas and his family, he was commonly praised as an individual for providing formal and well-paid jobs. During my conversations with people from the study area, Lucas was often compared to other local large landowners (*fazendeiros*), who would give preference to informality mainly for economic reasons. Their workers would similarly usually seek a ‘good’ relationship or ‘friendship’ (*amizade*) with them, instead of asking them to formalize their employment. Thus, local men and women commonly eulogised Lucas for actually paying (*pagar direitinho*) them for work and even signing their employment cards (*assinar a carteira*), something still not very common when employed locally as a day worker in agriculture. Also, as he would extend this practice over his farm and household, Lucas and his family were regularly seen as good patrons (*bons patrões*) who most of the local people would desire to work for. In other words, after the gradual collapse of traditional social structures when local people in rural areas became exposed to income insecurity, for some of them gaining formal employment at RPR represented an opportunity

to re-establish some of the benefits of traditional relations, where an employment card and social benefits fitted within a broader understanding of the ‘gifts’ that a patron could and should bestow on loyal workers.

5.6.2 Our patron is a mean person

Against these positive depictions of relationships and employment with Lucas stood another local discourse related to work at RPR, depicting Lucas as a more self-interested, wealthy person with little consideration for the views and needs of the community in times of hardship.

Thus, for instance, it was common to hear forest rangers, but others also employed at RPR, complaining about their low income. Here it is important to note that the monthly wage of R\$760 for a forest ranger was lower in comparison to that of an agricultural worker at a manioc plantation who could earn between R\$70 and R\$100 per day. Although their earnings represented the maximum an agricultural worker could earn in the fields, their job was physically demanding, requiring them to work six days a week and often in harsh weather conditions. Yet, I was also able to observe that many male reserve employees continued to maintain their own small garden plantations or work in their free time as helpers or sharecroppers for Lucas at his farm or other local landowners. They could also increase their income by collecting seeds in the RPR forests and selling them to Lucas or planting manioc on the RPR reforestation plantations. Alternatively, they would have other income-generating activities. Therefore, they could, and often would, invest their extra free time into performing activities that would compensate for their lower income at RPR.

Still, for the majority of local employees, Lucas was a mean person whom they ironically would call *mindingo*⁷¹ (poor, beggar). Several of them would explain to me that when the project was managed by the Dutch-Brazilian couple in its early years, people at the reserve used to earn more than the people employed at Lucas’s farm. Yet, once Lucas took over, one of the first decisions was to equal the remuneration of people employed on his farm and RPR. Guilherme, another forest ranger, commented on the subject stating, “he [Lucas] likes earning money but he does not like paying others. He wants the money only for himself,” and such representations of Lucas were quite common among local staff members. They were painting him as putting the welfare and wealth of himself and his family above any local

⁷¹ From *mendigo*, meaning beggar or poor.

considerations or obligations. I still did not understand why they thought of him as *mindingo*. To me, Lucas was giving them a job and still letting them to make something extra, for instance, by giving them extra work on his farm or sharing with them the income from manioc grown on RPR reforestation plantations. When I wanted to know why they thought of him as ‘mean’, Guilherme continued to explain that the wage of a forest ranger was too low. According to him, Lucas was rich. While his land was small and hilly (*no morro*), Lucas’s land was on the fertile lowland (*terra boa embaixo*) from which, thanks to having a land title (*documento*), he was able to expulse the squatters (*posseiros*). “My land does not have a road, electricity, I don’t have title to it and the land has little value.”

Thus, the key issue can be understood as the perceived unequal wealth distribution in the area and the role of Lucas as a large landowner (*fazendeiro*). The RPR employees would compare their socio-economic situations to that of their patrons, thinking that as they were so rich, they could offer to pay more if they really wanted to.

However, there were other important aspects to this discourse. One day, Marina, another cook at the reserve, seemed to be irritated with Laura, who wanted her to go to their house to cook dinner for a family visit. Yet, Marina was already very busy at the tourist lodge. Also, she had been working several days without any time off or time to see her family and small children properly. She felt exhausted:

“Laura needs someone to go to their house. The family of Lucas is coming. They are very rich people who do not even look at the poor like us. And, Lucas does not want to pay much. To us he pays only R\$30; he is stingy (*mindingo*). He wants to gain money (*lucro*), but to us he wants to pay only peanuts (*daquele seco*).”

Then, I asked whether he pays cash in hand when they work at his house. This made her apparently even more annoyed as she started saying agitatedly: “What? Paying cash in hand? Who pays is the reserve, on payday.”

Thus, it was not only the social inequality but also the way in which Lucas and Laura would manage RPR, exploiting local labour and using it for their own benefit that seemed to be aggravating the local staff. Lucas, acting from his social position as local landowner and patron (*patrão*), was liaising with his local employees through establishing interpersonal

clientelistic relationships, within which he was able to ask for more work that was perceived as not paid for, or paid for unfairly.

Another incident that occurred towards the very end of my fieldwork then brought more clarity into this issue. As already mentioned in Chapter 4, Lucas and Laura would often claim publicly that they work as volunteers, without any remuneration, dedicating their lives to saving the AF. This representation was, however, contested by their employees.

At this point, Rosa was working in the kitchen and she wanted to know if Lucas talked to me about his work at the reserve. She was wondering whether he had told me that he and Laura work there as volunteers. According to her, this was what he would say to them as well as to foreign volunteers and to other visitors. “Lucas says that he works as a volunteer (*voluntário*), but it has been three years since we found out that he makes R\$7,000 [approximately \$2,200] and Laura R\$4,500 [approximately \$1,400] per month. But they also have their farm, which gives them lots of money.” The unconfirmed rumour among local staff was that the farm gives Lucas more than one million (Brazilian) reals per year.

Rosa told me all of this in confidential tones as if she was saying something that I, as a foreigner (*gringo*), was not supposed to know. She described how she felt deceived by Lucas and Laura, presenting their work at RPR as voluntary while receiving a salary that was many times higher than the wage of most of the RPR local employees. In her view, RPR was only another form of wealth generating activity for Lucas. Then another day, I talked to Rosa about her work again:

“Lucas thinks only about himself. He can think only about what is good for him. I have known him since he came here. He only does something for you if you have something for him. If you do not have anything for him, he does not even look at you. He does not put himself into your place. When he pays us our money, he makes this sarcastic question about whether we had worked hard enough to deserve the money.”

Rosa was commenting on our previous conversation where she asked me how much Lucas charged me for staying at RPR. She thought that he was charging me as well as other foreigners a lot, but was only redistributing a small part of this RPR income in the form of wages. She describes him as a selfish person, little interested in others, and humiliating them with sarcastic comments about their work when comes time to pay them. This was a common

pattern of local staff discourse. They often thought that they were not paid enough in comparison with what RPR receives. In their discourse, Lucas and Laura tended to abuse and undervalue their work. In addition, while Lucas and Laura hesitated to pay or even mocked them for what they deserved for their work, they, already rich farmers, had disproportionately higher salaries, while pretending to work as volunteers. In other words, from the local point of view, they were using their control over RPR as another form of wealth accumulation.

Thus, while local staff would value and seek the stability provided by the formal character of their employment at the reserve, and protection by establishing an interpersonal relationship with Lucas and his family, they would also point to social inequalities in rural Brazil and reproduced through RPR, dividing the rural population into patrons and their dependent workers. Principally, they would often compare Lucas's wealth with their own socio-economic condition and the earnings of Laura and his family with what they received in payment for their work. Then they would often stress that RPR officially presented itself as a non-profit NGO, but was in reality controlled by its administrators, wealthy landowners who used it for their own economic benefit and further personal enrichment, rather than distributing the benefits among other people, such as their RPR employees. Consequently, Lucas appears in their discourse as a self-interested person who lacks generosity and compassion for others. What is more important, local people believed that Lucas and his family were financially benefiting from most of RPR's conservation activities, such as gaining commissions on land purchases, selling seeds or planting manioc on reforestation plantations, a point I will return to later. Therefore, their dissatisfaction with work at RPR was also related to the perceived unequal balance between their working obligations and conditions and financial compensation, within the context of the persisting social inequality characteristic of Brazilian rural society. Above all, their discourse reflected the coexistence of both systems, one based on market logic and the other on traditional reciprocity.

5.6.3 Tourist industry jobs

As elsewhere in the tourist industry, a job at the reserve often required the local staff, and mainly those working with tourists, to spend long hours and weekends at work. As demonstrated in the cases of the women employed at the reserve as cooks, their work in the kitchen was demanding and they would often have only limited time to care for their own families or visit friends. Thus, one day at the lodge kitchen, Rosa complained to me:

“She [Laura] is always pressing down on us (*está em cima da gente*). Today there is only one guest at the lodge and she could have left me to go home earlier, but she didn’t. She says that she cannot as the others might see it. But she does not understand that we do not have time even to clean at home. We are always here. ... I feel like leaving this place but it’s difficult for a woman to find a job like this. That’s why we stay and carry on (*a gente aguenta*).”

Thus, Rosa expressed her frustration related to working hours that I would also often hear from other local people employed at RPR. For instance, Zaquiel, the RPR bird guide, would often talk about leaving: “It is a lot of work, I want to leave, but Lucas does not let me go.” He felt tired of working long hours and not having weekends off. He wanted to go back to his previous job at a garage, even if he was going to earn less.

Then, as the end of the calendar year was approaching, I was surprised to observe how several members of staff suddenly claimed to be leaving, including a driver, a cook and a forest ranger. I was beginning to think that RPR was soon going to lose all its best employees when Valnisete explained to me that the same situation is repeated every year. In the end, the majority of these people stay, their threats to leave are, in part, a tactic to make Lucas give them better pay. “Everyone knows that once you leave him, he won’t have you back.”

Indeed, Zaquiel, who was considered by the RPR management to be a reliable worker, was given a promise of a higher income and his conditions of work being renegotiated so that he could spend more time with his family. Yet, tethered through a relation of mutual reciprocity to his boss (*patrão*), who provided him not only with a secure job, but also land to plant and employed his wife, Zaquiel would continue to be called to work early mornings, weekends and evenings, whenever it was necessary to guide tourists, which he continued to complain about.

It is not altogether surprising to find that local people employed at the reserve would talk about their work at RPR as they would about any other local job. The everyday issues concerning them were very distant to any nature or environment related topics that a western conservationist or a distant project supporter might romantically imagine. While their labour relations at RPR were established as modern and formal work contracts based on the logic of market exchange, in everyday reality they were operated and constructed as traditional reciprocal but hierarchical relations, reproducing much older inequalities and hierarchies. Above all, these labour relations, reflecting the wider relationship between RPR and local

people, were established in a social world where a traditional system of asymmetric reciprocity and modern market exchange continue next to each other. Such coexistence, which might be defined from a theoretical perspective as a ‘mixed system’ (Sabourin, 2011a, 2011b), has the potential to bring together the alienation associated with both systems, capitalist exploitation and paternalistic domination of large landowners that, in conjunction, drive the domination of subalterns in Brazil (Sabourin, 2011b). To explore the implications of these conclusions further for *in situ* private nature conservation, we now look at the most emblematic of RPR’s activities, the work at its reforestation plantation.

5.7 Rangers or agricultural workers?

Tourism was only one of the activities where RPR would offer employment opportunities for local men and women. Considering the number of jobs created by RPR, more than half of them came under the auspices of its role in the conservation and protection of the environment. During my stay in the area, RPR officially employed approximately 15 forest rangers. However, only one of them actually spent the majority of his time physically in the forest, guarding it, maintaining paths, and guiding tourists and researchers. Some of the others carried out quite different and varied tasks, such as driver, maintenance work or security, night guard for the headquarters and lodge, and so on. For the rest, their service would be divided among the more obvious forest ranger tasks and a variety of other work activities, including construction but most importantly, the reforestation plantation.

5.7.1 Forest rangers are ex-hunters

However, the job of a forest ranger was not supposed to be for everyone. The RPR administrators claimed that since the very beginning of the project, they tried to identify and offer work to those local men who were known as passionate hunters. For example, Fernando was an ex-hunter famed among locals for his knowledge of the forest and hunting skills. He recounted that when he started to work for RPR ten years ago, Lucas must have called him several times for a talk, offering him a job at RPR before accepting it. It was not because Fernando lost interest in hunting, he continued to like spending long hours in the forest, tracking and observing the animals, not necessarily killing them, but his advanced age and the harsh working conditions as a day labourer led him to eventually reflect on Lucas’s offer. Similar stories would be recounted by other forest rangers employed principally in the earlier stages of the project.

Such preference of employing a selected individual from local communities was, numerous times, presented officially by RPR as one of their principal conservation strategies that would produce both societal and environmental benefits. For instance, at one TPSP Consultative Council meeting in 2013, Laura described how RPR had chosen the policy of non-confrontation with local people, and instead offers them employment. She defined their priorities as the elimination of hunting through offering the positions of forest ranger to renowned local hunters (*grandes caçadores*). In part, this was crucial for the RPR project as it helped to justify its existence. It was also part of their strategy of how to market the project in relation to their sponsors, supporters, government authorities and foreign visitors. They were the primary (far-flung) consumers of their products, the representation of well-protected place of immense natural value. In other words, it was a component of the ‘spectacle of nature’, produced by them, that Brockington *et al.* (2008) define as ideas, images and representations of the physical environment and the place of people in this environment used in biodiversity conservation. The distinctive feature of such representations is the positive message they send that the money (spent or donated) will protect what is being portrayed as the ‘reality’ (Igoe, 2013). An image of a skilled hunter with intimate knowledge of the forest, able to track and kill an animal, who was turned into a fierce defender and protector of the threatened natural habitat through employment at RPR was a powerful demonstration of the project’s efficacy in dealing with local people and changing their natural resource use practices and thus, achieving the RPR conservation goals. Produced with the purpose to convince the donors, sponsors and authorities, it conveyed the idea of project ‘success’ to secure their continuous financial, or other non-material support.

Yet, such practice was also mirrored in the local representations of the employment at RPR. On one occasion, I was a witness to this conversation between Valnisete and two local men considering jobs at RPR:

1st man: “Because people say that only if you hunt, you can get a job at the reserve.”

Valnisete: “You do have to be a hunter (*caçador*) if you want to get a job at the reserve.”

2nd man, saying rather sarcastically: “Do I have to put this on my CV too?”

Valnisete: “Lucas said that many people are bringing their CVs. But, at the staff meeting, he said that he did not want anyone who could spoil what already exists there.”

Being a hunter or ex-hunter (*caçador*) was thus, amongst locals, often presented as the ‘eligibility criteria’ for work at RPR as a ranger. In other words, it was one of the determinant factors defining the distribution of the RPR employment related benefits among the local population.

However, as the project was growing, RPR needed more forest rangers. Also, not every local hunter wanted to become a forest ranger, for economic, personal or other reasons. Thus, many of the rangers, often employed at later stages of the project, confessed secretly to me as a ‘*gringo*’ that they had actually never hunted or liked hunting very much before. Moreover, with incoming funding from sponsoring organizations for reforestation, the rangers tended to spend more time on reforestation projects rather than walking the forest and guarding it against local hunters as it was often presented to a wider conservation audience for fundraising purposes. Such contradictions between the illusion produced by the conservation ‘spectacle’ and the reality on the ground were firmly set in the local context, where traditional clientelistic practices dominated the social relations.

On several occasions, I worked alongside the forest rangers, planting trees at the reforestation plantations or harvesting the manioc planted among them. Forest rangers, sometimes accompanied by the workers from Lucas’s farm or other temporarily hired local men, would usually plant trees from March until June. For instance, in 2012, they claimed to have planted 14,000 trees. Such reforestation then required further cleaning, watering, and the application of chemicals (*remedio*, *veneno*) to protect the seedlings against ants and weeds. The routine at the reforestation plantation in many ways resembled the work routine I later witnessed at regular manioc plantations, working alongside relatives and friends of many of the rangers. Men would start early and work at a fast pace, joking and laughing. For example, should they lose sight of each other, they would mimic bird songs or animals sounds using them as signals to communicate with each other. They would break for an early lunch around 10a.m. and leave the plantation after midday when the heat of the sun was becoming intolerable. Thus, most of the working rituals would be the same, and the only difference I was able to note was the character of the actual work task.

Second, the work on the reforestation plantations was supervised by Arnaldo, who came from a local, ‘traditional’ family and was officially employed as the headman on Lucas’s farm. He led rangers and organized their work, while also working alongside them during their main work activities, concentrating on reforestation. However, it was Roberto who was always

officially presented as the head ranger or field coordinator, particularly to foreign visitors. Although he was a professional from Rio de Janeiro, university educated and with previous experience of working as a state park ranger, he was relatively new to RPR. He would often talk about how local forest rangers needed more training and education as they did not possess the ‘right’ knowledge and thus were not able to give value to the threatened forest habitat. Being an ‘outsider’, it was primary his obligation to face and ‘scare off’ the local hunters, most of them close relatives and friends of the rangers. What is important here, is that as the result of his approach and role, he was not popular among local men and women, and most of the rangers openly resisted cooperating with him.

Yet, Roberto’s main interest was to actually get some of the rangers to walk the forest with him. Thus, one day at the reserve headquarters, I heard Roberto complaining that he went to ask Arnaldo to let at least one of the rangers walk the forest, but was told that they still had 5,000 trees to plant and therefore, not a single ranger could be spared. This conflict was resolved by Lucas, who backed Arnaldo and told Roberto that planting trees was the priority and he needed rangers to work on the reforestation as the funding from sponsors did not cover the costs of labour. Thus, the work of local rangers at reforestation not only resembled more traditional forms of labouring in the fields, but was also organized and managed through existing social structures, blending the boundaries between the RPR and the farm, while reproducing traditional social hierarchies.

A third point was the rangers’ representation of their own work. During one of the early days of my fieldwork I was working alongside them when I asked Fernando, whom I did not know before, whether he was also a ranger; another of the men working with us started to laugh and quickly said: “Is he what? A ranger?” The others also laughed. In the meantime, in silence, Fernando continued planting trees but and gave an impression of being puzzled. Again, the same man asked him very loudly with an ironic tone: “Do you walk in the forest?” The others laughed again.

That day, in the working atmosphere of laughing and making jokes at each other’s expense, as often happened while working on the plantation, they were not laughing about Fernando, as I initially thought, but rather about my, the ‘*gringo*’s’, naive image of them as rangers who walk the forest. After this, again and again during the course of my fieldwork, I noticed their comments, ridiculing their position as rangers and humorously describing how they never or rarely actually ‘walked the forest’ and guarded it.

On the same day, another younger ranger called Laec told me how he continues studying and wants to leave as what he earns at RPR is very little. He demonstratively showed me the dirty and worn out clothes he had on, describing it as the only RPR uniform he has ever had.⁷² “I am not going to pay for a new one myself,” he proclaimed. Such things, in their view, were attached to the lack of respect that their positions were given within the organization. In their view, their role was constructed by the RPR administration to deceive *gringos*, based on the image of ex-hunters transformed into resolved local forest protectors, a representation that contrasted with an everyday reality produced by socio-economic circumstances and that in many ways resembled work on any local agricultural plantation.

Above all, the reserve was presenting their practice of employing local ex-hunters as forest rangers who enthusiastically protect the threatened forest habitat as one of the important results of their successful conservation strategy, bringing socio-economic benefits to local people and further enhancing the protection of the AF. This was part of their production of a conservation spectacle; however, the reality on the ground was different. With ranger posts representing more than 50% of all jobs available at RPR, this employment policy acted to distribute the benefits of having stable and secure jobs at the reserve to a very narrow stratum of local society, male hunters, while excluding the vast majority of others. Yet, neither were all the forest rangers ‘real’ ex-hunters and nor did their work occupation match the image produced for the institutions and individuals allied with the RPR project. Instead of guarding the forest, increasing reforestation activities demanded the forest rangers spend most of their time working on the plantation. Here, in many ways, their everyday task resembled the work on a regular agricultural plantation and was managed alongside and thus reproduced traditional social hierarchies. More importantly, rangers themselves did not feel like ‘proper rangers’, so conscious were they of how this image was being sold to outsiders or as they would put it, *‘só para inglês ver’* (‘just for the English to see’).

5.7.2 Planting manioc

These local interpretations of employment at RPR were further reinforced and exposed through the practice of planting manioc among the trees on the reforestation plantation. According to Lucas, they planted 100 ha of trees up to 2012 and they were planning to plant another 100 ha in the following year, greatly accelerating RPR’s reforestation activities. It

⁷² When Roberto argued that new uniforms, equipment and more training were required for rangers to carry on their duties as forest rangers, he was told that financial resources were not available. Although he even applied for money from the UK sponsors, his demands were never met and ultimately, he was dismissed.

was common that manioc was planted around the tree seedlings. Land prepared for reforestation, with the technical assistance from Lucas's farm, was planted first with trees, followed by manioc. Twice cleaned (*roçar*) and treated with herbicide (*botar veneno, remedio*), such manioc was usually harvested after 13 months. This practice was approved by the responsible forest engineer RPR consulted, who argued that it combined 'ecological' and economic benefits.

As with seed collection, this agricultural production also represented an opportunity for the forest rangers to gain extra income. Therefore, I found myself puzzled when I noticed a feeling of discontent among them. The same young ranger, Laec, made this comment about the whole situation:

"Lucas prepares the land and we plant. We receive 20%-30% and he keeps the rest. It does not go to the reserve; it goes to him. He is very wily (*experto*); he could give us all of it."

Therefore, as I later understood, and as I suggested above, their resentment was related mainly to the division of the income between them and Lucas who was, according to them, financially benefiting from it, rather than it going to RPR as I thought.

However, in spite of RPR being a Brazilian NGO, the financial flows accompanying the reforestation were hidden behind the veil of the private character of the project whose managers felt little obligation to make its financial transactions public and thus subject themselves to public scrutiny. Therefore, it was not possible to clearly identify what was actually happening with the income from the manioc harvest as well as how much Lucas's farm might be charging RPR for the land preparation. Lucas himself claimed that the money from manioc constituted an income for RPR. In one of our recorded interviews, he explained that they reforest about 20 ha per year and plant manioc in between the trees to reduce the cost of reforestation. He noted that "we pay for the men to work in our [RPR] time and I give them a 30% commission on the sale," and then described the rest as going to RPR, which owns the land. He did not mention how they have used or were planning to use such income from more recent reforestation work but claimed that previously, R\$15,000 from a 10 ha plantation "went towards the making of wetlands." Yet, while some administration staff would hesitate to comment on the issue, claiming that they did not know where the money was actually going, according to Silvio the reforestation activities were fully funded by

sponsors and generated neither additional cost, nor income for RPR. All in all, it is not possible to say with confidence what the destiny of these financial returns was and who was actually benefiting (more) from planting manioc among the trees.

Notwithstanding, for local rangers, planting manioc at the reforestation plantation represented a parallel to a traditional sharecropping contract between a landowner and his workers, where the landowner would prepare the land and they would invest their labour. In their view, RPR paid for land preparation and they cared for plants, but it was Lucas who was the principal financial beneficiary, misusing his social position as a landowner and patron as well as his control over RPR's natural resources and thus, exploiting it all for his personal wealth accumulation. In their view, this was represented by his arbitrary decision over what percentage of manioc harvest rangers received. Parallel local representations of subtle forms of oppression and exploitation could be further extended to other RPR activities, such as land purchases, the informal seed trade and so on, emphasizing the juxtaposition of 'traditional' social structures and 'modern' labour relations based on market exchange.

5.8 Conclusions

Offering employment is usually presented as a key strategy for how a private conservation project can successfully liaise with people from involved communities by bringing them direct socio-economic benefits, and it has been adopted by many private conservation projects in the AF (cf. Kill, 2014). In RPR's case, the approach was presented as a strategy for allowing them to deliver their desired conservation outcome, to enhance protection of threatened natural habitats. Yet, my analysis in this chapter has been to emphasize how social relations established through work cannot be simply divorced from the particular socio-economic and historical context in which they are embedded. Therefore, the representations produced by RPR around the benefits of local employment were often founded on simplifications of local social reality with the purpose of meeting the expectations of sponsoring organizations, individual donors or sympathizers of the RPR project.

On the ground, employment at RPR, although representing modern labour relations based on formal contracts and the logic of market exchange, was nevertheless still founded on social structures reproducing the traditional reciprocal but hierarchical relations between patron and client. RPR's main representatives, Lucas and Laura, were viewed by the local population primarily as wealthy local landowners with symbolic, social and economic capital, granting them the power to control a sizeable share of local natural resources and thus influence the

life of people from local communities. Local men and women would thus seek to establish relationships with the RPR representatives, based on their understanding of reciprocity where, in exchange for their work and loyalty, they would not only secure employment but also receive other ‘gifts’ traditionally provided by rich *latifundistas* (large landowners) in rural Brazil. At the same time, the RPR representatives were claiming to turn this to the reserve’s advantage and to be using their traditional social positions as ‘patrons’ to achieve the project’s conservation goals, an approach that was accepted and welcomed by the project’s sponsors.

While the RPR representatives would represent these local forms of employment as a successful community outreach programme, allowing them to shape the environmental perspectives and practices of the local rural population, men and women from the rural settlements themselves would in their everyday discourse point mainly to social inequalities persisting in the area and reproduced through RPR. Although the RPR managers were portrayed as good patrons, they were also depicted as mainly interested in their own benefit, in particular in personal wealth accumulation at the expense of the others and even the RPR project itself. For them, employment at RPR was in essence not that different from any other job in the area. The consequences of this reality may in fact be great for both local rural populations and the natural environment. It has been argued that the coexistence of capitalist exploitation associated with modern labour relations and paternalistic domination related to relations of asymmetric reciprocity have the potential not only to perpetuate, but to drive further the economic exploitation and domination of the most marginalized strata of Brazilian rural society (Sabourin, 2011b). Thus, the case of forest rangers working at reforestation plantations demonstrates how twisted images of conservation success employed by RPR to attract sponsorship were, in reality, concealing a social reality where local people would feel frustrated and deceived by the actual practices of their employment. One of the outcomes would then be a common feeling of resentment among the local people and their resistance towards the RPR project, discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Resentment and Resistance

6.1 Introduction

The creation of protected areas is regularly linked with resistance towards them. While commonly noted in the context of public parks (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Holmes, 2007; West *et al.*, 2006), private conservation projects are also often subject to resistance from those who live within or around them (Kill, 2014; Meza, 2009; Quintana & Morse, 2005). Although the establishment of protected areas can produce considerable material, symbolic and cultural impacts on human populations (West *et al.*, 2006), the resistance towards them was more often observed to be rather clandestine and less violent (Kelly, 2011). Those who are most affected and oppose them often belong to weak rural groups and are thus ill-equipped to face those, commonly educated and powerful people, acting on behalf of protected areas (Amrock, 2006; Brockington *et al.*, 2008). While such subaltern groups commonly rely on acts of everyday resistance, these might not be sufficient to challenge the existence of protected areas; however, such tactics can still undermine some of their policies (Holmes, 2007, 2013). Unveiling local resistance towards PPAs in the AF of Brazil is thus crucial for understanding the relationship between them and local, rural inhabitants.

Local resistance towards conservation on private lands in the AF of Brazil is precisely what this chapter aims to discuss in more detail. It asks what and how members of the affected rural population around RPR resist its aims and actions and what the reactions of RPR and its representatives are to such resistance. It is argued that while both the inhabitants of neighbouring rural communities and RPR view the valley from their distinct perspectives, the main contest takes the form of a symbolic conflict over the valley's imagined future.

In the first section, I set the theoretical underpinnings for analyzing local resistance towards RPR. The chapter then presents some of the different 'content' of such local resistance and RPR's reactions to it.

6.2 The non-confrontational approach of RPR

As has already been discussed in this work, local men and women were often publicly presented by RPR as if not supporting, then at least tolerating the project, mainly due to being appreciative or aware of the benefits RPR was bringing to them by protecting local natural resources and their respective environmental services, contributing to local education and

providing employment. Thus, Lucas claimed that every time he goes to see people, “they greet me with smiles, praise the work and talk about how beautiful the place is looking and what a good job we are doing.” In this account, young people are keen to work for them and local landowners are happily coming to them to offer their parcels of land for sale, and there are only a handful of local people who feel antipathy towards the project, based on their view of hunting as part of their cultural legacy. Thus, although RPR’s leading figures would acknowledge some kind of discord among the local population over their conservation interventions, they maintained that their community approach, such as offering employment instead of persecution to local hunters, was designed to preclude any kind of alienation leading to overt opposition towards their project and was being successful in achieving this.

Moreover, the RPR representatives believed that even those local people who might not be supportive of their project now would change eventually and comprehend what the aim of RPR was. In the meantime, it was not important that all of them agreed as long as they do not actively oppose their project. “Your community may not totally approve but may not disapprove as well,” explained Lucas. The aim was to avoid conflict and antagonising people from the communities: “Even though we believe in conservation, in the protection of species, we are trying to be very careful and delicate in what we do and what we say and not to raise any negative public opinion.” According to him, it was this that was differentiating the RPR from the TPSP approach that was more strictly implementing and enforcing environmental regulation. RPR’s objective was not to make local people “frustrated, angry, or put into jail or anything like that” to guarantee the success of their project, but rather: “The way we work in private conservation is to tire out those people [who oppose us] and work with this transition.” Thus, instead of confronting the local men and women, they were planning to work with them throughout this ‘transition period’ until they became less dependent on agriculture and, at the same time, commenced to perceive the value of the surrounding natural environment.

The key point is that the RPR management thus claimed to adopt an approach to conservation that would eliminate or greatly minimize any possibility of conflicts or anger among local residents. Notwithstanding, there were still many occasions when local men and women would raise their voices to express or take action to demonstrate and air their frustration, fears and preoccupations with the RPR activities, such as land purchases and access restriction, and thus resist the changes it was imposing on their lives.

In analyzing this situation, it is useful to draw on Scott's (1985) concept of everyday resistance. In his work *Weapons of the Weak*, he describes how some factors, such as the heterogeneity of peasant populations, their relations with landowners and the slow pace of change, reduced incentives for and thus resulted in the absence of collective actions among rural populations in the face of the transformation of agrarian economies to a capitalist mode of production. Instead of insurgency, Scott argued that peasants, fearing repercussion, often turn to more anonymous and covert acts of everyday resistance. These are defined as small-scale actions, whether material or symbolic, of subordinated class members to counter the claims made on them by the dominant classes. The essential characteristic of such acts is that they require little planning, avoid direct confrontation and are often used by the weak to advance their own claims in relation to other members of superordinate classes (Scott, 1985).

Holmes (2007) has adapted this analysis to the context of neoliberal nature conservation, arguing that individuals affected by protected areas are similarly constrained as they need to balance protest with their ongoing livelihoods and access to land and employment, which reduces their ability to take collective action, and propels them to use more subtle forms of resistance. In the AF of Brazil, such resistance has been noted to have a form of creativity when, for instance, individuals were able to resist stereotypes imposed on them by using and adopting their local knowledge to a new booming tourist industry (Idrobo *et al.*, 2015) or by applying alternative agricultural techniques combining organic agriculture with agroforestry (Kill, 2014). Yet, although such actions might be regarded as trivial, carried out by a sufficient number of affected individuals and/or in incremental fashion, they can underpin large-scale changes (Scott, 1985), such as the ultimate failure of conservation projects (Holmes, 2007). Therefore, in spite of being largely underestimated in the discourse of the RPR management who present their non-confrontational approach as preventing local resistance to the project, it is important that we analyze local forms of resistance to RPR, while considering the socio-cultural context.

6.3 The case of Tacíeatá

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the complexity of land tenure would commonly impede RPR from purchasing all land outright, pushing RPR into co-ownership with other local landowners. For example, on one occasion, I was invited by foreign researchers to participate in their hunt for new species of insects. At dusk, we went to one of the RPR properties where, in the middle of the forest, we suddenly found ourselves in a field that had recently been

prepared for planting (Image 6). The cut vegetation and ash covering the soil indicated it being a recent activity. As I learned later, this was one of the RPR properties where rights to the property were still held by the members of the local Souza family.

Image 6 Cultivation area within the forested area co-owned by RPR



Photograph by Peter Slovak

I asked Lucas about this property at the first available opportunity. In contrast with what I had witnessed, he simply maintained that with the exception of a small banana plantation harvested by one of the owners, no other co-owner was interested in the land. The forest was presented as properly preserved and protected and frequently visited by both tourists and researchers. Later, I noticed how RPR was constantly looking for any opportunity to buy the remaining land shares, attributing the place a particular value for their conservation project. While there did seem to be a common agreement across the local community as to the

preserved status of this piece of forest, particularly in comparison with the surrounding area which had already been turned into fields and pastures, different actors still assigned distinct meanings to the place.

For the RPR management and outside researchers, this piece of forest was of special importance owing to the outstanding quality and diversity of tree species it contained. Consequently, it was used by them as a source of seeds to be sold or used on the RPR reforestation plantations. While all the surrounding forest had been razed, this piece of forest had been ‘miraculously’ saved from destruction. The Souza family, influenced by ‘modern’ environmental discourse, would proudly describe how their distant ancestor had not allowed the forest to be cut down and thus assured its preservation. In this narrative, he was portrayed as the first local ‘environmentalist’, and other alternative local narratives explaining the well-preserved state of the place would be ignored.

According to these more common narratives, it was a kind of enchantment that had protected this part of the forest from destruction. Still, in accordance with Souza family history, they would depict how the land was passed onto the family from their distant ancestor, commonly described as a *caboclo* from the forest (*do mato*), who passed away in a violent incident. Interestingly, the land also still carried an indigenous name and many locals cited it as a place that had been important to the original indigenous population (*do indio*), depicted in their narratives, for instance, as an indigenous burial place with a natural stone monument where indigenous drum-music can be heard at certain times of the year. Sometimes it was described as a place where slaves went through tremendous suffering. It was this ‘death’ and ‘suffering’ that was supposed to have protected it from destruction. Similar to other places in the area, this was an ‘enchanted’ location, under the protection of *Inhangoçu* (the master of the forest) who would not let local hunters (*caçador*) kill animals there. Thus, this small piece of well-preserved forest locally bore a variety of cultural and symbolic meanings but all shared some idea of the area’s significance.

Having realized this, I decided to confront Lucas directly with my observations about the ongoing land use. Reluctantly, he admitted that there might be just an insignificantly small area of plantation in the forest, while adding:

“We live in a predominantly rural area and people still live from farming and this is another issue. You cannot come into conflict with the owners because at the end of the day, you are buying inheritance rights and it does not give you the right

to tell everyone what they should do. It only gives you the right to take what you want [without interfering with the rights of others].”

Lucas’s initial attempt to obscure the issue, and later reluctance to discuss it openly was related to the fact that such an approach was not in direct accordance with the proclaimed RPR conservation policy and image sold to their distant supporters, based on strict protection and the promotion and overseeing of local people’s compliance with environmental regulations and protection. Instead, the reality of the situation reflects RPR’s claims about their non-confrontational and careful approach to the local community to secure their project’s success, and to differentiate themselves effectively from the neighbouring, and locally disliked, state park.

This approach also demonstrates Lucas’s pragmatism in his dealings with some of the local landowners. This was crucial not only for the conservation project, but also for Lucas personally as a local large landowner (*fazendeiro*), as well as for his relatives, as a significant portion of local land was still in the hands of better off and influential members of local ‘traditional’ families (see Chapter 3) who still wield considerable power over local issues. Further, as I have also noted above (Chapter 5), Lucas continued to be aware of the traditional reciprocal relations and obligations that he had with the surrounding, poorer population. All this would mediate any local population’s positioning towards RPR and vice versa, and what is more important, mitigate any local discourse manifesting open disaccord and resentment towards what RPR was representing, promoting or implementing locally.

Holmes (2007) notes that understanding cultural context is important for disclosing the resistance that otherwise might remain hidden from the observer. He notes that “to avoid confrontation, resistance must not contest directly the formal modes of oppression” (Holmes 2007: 187). Instead, while seeming to comply with the existing social order, the resistance is embedded in the culturally specific symbolism of the act (Holmes, 2007). In our case, the restriction imposed by RPR on the use of natural resources which one could understand as ‘invoking repression’ was resisted by locals continuing to use land in more traditional, non-conservationist ways as well as making more general, symbolic claims over the area. This was a very common approach among the members of the local population that I observed on numerous occasions.

Consequently, while the RPR management would acknowledge and recognize the possible contribution of the Souza family to the well-preserved state of the location, it would disregard

the other alternative representations as ‘old-fashioned’ and ‘trivial’ local stories, disregarding any possible contribution of the wider local population (through self-imposed restrictions) to the well-preserved status of the forest. Moreover, as co-owners, the Souza family would continue using a part the land for agricultural production, resisting the RPR’s claims to preserve the area and restricting its use to research and tourism. Thus, both the local elite and the local poor can be understood to use acts that while allowing them to make (symbolic or material) claims to the land, still overtly conform to the dominant power. Above all, the resistance in the case of RPR would not be primarily constrained by the distance between the affected population and the key decision-makers which, as Holmes (2007) argues, is generally the case for many protected areas and conservation projects, but rather by the hierarchical character of the local, traditional patron-client relationship (see Chapter 5).

6.4 Foreign character, control and unknown intentions

The Souza family were not just any local family, but rather were one of the few local ‘traditional’ landowning families that openly supported the RPR project. Some of the family members would participate in the RPR NGO’s general assembly and others sit on the RPR NGO’s fiscal council (*conselho fiscal*), formally overseeing the project and officially representing the local population. Also, they would present themselves as friends of Lucas and his family. For instance, a local farmer Walmir Souza, 50, described Lucas and Laura as friends and people who were always involved (*parceiros*), helping at the local (Catholic) church and the community by providing it with water. Still, he would demonstrate a degree of restraint when it came to the RPR land purchases:

“We preserve the forest we have there but they [land purchases] are a necessary evil (*o mal necessário*). If it wasn’t for it, people would destroy everything.”

Then, towards the end of my fieldwork, Walmir drove me together with a weekender to the provincial capital. As we sat in the car, I witnessed the following conversation:

Walmir: “Some [relatives] sold their shares (*direitos*) to the reserve.”

Weekender: “Is it where you plant (*fazer roça*)?”

Walmir: “Yes, but my father did not sell. We were going to sell, but we aren’t going to anymore. They buy a bit here and a bit there; soon they will take control of the entire place. We are not going to sell it to foreigners, as long as we are not sure what their intentions are.”

Weekender: “And who is buying?”

Walmir: “That NGO, RPR, they are buying it for foreigners. They say that foreigners want to invest their money, but there must be something else behind it.”

Weekender: “Where are they from?”

Walmir: “They are Americans; no, they are English. Their business is reforestation. Lucas makes lots of money with this. He wants to plant native trees only.”

Weekender: “Native trees?”

Walmir: “Yes, they are planting native forest and the animals are going to die of hunger.”⁷³

Walmir had previously been very careful what he said about RPR in my presence, but this time he was openly and angrily talking about his opinion of the reserve and of his decision not to sell their land to the reserve anymore. He also showed their concerns and suspicions regarding the foreigners RPR claimed to be representing and buying land for, while tying these activities to Lucas’s personal enrichment. Such views were common and many of the other traditional local landowning families often claimed that they would no longer sell their land to RPR. As they would often explain, they were concerned with the growing share of local land in ‘foreign’ hands without knowing what the intentions of these foreigners buying the land locally were.

6.4.1 Foreignness of the conservation project

The first of the main concerns common among local men and women was related to the fact that people standing behind the project and buying the land were foreign. As explained in previous chapters, besides the foreign donors and sponsors, Lucas and Laura were also commonly perceived as foreigners. One local man tried to explain to me why people from there do not trust RPR:

“Brazilians cannot trust foreigners, whether Americans or Europeans. They always used to come here to take something away. Lucas is not from here; he is English.”

⁷³ They argued that animals could in the past feed on their fruit trees and crops plantations previously existing in the forest. Similar arguments were also used by local rural population living in the vicinity of three private reserves of SPVS located in the AF of Brazil (Kill, 2014).

Moreover, the local perception of the ‘foreign’ character of the RPR project was further reinforced through the local discourse, according to which the land was not only being purchased by foreigners but for the exclusive benefit of foreigners, such as tourists. Thus, during the survey I conducted, more than half of local respondents expressed their opinion that RPR pays more attention to foreigners than to locals (see Appendix 6). Even more revealing were the comments accompanying their responses in which they would depict themselves as not being educated and wealthy enough, or not speaking the language, to be able to demonstrate the ‘appropriate’ culture and interest in the RPR project and to be welcomed there or to go there in any position other than as manual workers (*emplegados*). The reserve was a place for researchers and wealthy foreigners (*gringos*) and some believed that whatever RPR was doing was good only for *gringos*. “The RPR is an isolated thing. They are there and we are here,” explained one of the respondents.

In addition, the RPR apparently showed no interest in preserving the old buildings and ruins that remained and had possible historical and cultural value. Whenever possible, it was demolishing them, with a view that this would return the land to its most ‘original’ natural state, while also pre-empting any possible invasion by squatters. It would restrict access by locals to places that had previously been used and occupied under the previous traditional residency regime, while also often changing their names to please foreign sponsors. RPR was thus only replicating a conservation practice existing elsewhere in the world, when the creation of a protected area does not involve only the physical, but also the social and historical removal of the local population from the land (Neumann, 1998). As a result, there was a growing feeling of alienation from the project among the local population.

This became evident during social activities organized at the RPR headquarters. Otherwise very social local men and women employed at the reserve, who usually enjoyed every opportunity to participate in a barbecue (*churrasco*) and eating and drinking together, would often ignore parties organized (even for them) by RPR, despite being invited in person. This was also reflected on by Laura, who argued that locals did not participate in their activities “because they are illiterate and they think that people at RPR are of a higher cultural level than they are!” However, as one RPR cook, Luana, once confessed to me, local men and women were not participating because they simply did not like the reserve. Using their ‘weapon of the weak’, their non-participation could be understood as form of resistance to an organization they regarded as ‘distant’ and ‘foreign’, while not directly confronting the dominant clientelistic social structures, upon which it remained founded.

6.4.2 Control

Their second main concern was that ‘foreigners’ are gaining too much control over ever increasing portions of local land. “The reserve is encircling us” or “the reserve is everywhere” were very common expressions of local men and women, when describing the situation with RPR purchasing the land around and sometimes on the doorsteps of their communities. While local landowners were becoming reluctant to sell, landless rural poor would express their unease with the situation in a slightly different way.

For example, when I asked Valniste why local people do not like RPR and whether it is because of not letting them hunt, as was often argued by RPR, she replied:

“Very few people from here like RPR. It is because *alemãos* (foreigners) are buying everything. People are afraid that *alemãos* will buy all the land and one day they will become slaves again. If you look well, those here who really have something are whites (*brancos*), the others are poor [descendants of] slaves. It was *alemãos* who ‘enslaved’ people from here and people are simply afraid that this might happen in the future again.”

Valniste, as a direct descendant of people who were former slaves and later resident workers at Fazenda do Carmo, relates her worries about the returning power of foreigners, in her discourse described as *alemãos* (Germens, foreigners), a common epithet used by locals for foreign (not only German) owners and managers of the historical Fazenda do Carmo latifundium. She links the RPR land acquisition to land inequality, based not only on social but ethnic principles, a common pattern among locals with Afro-Brazilian roots. Her cogitation leads her to the conclusion that too much land in ‘foreign’ hands might cause a recurrence of the historical situation in which Lucas's great grandfather came to dominate the area (discussed in Chapter 3). In one way or another, continuous RPR land purchases were raising disquiet among the majority of the local population.

Yet, this discontent did not manifest itself in more public or organized ways. Local resident associations (*associação dos moradores*) officially existed but either had little actual existence beyond official papers or were dominated by individuals from among the large landowners or ‘traditional’ families. As a result, the communities had little real, official unity; social groups either revolved around family affiliations or around different churches and any other organized initiative capable of voicing their concerns did not exist.

Similarly, while RPR officially integrated local representation into its management structures on its fiscal council (*conselho fiscal*), the local positions were taken by members of ‘traditional’ families. Such members were usually loyal to RPR, while also only being occasionally and relatively informally briefed about the RPR activities. According to John, from NTL, these people did little in reality because, in his view, they did not really understand the project. At a wider level, the project’s ‘General Assembly’ was also supposed to give local actors the opportunity to express their views and shape the reserve.

At the end of 2012, I was invited to come to the end of year staff party at the RPR headquarters. Local employees with their families and a few other local people were sitting around tables. While they were eating and drinking, Lucas and other members of staff briefly evaluated the year and presented the reserve’s planned activities for the coming year. As Lucas finished speaking, he asked those present to raise their hands in agreement with what had been said. It was only later when I was asked to sign in a book that I realized that I was participating in the NGO’s general assembly. The text we were being asked to sign were the minutes of the session and with the lack of explanation of what was going on and the fact that many of the people signing were illiterate, they were clearly unaware of what they were adding their signature to. In similar fashion, a meeting was then organized, to which were invited only ‘amicable’ locals, where a part of the business had been to vote Lucas and Laura into their positions for another 6-year term. Lucas later commented on it as follows:

“To be very honest, it is not like a government election. There is no one else interested in managing RPR; it is only a formality, to follow the law.”

Thus, such events can be understood as theatrical and stage-managed meetings, exclusively for the RPR friends and employees and intentionally structured to produce the desired outcomes through the exclusion of those who might be interested in presenting opposing views or voicing their concerns. This would also differentiate RPR from the neighbouring TPSP, where community representatives were able to present their opposing views and challenge the park policies (see Chapter 4). Instead of engaging local men and women from the reserve’s vicinity, John from NTL talked enthusiastically about the importance of involving the ‘wider’ community in the project by creating a technical advisory board composed of Brazilian scientists who would better understand the project’s aims. Such observations fit patterns recorded of local participation in PPA management elsewhere in the world (cf. Langholz, 1996; Quintana & Morse, 2005; Tecklin & Sepulveda, 2014). My key

point here is to emphasize how such factors were further reinforcing the local feeling of alienation from the project, adding to the fear of increasing foreign control of local land.

6.4.3 Unknown intentions

Besides believing that the project was there for foreigners as well as for Lucas's personal enrichment, local people were convinced that it had other purposes, which were being intentionally hidden. For example, one of the local youngsters, in his response to one of my survey questions, called RPR "an NGO with very obscure objectives." Meanwhile another informant, Asael, thought that foreigners (*alemãos*) were buying the forest as they were interested in medicinal plants. "They must make some profit; they aren't buying the land here just like that," he explained. Similarly, other local men and women were also convinced that foreigners were interested in their land because of its water, plants, animals, minerals or carbon stocks, and so on. The explanation was that foreigners were coming to Brazil since what they used to have in their own countries had already been destroyed. Local people could simply not understand why foreigners, otherwise, would have been spending so much money on the land in the area, without making any economic profit from it. Their primary worry was that such people were coming to buy the land to extract 'their' natural resources, an understanding that is best illustrated by their concerns about water.

Water seemed to occupy a particular position in the local discourse on local natural resources. It was often discussed by local people in a variety of contextual levels, embedded in a diversity of utilitarian, cultural and symbolic meanings. Water had historically been a key form of transport as well as the cradle of deadly diseases. Until a few decades ago, water was also the only source of electricity, through water driven generators. At the time of my fieldwork, local water courses still represented an important source of sustenance for many local people and families, both as drinking water but also for crops and livestock. As the whole mountainous area was rich in water, it was also now home to a flourishing business of drinking-water extraction. Numerous mineral water companies, two of them already operating adjacent to our settlements, were locally the largest providers of regular employment. Yet, local men and women were also constantly worried about the decreasing levels of previously abundant water and "that [commercial water extraction] is why we do not have water in the river!" I was told on more than one occasion.

While in smaller isolated settlements water was individually piped to houses from their nearest available water source, in larger communities, such as Jabá, water would be brought

by communal pipes from a river upstream in the forest, and distributed among households by a pipe network maintained by the county government. In addition, locals liked bathing in the river and would often talk proudly about the beauty of their waterfalls. “We use water for more than just drinking, cooking, washing clothes, washing ourselves... Thank God there is abundance of water in these mountains” was common to hear from locals. These selected examples from a very rich local discourse on water demonstrate not only the utilitarian value of water, but also the much wider social and cultural importance it held in the area.

However, historically formed under the latifundium residency regime, local perception was still that water was a fundamentally communal and free resource. I lived in Jabá for one year, and besides my electricity bill, I also paid a water bill. During this time, I became friends with a local man, Alberto, who was in charge of maintaining the water supply system. When we went together to see where the water was coming from, he recounted how before the pipe system bringing water was built, people in the community used to take water directly from the river. As the sewage was also returning to the river, over time, with the fast expanding population, health problems began to appear. It was at this point that Lucas allowed water to be brought from a place further upstream.⁷⁴ When the system of pipes was built, almost 10 years ago, Alberto was contracted by the county government to watch and maintain it. Then when the government stopped paying him his wage, a few of the local better off landowners came together and decided to contribute to his remuneration. Once the county government took control of the system again and began to pay Alberto’s wage, it also started charging local people for the supply. However, as Alberto explained to me with a note of frustration in his voice, most of the people do not pay: “They think they should get water for free and do not want to pay.” I was very surprised to find out that I was probably one of very few in the community who was actually paying their water bill.

While Alberto’s intention was to complain about his neighbours’ poor appreciation of his work, his story of water also demonstrates that although water was important for locals, in their minds it was supposed to be free. In other words, it was ‘their’ water, and so why should they pay for it. Thus, it was in this context that local men and women often used to express their concerns about what the foreigners from RPR were actually doing in the forest, and the fact that through controlling the land, they were ultimately gaining control of the area’s water supply. Why were they mapping and photographing everything? They were worried that once

⁷⁴ Lucas would provide water in the same way for other local communities, sometimes piped on his land in others on that belonging now to RPR or even within TPSP.

foreigners had purchased most of the land, they would begin to charge local people for ‘their’ water. In other words, they were going to take ‘their’ water away! I also noticed similar discourses, although with less frequency, in relation to other natural resources, such as plants, trees (carbon stock), forest animals (game) or precious metals and the case of the upper Guapiaçu River valley was not unique. In other areas of the AF of Brazil, with foreign involvement in private conservation, local people from rural communities would similarly claim ‘their’ ownership over the surrounding natural resources and contest their appropriation and increasing control over them by foreign institutions (cf. Kill, 2014). Above all, the discourse of local people on the RPR land acquisitions was heavily loaded with feelings of alienation and concerns over growing ‘foreign’ control over ‘their’ natural resources, threatening their future access to them.

6.5 The RPR reaction

The RPR representatives were cognizant of such apprehension about their project among the local population. In 2006, in one of the letters to their supporters, RPR noted the existence of “a latent xenophobia towards foreigners purchasing land in the country for conservation,” and attributed it mainly to local Brazilians’ incapacity to understand their motives. Later, in 2012, I witnessed how Silvio, the RPR research coordinator, in an attempt to explain their work to an uninvolved Brazilian urban dweller, used the example of the time when Lucas was directly asked by a local large landowner, after concluding a land purchase, to tell him “just between us two, what’s behind all this?” “People do not understand why we are buying the land,” concluded Silvio. More importantly, while RPR argued to base their work on scientific knowledge, the inability of Brazilians, and local people in particular, to understand RPR’s intention was often attributed to their poverty, deficient education, and limited worldviews.

In their discourse, the RPR representatives would stress the significance of the AF as one of the most ancient and biodiverse regions of the world. Being an extremely complex ecosystem, of which only 7% remains, it was depicted as constantly threatened by human actions and therefore in need of urgent conservation action. Besides beautiful scenery, the importance of the valley, where RPR was located, was in the richness of its tropical vegetation and water resources with ideal conditions for plant growth. “It [the forest in the upper Guapiaçu River valley] has been perceived, by Brazilian researchers, as one of the best-preserved forests in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The biodiversity here has been proven by many scientists to be exceptional,” proclaimed Lucas. More importantly, it was part of a large

forest tract that goes from 40m to 2000m above sea level, with high incidence of documented endemic birds and insects as evidence of the quality of the remaining forest and its rich biodiversity. This led Lucas to conclude and rationalize the existence of RPR in this way:

“It is very special, in comparison to other areas. Because of the topography and because of the longitude, every square centimetre is different. It varies enormously; so that leads to its complexity. I say, this has to be protected.”

Hence, Lucas, drawing on natural science research (reviewed in Chapter 2) and related official conservation discourse disseminated by conservation BINGOs, was emphasizing the very particular position of the upper Guapiaçu River valley in the AF, especially on the state level. This was then often juxtaposed with what RPR would present as the perspectives of local men and women.

First, the environmental perspectives and natural resource use practices of local people were often represented by RPR as directly conditioned by their socio-economic situation. “The environmental destruction occurs mainly when people are poor,” stated Silvio when we talked about the causes of deforestation in rural Brazil. Similarly, Lucas, in one of the publicly available documents, would describe how more than half of the Brazilian population was poor, but trying to improve their socio-economic circumstances. As the abundant natural wilderness was not bringing them any financial benefits, the impoverished Brazilians saw it as the impediment to their country’s development. He believed that only by reaching financial maturity and independence would people start to realize the importance of the natural environment around them as well as become appreciative of its aesthetic value. Thus, because Brazilians have not reached financial maturity yet (unlike people from the West), they were not able to hold the “convictions that nature is something of value.” That is why, for instance, local people did not understand why planting more trees is so important and RPR had to provide them with direct economic benefits, such as work, to gain their support.

Second, the RPR representatives also argued that local men and women did not understand their project simply because they failed to possess the appropriate education and thus the correct knowledge about their natural surroundings. In their discourse, they would often compare them to people from Europe or the USA. For example, Lucas believed that because of their education, people in the western world have better understanding and awareness of environmental problems. Being born and brought up in the UK, he believed that thanks to education, from their early years people there were constantly exposed to environmental

issues and thus naturally aware of them: “They grow up with greater understanding and a feeling of responsibility towards nature.” That is why their donors and sponsors as well as the researchers and young paying volunteers who were coming to help them with their project were mainly foreign. In contrast, Brazilians were more interested in going to the beach than walking in the forest. Foreigners were more concerned about the environment in Brazil than Brazilians themselves, argued one of their main UK sponsors from the private sector. Thus, local people were thought not to be interested in ‘nature’ at all. Worse, local men and women were represented by the RPR representatives as extremely destructive, able to cut down trees and kill animals, even cats or dogs, regarded by European moral standards as something highly inappropriate. Behind their environmental immorality was the absence of a proper education and subsequent failure to ‘understand nature’ and its ‘real’ importance.

Lastly, unfavourable economic conditions as well as ignorance embedded in their limited and inappropriate education were the main reasons for local people’s narrow and incorrect world environmental outlook. According to John, they had always lived in the area with an abundance of forest. They did not know what was going on, for example, in Indonesia, or could not say where the Amazon was on the map. “It is a completely different level of world understanding and the understanding of the issues around the conservation of the environment.” According to John, Lucas and other administration staff, due to their unfavourable socio-economic situation not allowing them to study and travel, local men and women, held a very simplistic perception where the entire world was covered by the forest, leading them to erroneous conclusion that if the AF was destroyed, it would not have many consequences for the global environment. Local people, including the RPR employees, were thus commonly depicted as simply lacking a global perspective on the natural environment. They did not understand how threatened the AF was, nor could they attribute the right value to nature, water and the forest, and thus discern why hunting or cutting trees down was detrimental for the environment. Consequently, they could not understand why the work of RPR was important.

However, as mentioned earlier, the RPR representatives argued that the local population (or at least some parts of it) had already started to change and comprehend their project, and most importantly, that some of them were getting behind its vision of conservation. Laura argued that particularly weekenders and young people from the surrounding communities with their different lifestyles and aspirations from the more permanent and older local adults were proving to be more open to transformation into ‘competent local environmentalists’.

Also, a slightly distinct perspective on the whole issue was given by John from NTL, who is based in the UK and whom I recorded in 2011. During an interview, prior to my departure for fieldwork, he mentioned Lucas telling him about local people initially resenting their buying of the land: “We were seen as being sort of *gringos* buying up forest.” Lucas told him about ‘crazy-scare stories’ of locals believing “that the British were buying up their land because we wanted to take their water” and export it to the UK. John was convinced that the RPR had passed that phase thanks to Lucas who “has managed to get the whole community on board, understanding that it is their forest and they have realized that we had no intention of taking their water to England. We are buying the land because we want [to protect] wildlife.” According to him, people now understand that what RPR is doing is “protecting their forest. It is there for them to walk in. We are not taking it away from them.”

Here, it is possible to observe how in his discourse, John, to a great degree, reflects on the information passed on to him by Lucas: a common form of receiving information for the majority of foreigners involved in the project, usually only ever making short visits to the project, do not speak the local language, have only limited contact with members of the local population, while being interested mostly in the forest and its birds. It might also be the reason why he trivializes local concerns related to water by downgrading them to ‘crazy-scare stories’. He assigned the fact that initial resentment among local population was eventually extinguished due to Lucas’s efforts to involve them in the project. As a result, they understood that the RPR purchases were aiming to provide protection of ‘their’ forest instead of taking it away from them and still allowed them to use it in the ‘appropriate’ way by walking in it. Above all, this only demonstrates how distant from the project’s everyday reality the understanding of the RPR donors and sponsors of the reserve were in relation to the local population. Misinterpretation of local resentment and their acts of resistance by conservation authorities have been noted as common (Holmes, 2007). They often claim to be the only ones who possess the necessary knowledge to control and manage the threatened natural habitats, while rural people inhabiting these areas are depicted as the nature-hostile destroyers (Nygren, 2003). Thus, whether trivialized or ascribed to a local incapacity to become ‘true’ conservationists, local concerns and acts of resistance remain relegated or largely ignored by RPR and its supporters and representatives.

6.6 Resisting removal

Even as the RPR management rejected the concerns of local people acquiring their land as ‘irrational’, due their poverty, lack of education or limited worldview, this preoccupation can be linked to the broader historical experience of these populations of expulsion and removal from the land. As discussed in previous chapters, several local residents recounted how their ancestors were expelled from the land consolidated under the Fazenda do Carmo latifundium. Families of many were also directly affected by the eviction of rural workers from the estate in the second half of the 20th century. The process of their removal can be seen as having its ultimate end in Lucas’s conversion of the land to the reserve, and similar processes with the local brewery as well as TPSP, with these lands gradually withdrawn from agricultural production and any remaining agricultural workers dismissed and often forced to relocate their homes. Thus, although occurring in different time periods and for different reasons, the outcomes have always been similar for local rural dwellers, stripped not only of access to land, but also of water, wood and other natural resources they previously used to depend on for their subsistence needs.

In spite of the RPR’s official stance that they did not purchase land in dispute, which might result in losing the community’s “approval and support contributing to the success of this [conservation] model,” not all of the lands acquired by RPR were completely without human presence. As was shown in Chapter 4, there had been recent cases of the RPR purchasing lands in areas occupied by small landholders who could be understood to hold informal rights to the land. In addition, there was also a large property of former farm (*fazenda*) land that had been purchased by RPR that was still occupied by the farm’s former agricultural workers.

I was already familiar with this situation when I met with one of the sharecroppers from Lucas’s farm in a local bar. Without me mentioning the topic, he commenced to talk about an old man still living at one of the RPR properties and whom Lucas was trying to expel: “He offered him R\$10,000 [approx \$3,250] for 50 years of work. It does not give enough for you to buy a house. Just a parcel [of land] goes for around R\$18,000-20,000.” The sharecropper recognised that it was not entirely Lucas’s fault, as it should have been the previous owner who settled with the man before selling the land to Lucas. However, Lucas made the old man sign a contract that would allow him to stay there, without giving him any right to land, whilst also obliging him “not to cut a single piece of wood.” However, as my interlocutor said, the old man had never had any formal education, and “he is a foolish old caboclo (*caboclo burro*) that started to work when he was 6. If he does not do this [clear the forest

and plant], what is he going to do? Will he need to steal?” He was disgusted with the situation that Lucas was not allowing the old man to make a new plantation and threatening to denounce him to the environmental police if he did so. “He lives from this [planting]; without it he would die.” According to the sharecropper, the old man was not really deforesting, just cutting down few regrown trees (*capoeira*) to plant manioc and beans. Then he proclaimed:

“God forgive me, but what is one man without study, all of his life living in the forest (*dentro do mato*), without rights to anything, what is he going to do in this situation? We do not have any value for [Lucas]. He’s interested only in trees.”

The local man expressed his anger and disagreement with the situation of the old man who suddenly found himself living within a private natural reserve, where he is prohibited from continuing his agricultural activities using traditional techniques, such as slash-and-burn, to meet his subsistence needs. It is important to note that such statements of opposition were not uncommon and demonstrate how strongly the case resonated among local residents.

Later, when I asked Lucas about the agricultural worker during one of our interviews, he attributed to him the status of a sharecropper without any right to the land. However, he admitted to letting the old *fazenda* worker remain living on the property and harvest his banana plantation: “He’s going to continue living there; he handles his banana plantation and for me, it is not a problem.”

Thus, Lucas again presented his approach to the local population as based on the pragmatism of a wealthy and generous local large landowner (*fazendeiro*) able to act at his will. Yet, the problem was still more complex as the land where the man lived was about to be officially declared one of RPR’s new RPPNs. Thus, Lucas did not forget to add, “but you have to be careful, because you shouldn’t really have anybody living there.”

Given the wider political context of struggle for land in rural Brazil, this particular case evoked a strong and emotional reaction among local people, fuelling further local resentment and resistance towards the RPR project. More importantly, it also shows how conservation on private lands can be understood as the continuation of a long and ongoing struggle for land and subsistence between the landless rural poor and those who control access to it in rural Brazil. Lastly, it represents a form of a physical removal, positioning private conservation

closer to public conservation, where parks are commonly created in the AF without any consideration for the affected population and their natural resource use practices (cf. Castro *et al.*, 2006; Dean, 1995; Dünckmann; 1998; Idoro *et al.*, 2015).

6.7 Symbolic conflict

Besides the suspicion towards increasing foreign control over local natural resources and RPR's perpetuation of land inequity, the main conflict between the local population and RPR was arguably about the 'imagined future' of the area. The future vision of the Guapiaçu River valley was, as described in Chapter 4, represented by the RPR plan baptized 'Future Forests' and ultimately, focused on the reforestation of the area. This vision did not go unchallenged by the local community, as shown by the following discussion.

Early on in my fieldwork I was working alongside Asael, his brothers and friends on a manioc plantation. As we were working and sweating under the hot sun, we would keep ourselves entertained by discussing various issues. It was in such a moment that Asael suddenly turned to me and asked, with a serious expression on his face, whether people from abroad really believed that all this land should be planted with trees, and if it was so, what they thought that people like him and his family were supposed to do and what they were supposed to eat.

This question was never far from people's mind about the activities of RPR. They knew that foreigners who stay at the reserve's headquarters liked to help plant trees and although they were not opposed to the planting of trees, indeed they often planted trees on their own lands. Their main preoccupation was that planting larger areas that had previously been used for agriculture would steadily deprive them of their work and sustenance.

After this conversation with Asael, and as I gradually became acquainted with more and more people locally, I often found myself questioned about this issue. Sometimes it was the choice of the place where RPR decided to conduct reforestation; for example, contemplating the 60ha parcel of land that had long been used as pastureland that had been part of Fazenda do Carmo latifundium and was located in close vicinity of the local community but was now being planted with trees drew this comment from one man, Eduardo:

“At the beginning, it was good. We were worried but they preserve [the environment] and many locals found jobs there. But, this [kind of reforestation] is

going to give hunger. I do not know what Lucas is going to eat. Is he going to eat the leaves of trees? This place is going to suffer hunger.”

Thus, while appreciating what RPR was doing for the community and local environment, Eduardo expressed his concerns with RPR reforesting a piece of pasture located very close to his community. He recalled how his family used to live there, at Fazenda do Carmo, that once used to be a prosperous agricultural estate, providing a living to hundreds of people. Yet, this once productive land was now mostly covered by forest. This latest round of reforestation was causing him to feel unsettled about the long-term future of the community and area, as land without crops and animals would not bring them work and feed their families. Other people had similar reactions: “People are asking why they [the RPR] are not planting fruit trees. Why aren’t they planting some food (*alimento*) for people? Why trees?” as Valnisete said when I told her about my experience with Eduardo. Above all, RPR’s land acquisitions and reforestation projects were causing the local population to worry about the future of the valley and the uncertainty of their continued place in it.

Yet, it was not solely RPR’s presence that was provoking this anxiety but rather a combination of it, with other larger contextual processes that were at the play in the Guapiaçu River valley. The most important factor, which also dominated the local discourse, was the proposed construction of a dam which would turn the middle part of the valley into a large reservoir to supply water for Rio de Janeiro’s constantly growing population. There was also a new petrochemical complex being constructed at the county limits by PETROBRAS, Brazil’s state oil company. The dam project appeared to be starting without any obvious or transparent consultation with the local population or a clear explanation of where the boundaries of the future dam and reservoir would be. Many of the people occupying the potentially affected area did not hold a legal title to their land and did not know what was going to happen to them and their properties.

One of the areas that local people believed the proposed dam was going to cover was the Esperança community, the place where Lemuel and his family were living. Once, when we went to visit a place where his grandfather used to plant up in the hills, we were taking a break when he told me: “Water will come up to here.” He looked at me sadly and continued: “I will need to leave too. I don’t know where I will go.” He was contemplating making a new house close to his relatives living in a different part of the county. After some time discussing the possible limits of the dam he continued: “When this turns into a dam, this land [around]

will come to be a reserve. It will be an 'IBAMA place' [protected area] where foreigners can do their work. This is going to be good for Lucas. They [the government] will need someone to care (*tomar conta*) about it. According to Lemuel, Lucas was the one who was going to do this. "They will want forest (*mata*). Do you think they will let people plant (*fazer roça*) around the lake (*lago*)?"

Lemuel has lived his entire life in this place. He worries that the construction of water reservoirs will mean that his family will need to find a new home. More importantly, he saw Lucas and RPR as benefiting from this, as the land around the proposed dam will, as he was imagining, become protected area for the use of outsiders.

However, as demonstrated through his story (Chapter 3), this place is more than just land to him. For him as for many of his relatives, it carries the symbolic meaning of home and security. Slavery, captivity, acculturation, migration, eviction, hardship and finally, the struggle for land rights accompanied him and his wife, their ancestors and families on the way to settling on this piece of hilly land of low fertility, once abandoned by its previous owners because of the harsh environment and precarious living conditions, but which they could now call theirs. Yet as the land and local natural resources are being redefined and redistributed again, this time to serve the interests of wealthy, urban or foreign outsiders, the rural populations will again be expelled from the land on which they live and survive. As with those who had been displaced by river dredging or the consolidation of latifundium in previous generations, Lemuel and his relatives apparently face a stark choice between becoming landless, rural dwellers or of joining their relatives living in the shantytowns of large urban centres.

In the face of this oncoming future, Lemuel and Ruana, similarly to many local people I observed, were increasingly constructing their own identities around their indigenous origins built on family ancestries of *caboclos* or unidentified forest dwellers, often persecuted, acculturated and in the end, turned mostly into landless rural workers wandering across the country in search of land to settle on. Thus, as Lemuel explained to me, although they are not Indians, they share the same blood as them and it is why this land is theirs. He called it "my ancestral land." Yet, he did not mean the land in its material form only since, similarly to him, many other local rural dwellers too had often only contested if any rights to land they were occupying. It was the land as a socially constructed space, in its symbolic, cultural and spiritual meaning (West *et al.*, 2006) that was repeatedly demonstrated in the cases included

in this work. Thus, although Lemuel and his relatives did not hold an official title to the land on which they lived until very recently, they were able to freely cultivate it, to roam freely in the forest that surrounded them and occupied by spiritual beings, to hunt, and to fish and to collect medicinal plants or extract the wood they needed for fuel and shelter. They were now facing a future in which all of this was under threat.

In contrast, RPR's "Future Forests" vision for the upper Guapiaçu River valley was not in conflict with the government's and PETROBRAS's plans and RPR was already cooperating with both on different levels and issues. As Lucas explained in one of our interviews, what he was trying to achieve was to consolidate the nature reserve: "The reserve has not got a static perimeter. The perimeter is ever expanding. I think it is a bit worrying for some people who live here because they do not know how to live with a nature reserve on their back step." As described in Chapter 4, Lucas was interested in purchasing as much land as possible in the Guapiaçu River valley and by removing the traces of previous human presence, reforesting and protecting it, he was aiming to transform it into a place serving tourism, research and nature itself. "So, if I was to say, 'I would like to have all this area under protection', people would perhaps think that I'm slightly mad. But, I see this as potential, as a possibility." Thus, the government, in aiming to transform a large portion of the area into a water reservoir and expelling its rural occupants, was in accord with RPR's ultimate vision of the valley's future. According to Lucas, RPR's ultimate goals were "in tandem with what the state government wants; lots of forest, the water, the dam, the reservoir, and protected forest upstream, maybe people receiving money for some of the pieces of land." As there were still many properties on sale, the aim was to raise more funds, purchase more land and turn the area into one of the best reserves in Rio de Janeiro state.

However, in this vision of the future, what was supposed to happen to local people? The problem was that their vision, according to Lucas, stood in stark contrast to the vision advocated and being implanted by RPR:

"This idea that you actually have to make every single bit of nature work for us, I disagree with. I think...in fact, personally and spiritually that I like to make it so mysterious that I respect it and do not completely destroy it. Because, these guys [those locals who oppose RPR], I know that is what they are going to do; they are going to destroy it all; that's their vision. They have a vision of cutting everything down."

Lucas argued that there were still many local people who believed that their project, by turning the purchased parcels into forest, was a sort of a 'backward step' (*atraso da vida*). They would have wanted to go back to the time when all the hills were deforested, with houses, many people living there, land producing crops and providing work, thus referring to the times when the area was dominated by the Fazenda do Carmo latifundium. For Lucas, it was the RPR vision against the vision of these local people. Therefore, what RPR was trying to achieve first, before anything else, was to consolidate the area according to their vision, that is to "make it into an empty world, world empty of humans, obviously," stated Lucas. Yet, as "there will still be communities living in there," they might not be able to succeed completely. Thus, their plan was to consolidate as large an area as possible, while continuing to build a good relationship with their communities, by providing them with economic benefits and educating them so that they become environmentally-aware individuals. Therefore, as Lucas put it, the remaining rural population would need to "fit around" their proposal for the valley future. In this future, he saw RPR's role as a broker and conduit for the local population, helping to mould them into a new relationship with their surroundings. Most importantly, while it was nature that was at the centre of the RPR conservation activities, people living around it needed to be, at least for the time being, simply tolerated as an unavoidable 'evil'.

All in all, RPR and local population were engaged in a symbolic conflict over the imagined future of the area, the meaning of the land and its related natural resources, and who would ultimately control them. RPR presented itself as acting for the 'common good' and its actions benefiting the global environment, while they could also be interpreted as contributing to the enrichment of an already privileged local elite and serving the interests of distant foreign or urban dwellers. On the other hand, local people, with or without land, saw the access to land and its natural resources as the essential means for their own subsistence and survival and at the centre of their own identities. From RPR's perspective, however, they hold destructive visions of the valley that, while in stark contrast to that of RPR, were also steadily leading to the degradation of the land and thus its future. As Holmes (2007: 190) writes, the contest over conservation is always about the meaning of the protected natural resources, and the argumentation involved is founded on the historic, political, social and economic context of the area. While the rural population may use the weapons of the weak such as non-participation or the continuation of their older livelihood practices, RPR is acting by taking advantage of the clientelistic structures still dominating the social relations in the area.

However, the ultimate outcome, for both sides, of this symbolic conflict, was at the time of my fieldwork still largely unpredictable.

6.8 Conclusions

Local resistance towards conservation units might not be always straightforward and easily deciphered without an understanding of the wider socio-cultural, political and historic context. Thus, RPR would claim to apply a non-confrontational approach to its neighbouring rural communities, seeking to avoid the hostility of their members which might lead to open opposition to the project. Also, this was argued to be their crucial achievement towards the success of their conservation model and, in the end, what differentiated it from the neighbouring state-led conservation unit despised by the rural population. However, in contrast to what is often argued about resistance in conservation in general, where greater geographical and social distance between dominating (decision-makers) and subordinated classes makes individuals act more overtly (Holmes, 2007), the lack, though not complete absence, of more overt acts of local resistance in the case of RPR can be attributed to traditional clientelistic social structures, on which the relationship between RPR and the local population was constructed. Thus, depending on their social standing within local society, local men and women would resist the restrictions imposed by RPR, by continuing to use the land and related natural resources or by simply making symbolic claims over the area that would still conform to the dominating power of the local large landowner (*fazendeiro*).

Moreover, local people would, in their discourse on RPR's land purchases, express their concerns over growing 'foreign' control over 'their' natural resources threatening their future access to them. RPR's conservation practices would make them feel alienated from the spaces, now under protection, which they previously used and had access to, and thus with the project. This was demonstrated, for instance, in their non-participation in the RPR activities that was, in turn, interpreted and assigned by RPR to local people's subjective feeling of 'cultural inferiority', while their actual concerns were trivialised and described as irrational. In such cases, the RPR representatives would depict people from neighbouring communities as mostly poor and without an appropriate education, giving them a limited worldview that inhibited them comprehending the project and its aims and therefore of meaningfully participating in its management. The result of this view was a further marginalization of the local rural population from the management and thus the project. In the RPR discourse, they were increasingly attributed the role of passive subjects, with

destructive environmental perspectives, who were in need of being transformed into ‘competent environmentalists’, mirroring their Western counterparts.

In the highly politicised wider context of land-ownership inequality in rural Brazil, the cases when RPR attempted to remove individuals from purchased properties led to heightened feelings of resentment and opposition in the local population. More importantly, such practices positioned RPR closer to the neighbouring public conservation unit, TPSP, from which RPR usually aimed to differentiate itself.

Above all, RPR and the people from neighbouring communities continued to hold distinct visions of the upper Guapiaçu River valley. The RPR outlook was informed by international and domestic conservation discourse and their argumentation based on the results of scientific research. In contrast, local men and women were influenced in their views by their historical experience of the struggle for subsistence and survival, around which they constructed their identities and founded their claims over the land and its resources. Thus, the contest is best understood as a symbolic conflict over the meaning and imagined future of the land and its natural resources. In the following chapter, we now conclude what has been argued in this work and then make suggestions for conservation practice.

Conclusion

According to West *et al.* (2006: 252), protected areas represent a particular “way of seeing, understanding and (re)producing the world.” Protected areas are sites rich not only in biodiversity, but also in social production and interaction. Thus, they are particular social constructions that represent one type of relationship between society (people) and the environment (nature) as well as attempts to control and manage this relationship. Hence, to unravel what impact protected areas in general, and PPAs in particular, have on local human populations living in them or adjacent to them, it is first necessary to understand how those who speak on behalf of PPAs, such as conservation practitioners, NGOs and government representatives as well as scientists, portray these people and their interactions with the surrounding natural environment and justify their conservation interventions.

One of the environmental discourses particularly important in this context is the discourse on global environmental problems. Escobar (2002) claims that environmental problems have come to be seen as global and are, thus, perceived by conservation practitioners as the result of complex processes that transcend local and cultural contexts. In this context, Nygren (2000) notes how tropical forests, in the light of growing interest from the scientific community, gained the symbolic value of ‘world heritage’, and deforestation became defined as a global, rather than just a local, problem. Being ‘global’ embodies the symbolic meaning of shared ownership of the environment (Ingold, 1993) as well as shared responsibility for its degradation (Escobar, 2002). However, Escobar (2002) claims that this view tends to ignore inequalities related to natural resource use between various countries and communities and it privileges those who decide what ‘global’ is, while marginalizing those who use natural resources at the local level.

Important also in this context is the discourse on the division between nature and culture, where nature is often portrayed as a static object, existing separately from human beings, while human activities and their ecological effects are presented as a part of culture and thus, as ‘unnatural’ (West *et al.*, 2006). Here, rural peasant communities, as opposed to indigenous people who are frequently perceived as ‘natural conservationists’, are often constructed as destroyers of precious ecosystems (Nygren, 2004). However, it has been argued that such representations of rural peasants and their activities are oblivious of the wider contextual factors (Hecht, 2010; Nygren, 2000). Furthermore, the homogenization of rural communities

does not take into account the variety of local actors, multidimensionality of rural livelihoods and the multiplicity of rural people's conceptualization of nature (Nygren, 2000). More importantly, these representations of local rural populations play a crucial role in shaping the conservation and development agenda and are transformed into management policies of protected areas with further impact on the rural populations living within or adjacent to them (Durand & Vázquez, 2011; Nygren, 2004).

Similar discourses deployed by conservation professionals, scientists and government officials can be also found in the context of the Brazilian AF. The AF is frequently described as one the most threatened ecosystems on the planet (Galindo-Leal & Câmara, 2003) and its continuing deforestation, degradation and the related loss of biodiversity is presented as a global, rather than a local or Brazilian, environmental problem. Moreover, rural settlers and peasant communities living among the remnants of the AF are frequently constructed as forest destroyers unfamiliar with its habitat (Pauda *et al.*, 2002) as opposed to 'neo-traditional' *Caiçaras*, seen by some as 'ecologically noble' and living in 'harmony' with nature (Adams, 2004). As a result, the conservation agenda in the AF frequently advocates the incompatibility of conservation goals with the human occupation of protected areas (Galetti, 2001). However, according to some (Castro *et al.*, 2006; Paulson & DeVore, 2006), such representations tend to ignore the complexity and the contextual factors that shape rural people's conceptualization of the forest and the way they use its resources.

Notwithstanding such discussions, little is actually known about how the funders and supporters of PPAs conceptualize the ongoing relationship of rural people with the forest and its resources. Such assessments are of particular importance, particularly in a context where global dominance and influence of neoliberal conservation discourse is seen to be growing and is claimed to frequently portray local human populations as having a defective relationship with their surrounding environment and as the most immediate threat to protected areas (Igoe *et al.*, 2010). Also, it promotes interventions that seek to bring these people out into new markets and economies so that they become less dependent on natural resources and competent conservationists, eventually (Büscher & Dressler, 2010).

The aim of this work was to address the issues around the interaction between PPAs and local rural communities in Brazil's AF. In the context of private conservation, this is a special place of interest due to its high biodiversity, the degree of habitat destruction, the large proportion of lands in private hands, local levels of rural poverty and, most importantly, the

ever-increasing number of private reserves making apparently significant contributions to the protection of threatened natural habitats. Relationships between PPAs and people from their neighbouring communities were studied through a specific focus on Redonda Private Reserve, located in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

The AF region is home to a variety of Brazil's communities. While they differ in their socio-economic conditions, political status and socio-ethnic background, significant determinants of the relationship between them, and the present socio-economic and political context of rural Brazil, are high income inequality, conflict over land and widespread poverty. For many of the poorest households, subsistence farming continues to be an important livelihood strategy, and those who reside in or around established protected areas frequently use forest resources to complement their other subsistence or income generating activities. Similarly, the rural communities around RPR are far from being homogenous. People here are divided along socio-economic and socio-ethnic lines. Agriculture still dominates the local economy and provides subsistence for a significant portion of the local population. Such conditions then form the context in which control of land and natural resources continues to be played out and forms a crucial background for the issues raised in this research.

I have shown in this thesis how RPR regularly presented itself as a 'local' NGO, managed by 'local people', in collaboration with neighbouring communities but how this might be considered a disguise of its true nature as an organization funded mainly from abroad, and controlled and managed on the ground by the members of a single landowning family. This reality of RPR being the latest form of domination of local land-ownership and economic power calls into question its claim to act for the 'common good' when arguably, its largest beneficiaries are a wealthy and privileged elite. To secure funding, RPR has developed a discourse and produced images of their project and activities divorced from the socio-economic, historic and political reality that would undermine their position and activities in relation to the expectations of their donors and sponsors. My contention is that the selling of this 'conservation fantasy' to their distant supporters allowed them to contribute to the solution of global environmental problems by providing them with financial support, thus creating their own 'spectacle of nature' (Brockington *et al.*, 2008). Importantly, part of this image depended on a malleable depiction of local people who were, at times, presented as their supporters, but more often as irresponsible stewards, destructive encroachers and then as passive subjects in need of a transformation into competent environmentalists. Such

transformations would then fit with RPR's own interests and agenda, arguably acting to further marginalize the most fragile local subaltern groups.

As has been demonstrated, the establishment and growth of RPR was closely linked with the history and presence of a particular large landowning family in the area. By creating the reserve, they were not acting from purely altruistic motives, nor only for the sake of the nature itself, but arguably, another key motivation was also their own economic benefit. The RPR representatives were actively searching for new economic opportunities that the conservation of private lands in Brazil might offer. By running the project as a 'green business', they were gradually turning the protected natural resources into commodities, such as ecotourism experiences or ecosystems services that they envisioned selling on within the Brazilian and Global (emerging) green markets. This perspective fits within the logic of neoliberal conservation, as outlined by Igoe and Brockington (2007) and also parallels the work of others in this field (Mitchell, 2005; Pellin, 2010; Stolton *et al.*, 2014) in emphasizing that the motivation of individual owners of PPAs is complex.

In contrast to the increasing importance of the logic of economic markets, for members of local communities, particularly in relation to their employment by the reserve, the dominant idiom remained one of traditional reciprocal but hierarchical relations between patron and client, albeit transformed to fit the new environmental agenda. In this context, the RPR representatives would claim to their outside supporters to be using their dominant social position to the advantage of the reserve and as part of their successful community outreach practices. That is, they were consciously using their social positions to produce desired social outcomes, such as increasing control over land and natural resources. Also, they would act within them to produce the desired social reality, as the enduring traits of traditional clientelistic relations would help to mitigate open local resistance towards the project. In turn, their sponsors and donors welcomed this by interpreting it as the RPR managers' 'local' expertise, allowing them to get the members of the rural population on board and if not supporting than at least tolerating the project. Any concerns of the local population were trivialized by describing them as irrational or attributed to their incapacity to comprehend the project.

On the other hand, the local population perceived and related to the RPR managers principally as local large landowners who, through the conservation project, had continued their generational accumulation of local land and natural resources and through the prevalent

traditional social structures continued to exert influence over their lives. They were mainly concerned with RPR's increasing control over land in the area, whilst also feeling alienated by the 'foreign' character of the project, perceived as serving only outsiders while disregarding their social and cultural heritage. To oppose the project, they would turn to acts of everyday resistance that would still conform to traditional social structures of reciprocal but hierarchical relations between patron and client. In their vision of the upper Guapiaçu River valley, they draw on the importance of agriculture in their livelihoods as well as their historical experience of the struggle for land, access to it and survival, around which they would construct their identities and make symbolic claims over the land and its related natural resources. In contrast, RPR tended to disregard the views and interests of local people, envisaging the future of the valley as a depopulated place covered mostly by forest. Thus, RPR and local population can be seen to hold contesting visions of the valley's future, leading to symbolic conflict over the meaning of natural resources, their control and the way they were to be used. Previous work (for example, Holmes 2013) has emphasized the importance of opening up spaces for local discourse in helping local populations to influence and shape protected areas and therefore achieve more effective interventions. By deliberately disregarding the local views of the place in which the reserve was situated, the RPR management can be seen to have disempowered the local population and stripped local people of the opportunity to meaningfully shape the private reserve.

In addition, local men and women would, in their discourse, regularly point to existing social inequalities in the area and reproduced through RPR. Throughout the research, this was demonstrated by the local representation of the alleged misuse of the project for the personal enrichment of the landowning family. More importantly, historical processes preceding the existence of RPR, along with the current motivations of its founders as well as the prevalent social structure of asymmetric reciprocity with traits of paternalistic domination and current attempts to physically remove local families from more recent RPR land acquisitions, suggest that the appropriation and transformation of land into private protected area, as carried out by RPR, can be interpreted through the lense of 'green land grabbing' as detailed by (among others) Fairhead *et al.* (2012) and Holmes (2014).

Lastly, the RPR representatives would often contrast their project with the neighbouring public conservation unit, claiming to provide more effective protection of natural resources and replacing the (incapable) government in its regulatory obligations. They would maintain to offer a more community-friendly approach to conservation, such as giving financial

compensation instead of forced confiscations or bringing economic benefits by employing the members of neighbouring communities. However, the attempts of physical removal from the acquired land as well as a discourse around the local population's incapacity to participate meaningfully in RPR's management contrast with such RPR proclamations. Above all, the case of RPR confirms that PPAs and their contribution to nature conservation as well as rural development cannot be studied outside of their socio-economic, political and historical context.

While this work has made some important observations, it was not possible to cover all the issues that emerged during my fieldwork in the relations between private conservation and the affected rural population in the AF of Brazil. The complex issue of hunting, involving the discussion of cultural values and Amerindian heritage of the local population in contrast with environmental legislation applied in practice by private versus public conservation units, for example, deserves more attention. Similarly, the different forms of violence used in the conservation practices of RPR and TPSP could have been explored further. Also, in the end, limited space was allocated to discussions of the conservation discourses that have evolved in and around the local rural population. In this context, RPR had an environmental education programme through which it was aiming to transform some of the local men and women into more 'competent environmentalists'. Last but not least, this work could benefit from further, enlarged comparisons between private and public conservation in the AF as a whole. Further research is also needed to show whether the patterns of interaction between PPAs and local communities that have been shown in this work are common for other PPAs found in the region as well as globally.

In conclusion, although this work does not make any recommendation for concrete actions, it suggests that organizations and individuals sponsoring private conservation projects should investigate with more care and pay more attention to the wider socio-economic and political context where these projects are found.

Bibliography

- Abakerli, S. (2001) 'A Critique of Development and Conservation Policies in Environmentally Sensitive Regions in Brazil', *Geoforum* 32, 551-565.
- Adams, C. (2004) 'Pitfalls of Synchronicity: A Case Study of the Caiçaras in the Atlantic Rainforest of South-eastern Brazil'. In Anderson, D.G. & Berglund, E. (eds) *Ethnographies of Conservation: Environmentalism and the Distribution of Privilege*. Oxford: Berghahn, Chapter 2.
- Adams, W.M. (2017) 'Sleeping with the Enemy? Biodiversity Conservation, Corporations and the Green Economy', *Journal of Political Ecology* 24, 243-257.
- Adams, W.M. & Hutton, J. (2007) 'People, Parks and Poverty: Political Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation', *Conservation and Society* 5(2), 147-183.
- Adams, W.M. & Moon, K. (2013) 'Security and Equity of Conservation Covenants: Contradictions of Private Protected Area Policies in Australia', *Land Use Policy* 30, 114-119.
- Almeida, M.R.C.D. (2013) *Metamorfoses indígenas: Identidade e cultura nas aldeias coloniais do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV.
- Alston, L. & Mueller, B. (2010) 'Tenancy, Conflicts and Priests in Brazil'. [Online]. Available at <http://www.economics.uiuc.edu/docs/seminars/Alston-Tenancy-Conflicts-Priests-Brazil.pdf> (Accessed 29 August 2011).
- Amador D.S.E. (2013) *Baía da Guanabara: Ocupação Histórica e Avaliação Ambiental*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Interciência.
- Amantino, M. & Cardoso, V.M. (2013) 'A fazenda jesuítica da Papucaia, Rio de Janeiro, século XVIII, *IHS: Antigos Jesuítas en Iberoamérica* 1(1), 43-66.
- Amrock, J. (2006) 'Challenges for Private Sector Conservation: Sanderson's The Future of Conservation in Tierra del Fuego', *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 13(2): 595-615.
- Banks-Leite, C., Pardini, R., Tambosi, L.R., Pearse, D.W., Bueno, A.A., Bruscagin, T.R., Condez, HT., Dixo, M., Igari, T., Martensen, C.A. and Metzger, J.P. (2014) 'Response', *Science* 346(6214), 1193.
- Barany, M.E., Hammett, A.L., Shillington, L.J. & Murphy, B.R. (2001) 'The Role of Private Wildlife Reserves in Nicaragua's Emerging Ecotourism Industry', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 9(2), 95-110.
- Barnhart, M. (2015) 'A Critical Examination of Private Conservation Areas on Campesino Community Lands in Peru', *Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers*. Paper 4556.
- Bernard, R.H. (2006) *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Oxford: AltaMira Press.
- Bevan, S. & Bevan, K. (1999) 'Interviews: Meaning in Groups'. In Parker, I. & Network, B. D. (eds) *Critical Texts: An Introduction to Varieties of Discourse Analysis*. Buckingham: Open University Press, Chapter 2.

- Bond, I., Child, B., Harpe, D.D.L., Jones, B., Barnes, J. & Anderson, H. (2004) 'Private Land Contribution to Conservation in South Africa'. In Child, B. (ed.) *Parks in Transition: Biodiversity, Rural Development and the Bottom Line*. London: Earthscan, Chapter 3.
- Boskovic, A. (2005) 'Joyeuses Tropiques: Five Encounters with Alterities in Brazil', *Dialectical Anthropology* 29 (2), 221-239.
- Botelho, E.S. (2009) *Conflitos na gestão de parques: o caso do conselho do Parque Estadual dos Três Picos (RJ)*. CFCH, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. Master's thesis: unpublished.
- Brockington, D. (2009) *Celebrity and the Environment*. London: Zed Books.
- Brockington, D., Duffy, R. & Igoe, J. (2008) *Nature Unbound: Conservation, Capitalism and the Future of Protected Areas*. London: Earthscan.
- Brown, J. & Mitchell, B. (1999) 'Private Initiatives for Protected Areas in South America'. In Stolton, S. & Dudley, N. (eds) *Partnership for Protection: New Strategies for Planning and Management for Protected Areas*, London: Earthscan.
- Bruno, R.A. L. (2003) 'Nova República: a Violência Patronal Rural Como Prática de Classe', *Sociologias* 5(10), 284-310.
- Buckley, C.R. & Pegas, F.V. (2015) 'Four Hurdles for Conservation on Private Land: the Case of the Golden Lion Tamarin in Brazil's Atlantic Forest', *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*, 04 August. [Online]. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2015.00088> (Accessed 27 June 2016).
- Büscher, B. (2013) 'Nature on the Move: The Value and Circulation of Liquid Nature and the Emergence of Fictitious Conservation', *New Proposals* 6 (1-2), 20-36.
- Büscher, B. & Dressler, W. (2010) 'Commodity Conservation. The Restructuring of Community Conservation in South Africa and the Philippines'. *Geoforum* 1-10.
- Büscher, B., Sullivan, S., Neves, K., Igoe, J. & Brockington, D. (2012) 'Towards a Synthesized Critique of Neoliberal Biodiversity Conservation', *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 23:2, 4-30.
- Büscher, B. & Whande, W. (2007) 'Whims of the Winds of Time? Emerging Trends in Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Management', *Conservation and Society* 5(1), 22-43.
- Cabral, D.D.C. (2004) 'Produtores rurais e indústria madeireira no Rio de Janeiro do final de século XVII - evidências empíricas para a região do vale do Macacu', *Ambiente e Sociedade* VII(2), 125-145.
- Cabral, D.D.C. (2007) *Homens e árvores no ecúmeno colonial: uma história ambiental da indústria madeireira na bacia do Macacu, Rio de Janeiro, 1763-1825*. Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. Master's thesis: unpublished.
- Cabral, D.D.C. & Friszton, J.T. (2004) 'Padrões sócio-espaciais de desflorestamento e suas implicações para a fragmentação florestal: Estudo de caso na Bacia do Rio Macacu, RJ', *Scientia Forestalis* 66, 13-24.

Castree, N. (2008) 'Neoliberalising Nature: the Logics of Deregulation and Reregulation', *Environment and Planning A* 40, 131 -152.

Câmara, I.D.G. (2003) 'Brief History of Conservation in the Atlantic Forest'. In Galindo-Leal, C. & Câmara, I.D.G. (eds) *The Atlantic Forest of South America: Biodiversity Status, Threats, and Outlook*. Washington: Island Press, Chapter 4.

Carneiro, J.M., Latini, J.L., Coelho, T.D., Pedreira, B.D.C.C.G. Fidalgo, E.C.C. & Prado, R.B. (2012) 'Histórico do Processo de Ocupação Histórica das Bacias Hidrográficas dos Rios Guapi-Macacu e Caceribu', *Documentos 152*. Rio de Janeiro: Embrapa Solos.

Carter, E., Adams, W.M. & Hutton, J. (2008) 'Private Protected Areas: Management Regimes, Tenure Arrangements and Protected Area Categorization in East Africa', *Oryx* 42(2), 177-186.

Cascudo, C.L. (2012) *Geografia dos mitos brasileiros*. São Paulo: Global Editora.

Castro, F.D., Siqueria, A.D., Brondizio, E.S. & Ferreira, L.C. (2006) 'Use and Misuse of the Concept of Tradition and Property Rights in the Conservation of Natural Resources in the Atlantic Forest (Brazil)', *Ambiente & Sociedade* 4(1), 23-39.

Castro, H.M.M. (2009) *Ao sul da história: lavradores pobres na crise do trabalho escravo*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, Faperj.

Castro, H.M.M. (1988) 'Beyond Masters and Slaves: Subsistence Agriculture as a Survival Strategy in Brazil during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 68(3), 461-489.

Chacon, C.M. (2005) 'Fostering Conservation of Key Priority Sites and Rural Development in Central America: The Role of Private Protected Areas', *Parks* 15(2), 39-47.

Chape, S., Spalding, M. & Jenkins, M. (2008) *The World's Protected Areas: Status, Values and Prospects in the 21st Century*. London: University California Press.

Chudy, J. (2006) 'Green Barons', *Portfolio* (August/September), 45-46.

Cifuentes, M., Izurieta, A. & Faria, H.H. (2000) *Medición de la Efectividad del Manejo de Areas Protegidas*. Turrialba: WWF; IUCN; GTZ.

Clements H.S., Baum J. & Cumming G. (2016) 'Money and Motives: an Organizational Ecology Perspective on Private Land Conservation', *Biological Conservation* 197, 108-115.

Conservation International (CI) (2011) 'Atlantic Forest'. [Online]. Available at www.conservation.org/where/priority_areas/hotspots/south_america/Atlantic-Forest/Pages/default.aspx (Accessed 12 July 2011).

CRNPPN (2016) 'Associações de Proprietários de Reservas Particulares do Patrimônio Natural'. [Online]. Available at http://www.rppnweb.com/site_rppn/index.php/associacoes-rppn (Accessed 7 August 2016).

Davies, C.A. (1999) *Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. London: Routledge.

Dean, W. (1995) *With Broadax and Firebrand*. London: University of California Press.

Deer, C.D. & Medeiros, L.S. (2007) 'Agrarian Reform and Poverty Reduction: Lessons from Brazil'. In Akram-Lodhi, A.H., Borras, S.M. & Kay, C. (eds) *Land, Poverty and Livelihoods in an Era of Globalization: Perspectives from Developing and Transition Countries*. London: Routledge, Chapter 3.

Dudley, N., Guija, B., Jackson, B., Jeanrenaud, J.-P., Oviedo, G., Phillips, A., Rosabel, P., Stolton, S. & Wells, S. (1999) 'Challenges for Protected Areas in the 21st Century'. In Stolton, S. & Dudley, N. (eds) *Partnership for Protection: New Strategies for Planning and Management for Protected Areas*. London: Earthscan.

Dünckmann, F. (1999) 'Environmental Conservation, Land Tenure and Migration: The Case of the Atlantic Rainforest in Southeast Brazil'. In Lohnert, B. & Geist, H. (eds) *Coping with Changing Environments: Social Dimensions of Endangered Ecosystems in the Developing World*. Ashgate.

Durand, L. & Vázquez, L.B. (2011) 'Biodiversity Conservation Discourses. A Case Study on Scientists and Government Authorities in Sierra de Huautla Biosphere Reserve, Mexico', *Land Use Policy* 28, 76-82.

Environmental Law Institute (2003) *Legal Tools and Incentives for Private Land Conservation in Latin America: Building Models for Success*. Washington D.C.: Environmental Law Institute.

Escobar, A. (2002) 'Constructing Nature: Elements for a Poststructural Political Ecology'. In Peet, R. & Watts, M. (eds) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development and Social Movements*. London: Routledge.

Escola da Terra (2017) 'RPPN Encantos da Juréia'. [Online]. Available at <http://www.escoladaterra.com.br/rppn.htm> (Accessed 1 February 2017).

Fabricius, C. (2004) 'The Fundamentals of Community-Based Natural Resource Management'. In Fabricius, C., Koch, E., Magome, H. & Turner, S. (eds) *Rights, Resources and Rural Development*. London: Earthscan, Chapter 1.

Fairhead, J., Leach, M. & Scoones, I. (2012) 'Green Grabbing: A New Appropriation of Nature?', *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 39(2), 237-261.

Fausto, B. (2013) *História do Brasil*, São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo.

Fife, W. (2005) *Doing Fieldwork: Ethnographic Methods for Research in Developing Countries and Beyond*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fisher, B. & Christopher, T. (2007) 'Poverty and Biodiversity: Measuring the Overlap of Human Poverty and the Biodiversity Hotspot', *Ecological Economics* 62, 93-101.

Forte, J.M.M. (1934) 'Vilas fluminenses desaparecidas: Santo Antônio de Sá', *Revista da Sociedade de Geografia do Rio de Janeiro*, XLIV.

Foucault, M. (1991) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (2008) *The Birth of Biopolitics. Lecturers at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. New York: Picador.

Freire, R.B. & Malheiros, M.F. (2010) *Aldeamentos indígenas do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: EDUERJ.

Freyre, G. (2003) *Casa-grande & senzala: Formação da família brasileira sob o regime da economia patriarcal*. São Paulo: Global Editora.

Fundação Grupo Boticário (2017) 'Salto Morato Natural Reserve'. [Online]. Available at <http://www.fundacaogrupoboticario.org.br/en/what-we-do/nature-preserves/pages/natural%20-preserves-salto-morato.aspx> (Accessed 1 February 2017).

Fundación Terram (2005) *Áreas Protegidas Privadas en Chile*. Terram Publicaciones.

Galindo-Leal, C. & Câmara, I.D.G. (2003) 'Atlantic Forest Hotspot Status: An Overview'. In Galindo-Leal, C. & Câmara, I.D.G. (eds) *The Atlantic Forest of South America: Biodiversity Status, Threats, and Outlook*. Washington: Island Press, Chapter 1.

Galetti, M. (2001) 'Indians within Conservation Units: Lessons from the Atlantic Forest', *Conservation Biology* 15(3), 798-799.

Garcia, A. & Palmeira, M. (2009) 'Traces of the Big House and the Slave Quarters: Social Transformation in Rural Brazil during the Twentieth Century'. In Sachs, I., Wilhelm, J. & Pinheiro, P. S. (eds) *Brazil: a Century of Change*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, Chapter 2.

Geffray, C. (2007) *A Opressão Paternalista: Cordialidade e Brutalidade no Cotidiano Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Educam.

Globo (1973) 'Experiência de Macacu é o ponto de partida', *Economia, O Globo*, 1.5. 1973, p.28. [Online]. Available at <http://acervo.oglobo.globo.com> (Accessed 23 November 2013).

Globo (1982) 'Ministro distribui terra em Cachoeiras de Macacu', *Grande Rio, O Globo* 6.11.1982, p.8. [Online]. Available at <http://acervo.oglobo.globo.com> (Accessed 24 November 2013).

Globo (1984) 'Desmatamento: no rasto de madeireiros em Cachoeiras de Macacu, até áreas de preservação são devastadas. A fiscalização do IBDF é falha. E os criminosos não temem punições', *Grande Rio, O Globo* 22.07.1984, p.20. [Online]. Available at <http://acervo.oglobo.globo.com> (Accessed 24 November 2013).

Globo (1986) 'Invasão de fazenda em Macacu pode gerar luta entre posseiros', *O País, O Globo* 29.9.1986, p.2. [Online]. Available at <http://acervo.oglobo.globo.com> (Accessed 23 November 2013).

Globo (1997) 'Sem-terra invadem fazenda na Região dos Lagos: Área desapropriada em 1975 tem 2.700 hectares e foi ocupada por 300 pessoas, que chegaram ainda de madrugada.' *O Globo*, 2nd edição, 22.6. 1997, p.32. [Online]. Available at <http://acervo.oglobo.globo.com> (Accessed 24 November 2013).

Gomes, PM. (2012) *Os índios e o Brasil: passado, presente e futuro*. São Paulo: Contexto.

Gouldner, A. W. (1960) 'The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement', *American Sociological Review* 25(2), 161-178.

- Grynszpan, M. (2009) 'Ação política e atores sociais: posseiros, grileiros e a luta pela terra na baixada fluminense'. In Fernandes, B.M., Medeiros, L.S. & Paulilo, M.I. (eds) *Lutas camponesas contemporâneas: condições, dilemas e conquistas*. Brasília: UNESP.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (2007) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. Taylor & Francis.
- Hall, A. (2009) 'Conservation, Development and Climate Change in Latin America', *LASA Congress, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 11-14 June 2009*. [Online]. Available at <http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/members/congress-papers/lasa2009/files/HallAnthony.pdf> (Accessed 6 June 2011).
- Hall, A. (1974) 'Patron-Client Relations', *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 1(4), 506-509.
- Harris, R.I. & Nef, J. (2008) 'Capital, Power, and Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean'. In Harris, R.I. & Nef, J. (eds.) *Capital, Power, and Inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Plymouth, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Chapter 1.
- Hecht, S. (2010) 'The New Rurality: Globalization, Peasants and the Paradoxes of Landscapes', *Land Use Policy* 27, 161-169.
- Heynen, N. & Robbins, P. (2005) 'The Neoliberalization of Nature: Governance, Privatization, Enclosure and Valuation', *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 16(1), 5-8.
- Hinchberger, B. (2004) 'RPPN: Private Reserves Embrace Ecotourism in Brazil', *Brazilmax, Brazil, 16 February 2004*. [Online]. Available at http://www.brazilmax.com/news3.cfm/tborigem/fe_ecology/id/1 (Accessed 29 August 2011).
- Hochstetler, K. & Keck, E.M. (2007) *Greening Brazil: Environmental Activism in State and Society*. London: Duke University Press.
- Hodge I.D. & Adams W.M. (2012) 'Neoliberalisation, Rural Land Trusts and Institutional Blending', *Geoforum* 43, 472-482.
- Holmes, G. (2007) 'Protection, Politics and Protest: Understanding Resistance in Conservation', *Conservation and Society* 5(2), 184-201.
- Holmes, G. (2012) 'Biodiversity for Billionaires: Capitalism, Conservation and the Role of Philanthropy in Saving/Selling Nature', *Development and Change* 43(1), 185-203.
- Holmes, G. (2013a) 'What Role Do Private Protected Areas Have in Conserving Global Biodiversity?' *SRI Working Papers* (46). ISSN 1753-1330.
- Holmes, G. (2013b) 'Exploring the Relationship between Local Support and the Success of Protected areas', *Conservation and Society* 11(1), 72-82.
- Holmes, G. (2014) 'What is a Land Grab? Exploring Green Grabs, Conservation, and Private Protected Areas in Southern Chile', *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 41(4), 547-567.
- Idoro, C.J., Davidson-Hunt, I.J. & Seixas, C.S. (2015) 'Produced Natures through the Lens of Biodiversity Conservation and Tourism: the Ponta Negra Caiçara in the Atlantic Forest coast of Brazil', *Local Environment*. DOI:10.1080/13549839.2015.1075479.

- Igoe, J. (2013) 'Nature on the Move II: Contemplation Becomes Speculation', *New Proposals* 6 (1-2): 37-49.
- Igoe, J. & Brockington, D. (2007) 'Neoliberal Conservation: A Brief Introduction', *Conservation and Society* 5(4): 432-449.
- Igoe, J., Neves, K. & Brockington, D. (2010) 'A Spectacular Eco-Tour Around the Historic Bloc: Theorising the Convergence of Biodiversity Conservation and Capitalist Expansion', *Antipode* 42(3), 486-512.
- Ingold, T. (1993) 'Globes and Spheres: Topology of Environmentalism'. In Milton, K. (ed.) *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology*. London: Routledge, Chapter 2.
- IUCN NL & WLT (2009) *Land Purchases for Conservation: Proceedings of Symposia Hosted by IUCN National Committee of the Netherlands & World Land Trust 2006/2008*. Amsterdam: IUCN NL & WLT.
- Jaccoud, S.L.R. (1999) *História, contos e lendas da velha Nova Friburgo*. Nova Friburgo: Múltipla Cultural.
- Jeanrenaud, S. (1999) 'People-Oriented Conservation: Progress to Date'. In Stolton, S. & Dudley, N. (eds) *Partnership for Protection: New Strategies for Planning and Management for Protected Areas*. Earthscan: London, Chapter 14.
- Jones, B.T.B., Stolton, S. & Dudley, N. (2005) 'Private Protected Areas in East and Southern Africa: Contributing to Biodiversity Conservation and Rural Development', *Parks* 15(2), 67-77.
- Juliano, A.M. (2008) *RPPN: um novo conceito de propriedade*. São Leopoldo: Oikos.
- Junior, R.F.A. & Cesco, S. (2013) 'Pobres rurais e desflorestamento no interior fluminense na segunda metade do século XIX', *Revista Territórios & Fronteiras, Cuiabá* (1), 168-186.
- Kamal, S., Grodzinska-Jurczak, M. & Brown, G. (2014) 'Conservation on Private land: A Review of Global Strategies with a Proposed Classification System', *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*. DOI: [10.1080/09640568.2013.875463](https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2013.875463).
- Kay, C. (2004) 'Rural Livelihoods and Peasant Futures'. In Gwynne, R.N. & Kay, C. (eds) *Latin America Transformed: Globalization and Modernity*. London: Edward Arnold, Chapter 12.
- Kay, K. (2015) 'A Hostile Takeover of Nature? Placing Value in Conservation Finance', *Dimensions of Political Ecology Conference*, Lexington, KY, 26-28.
- Kelly, A. B. (2011) 'Conservation Practice as Primitive Accumulation', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38 (4), 683-701.
- Koziell, I. & Inoue, C. (2006) *Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reserve, Brazil: Lessons Learnt in Integrating Conservation with Poverty Reduction*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development.
- Kill, J. (2014) *REDD in Brazil: Two Case Studies on Early Forest Carbon Offset Projects*. Rio de Janeiro: Heindrich Boll Foundation Brazil.

- Lairana, A.V. (2003) 'A Challenge for Conservation: Atlantic Forest Protected Areas'. In Galindo-Leal, C. & Câmara, I. D. G. (eds) *The Atlantic Forest of South America: Biodiversity Status, Threats, and Outlook*. Washington: Island Press, Chapter 38.
- Langholz, J. (1996) 'Economics, Objectives, and Success of Private Nature Reserves in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America', *Conservation Biology* 10(1), 271-280.
- Langholz, J.A. & Krug, W. (2004) 'New Forms of Biodiversity Governance: Non-State Actors and The Private Protected Area Action Plan', *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy* 7, 9-29.
- Langholz, J. & Lassoie, J.P. (2001) 'Perils and Promise of Privately Owned Protected Areas', *BioScience* 51(12), 1079-1085.
- Langholz, J. & Lassoie, J. (2002) 'Combining Conservation and Development on Private Lands: Lessons from Costa Rica', *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 3, 309-322.
- Langholz, J.A., Lassoie, J.P., Lee, D. & Chapman, D. (2000b) 'Economic Considerations of Privately Owned Parks', *Ecological Economics* 33, 173-183.
- Langholz, J., Lassoie, J. & Schelhas, J. (2000a) 'Incentives for Biological Conservation: Costa Rica's Private Wildlife Refuge Program', *Conservation Biology* 14(6), 1735-1743.
- Larrouse do Brasil & Carvalho, L.B. (2009) *Minidicionário Larrouse de língua Portuguesa*. São Paulo: Larrouse do Brasil.
- Leménger, T., King, D., Elliot J., Gibbons H. & King A. (2014) 'Greater than the Sum of Their Parts: Exploring the Environmental Complementarity of State, Private and Community Protected Areas', *Global Ecology and Conservation* 2, 238-247.
- Lovell, P.A. (2000) 'Gender, Race, and the Struggle for Social Justice in Brazil', *Latin American Perspectives* 27(6), 85-103.
- Macura B., Secco L. & Pullin A.S. (2015) 'What Evidence Exists on the Impact of Governance Type on the Conservation Effectiveness of Forest Protected Areas? Knowledge Base and Evidence Gaps', *Environmental Evidence* (4)24, 1-29.
- Martins, J.D.S. (2002) 'Representing the Peasantry? Struggles for/about Land in Brazil', *Journal of Peasant Studies* 3, 300-335.
- Mauss, M. (2002) *The Gift. The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, e-book. London: Routledge.
- McAfee, K. (1999) 'Selling Nature to Save It? Biodiversity and Green Developmentalism', *Society and Space* 17, 133-154.
- McCarthy J. & Prudham, S. (2004) 'Neoliberal Nature and the Nature of Neoliberalism', *Geoforum* 35, 275-283.
- Mesquita, C.A.B. (1999) *Caracterización de las Reservas Naturales Privadas en América Latina*. Escuela de Posgrado, Programa de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo y la Conservación, Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza. Master's thesis: unpublished.

- Metzger, J.P. (2009) 'Editorial: Conservation Issues in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest', *Biological Conservation* 142, 1138-1140.
- Meszaros, G. (2007) 'The MST and Rule of Law in Brazil', *Law, Social Justice & Global Development Journal*. [Online]. Available at www.go.warwick.ac.uk/elj/lgd/2007_1/meszaros (Accessed 12 July 2011).
- Moraes, M. A. (2016) *Forest Landscape Restoration in Brazil*. Brasília: UICN.
- Mitchell, B. (2005) 'Editorial', *Parks* 15(2), 1-5.
- Myers, N., Mittermeier, R.A., Mittermeier, C.G., Fonseca, G.A.B.D. & Kent, J. (2000) 'Biodiversity Hotspots for Conservation Priorities', *Nature* 403.
- Mulder, M.B. & Coppolillo, P. (2005) *Conservation: Linking Ecology, Economics, and Culture*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Nascimento, A. & Nascimento, E.L. (2001) 'Dance of Deception: A Reading of Race Relations in Brazil'. In Hamilton, C.V., Huntley, L., Neville, A., Guimarães, A.S.A. & Wilmot, J. (eds) *Beyond Racism: Race and Inequality in Brazil, South Africa, and the United States*. London: Lynn Rienner.
- Neumann, R.P. (1998) *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa*. London: University of California Press.
- Nobrega, C. (2013) 'Município de Varre-Sai, no Rio, tem programa pioneiro de pagamento por serviços ambientais com uso de ICMS verde. Falta de regulamentação nacional ainda é entrave', *O Globo Amanhã*, 15.1.2013, p.11-13.
- Noronha, G.E. (2003) 'Informal, Illegal and Unfair: Perception of Labour Markets in Brazil', *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 18(53), 111-129.
- Nyahunzvi, D.K. (2014) 'The Resurgence in Resource Nationalism and Private Protected Areas: Through the Lens of Save Valley Conservancy Indigenisation', *Journal for Nature Conservation* 22: 42-49.
- Nygren, A. (2000) 'Development Discourse and Peasant-Forest Relations: Natural Resource Utilization as Social Process'. In Doornbos, M., Saith, A. & White, B. (eds) *Forests: Nature, People, Power*. Oxford: Blackwell, Chapter 2.
- Nygren, A. (2004) 'Nature as Contested Terrain: Conflicts Over Wilderness Protection and local livelihoods in Rio San Juan, Nicaragua'. In Anderson, D.G. & Berglund, E. (eds) *Ethnographies of Conservation: Environmentalism and the Distribution of Privilege*. Oxford: Berghahn, Chapter 1.
- Padua, CV., Pauda, S. M. & Cullen, L. (2002) 'Within and Surrounding the Morro do Diabo State Park: Biological Value, Conflicts, Mitigation and Sustainable Development Alternatives', *Environmental Science & Policy* 5, 69-78.
- Pacheco, E.M.C. (org.) (2008) *Agenda 21 de Cachoeiras de Macacu*, Nova Friburgo: FNMA/PROBIO.
- Parry, J. (1986) 'The Gift, the Indian Gift and the 'Indian Gift'', *Man* 21(3), 453-473.

- Paulson, S. & DeVore, J. (2006) “Feeding the Nation” and “Protecting the Watershed”: Forces and Ideas Influencing Production Strategies in a Brazilian Agricultural Community’, *Culture and Agriculture* 28(1), 32-44.
- Pawliczek, J. & Sullivan, S. (2011) ‘Conservation and Concealment in SpeciesBanking.com, USA: an Analysis of Neoliberal Performance in the Species Offsetting Industry’, *Environmental Conservation* 38 (4), 435-444.
- Peck, J. & Tickell, A. (2002) ‘Neoliberalizing Space’, *Antipode* 34(3), 380-404.
- Pegas, F.V. & Buckley, R.C. (2015) ‘Four Hurdles for Conservation on Private Land: The Case of the Golden Lion Tamarin in Brazil’s Atlantic Forest’, *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* 3(88). [Online]. Available at <https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2015.00088> (Accessed 17 May 2016).
- Pegas, F.V. & Castley, G.J. (2014) ‘Ecotourism as Conservation Tool and its Adoption by Private Protected Areas in Brazil’, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 22(4), 604-625.
- Pegas, F.V. & Castley, G.J. (2016) ‘Private Reserves in Brazil: Distribution Patterns, Logistical Challenges, and Conservation Contribution’, *Journal for Nature Conservation* 29, 14-24.
- Pellin, A. (2010) *Avaliação dos aspectos relacionados à criação e manejo de Reservas Particulares do Patrimônio Natural no Estado do Mato Grosso do Sul, Brasil*. USP. Master’s thesis. [Online]. Available at <http://www.teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/18/18139/tde-10062010-143124/pt-br.php> (Accessed 19 May 2016).
- Pellis, A., Lamers, M. & Duim, R.V.D. (2015) ‘Conservation Tourism and Landscape Governance in Kenya: The Interdependency of Three Conservation NGOs’, *Journal of Ecotourism* 14(2-3), 130-144.
- Plummer, K. (2001) ‘The Call of Life Stories in Ethnographic Research’. In Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J. & Lofland, L. (eds) *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.
- Quintana, J. & Morse, S. (2005) ‘Social Interactions and Resource Ownership in Two Private Protected Areas of Paraguay’, *Journal of Environmental Management* 77, 64-78.
- Rambaldi, D.M., Fernandes, R.V. & Schmidt, M.A.R. (2005) ‘Private Protected Areas and Their Key Role in the Conservation of the Atlantic Forest Biodiversity Hotspot, Brazil’, *Parks* 15(2), 30-38.
- Ribeiro, D. (1995) *O povo brasileiro: evolução e sentido do Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Ribeiro, D. (1996) *Os índios e a civilização: a integração das populações indígenas no Brasil moderno*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Ribeiro, M.C., Metzger, J.P., Martensen, A.C., Ponzoni, F.J. & Hirota, M.M. (2009) ‘The Brazilian Atlantic Forest: How Much Is Left, and How Is the Remaining Forest Distributed? Implications for Conservation’, *Biological Conservation* 142, 1141-1153.
- RPPN Rio das Lontras (2017) ‘RPPN Rio das Lontras’. [Online]. Available at <http://rppnriodaslontras.blogspot.com.br/> (Accessed 1 February 2017).

- Rudzevicz, L. & Lanzer, R.M. (2008) 'Práticas de ecoturismo nas Reservas Particulares de Patrimônio Natural', *Revista Hospitalidade*, ano V(1), 81-96.
- Rylands, A.B. & Brandon, K. (2005) 'Brazilian Protected Areas', *Conservation Biology* 19(3), 612-618.
- Sabourin, E. (2008) 'Marcel Mauss: da Dádiva à Questão da Reciprocidade', *Revista Brasileira de Ciências Sociais* 23(66), 131-138.
- Sabourin, E. (2011a) 'Teoria da Reciprocidade e Sócio-Antropologia do Desenvolvimento', *Sociologias* 13(27), 24-51.
- Sabourin, E. (2011b) 'Paternalismo e Clientelismo como Efeitos da Conjunção entre Opressão Paternalista e Exploração Capitalista', *Estudos Sociedade e Agricultura* 19(1), 5-29.
- Sallinger-McBride, J. & Roberts K. L. (1998) 'Conflict between the Landed and the Landless in Brazil', *International Journal on World Peace* 15(4), 61-90.
- Santos, N.D.D. & Costa, D.P.D. (2008) 'A importância de reservas particulares do patrimônio natural para a conservação da bioflora da Mata Atlântica: um estudo em El Nagual, Magé, RJ, Brasil. *Acta Botânica Brasilica* 22(2), 359-372.
- Scheyvens, R., Scheyvens, H. & Murray, W.E. (2003) 'Working with Marginalised, Vulnerable or Privileged Groups'. In Scheyvens, R. & Storey, D. (eds) *Development Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage, Chapter 9.
- Scott, J.C. (1985) *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Serenari, Ch., Peterson, M.N., Leung Y.F., Stowhas, P., Wallace, T. & Sills, O.E. (2015) 'Private Development-Based Forest Conservation in Patagonia: Comparing Mental Models and Revealing Cultural Truths', *Ecology and Society* 20(3), 4.
- Shanee, N., Shanee, S. & Horwich, R. H. (2015) 'Effectiveness of Locally Run Conservation Initiatives in North-East Peru', *Oryx* 49(2), 239-247.
- Shani, A. (2013) 'From Threat to Opportunity: The Free Market Approach for Managing National Parks and Protected Areas', *Tourism Recreation Research* 38(3), 371-374.
- Sikor, T. (2008) *Public and Private in Natural Resource Governance: A False Dichotomy?* New York: Taylor and Francis.
- Silvan, R.A.M., Udvardy, S., Ceroni, M. & Farley, J. (2005) 'An Ecological Integrity Assessment of a Brazilian Atlantic Forest Watershed Based on Survey of Stream Health and Local Farmers' Perceptions: Implications for Management', *Ecological Economics* 53, 369-385.
- Sims-Castley, R., Kerley, G.I.H., Geach, B. & Langholz, J. (2005) 'Socio-Economic Significance of Ecotourism-Based Private Game Reserves in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province', *Parks* 15(2), 6-18.
- Skidmore, T. E. & Smith, P.H. (2001) *Modern Latin America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Slovak (2009) *To What Extent Can Private Protected Areas Contribute to the Integration of Conservation and Development in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest?* School of Global Studies, University of Sussex. MA Dissertation: Unpublished.

SOS Mata Atlântica (2012) 'PSA: ignição de uma nova economia sustentável'. [Online]. Available at <https://www.sosma.org.br/11631/psa-ignicao-de-uma-nova-economia-sustentavel/> (Accessed 29 July 2014).

SOS Mata Atlântica (2016) 'Programa de Incentivo às RPPNs da Mata Atlântica'. [Online]. Available at <https://www.sosma.org.br/projeto/programa-de-incentivo-rppns-da-mata-atlantica/> (Accessed 30 August 2016).

Stolton, S., Redford, K.H. & Dudley, N. (2014) *The Futures of Privately Protected Areas*. Gland: IUCN.

Sullivan, S. (2011) 'Banking Nature? The Financialisation of Environmental Conservation', *Working Papers Series* 8. London: OAC Press.

Tacón, A., Montenegro, I., Pineda, G. & Corcuera, E. (2012) 'Diseño y Aplicación de una Herramienta Piloto de Evaluación de Efectividad de Manejo en Áreas Protegidas Privadas y Pueblos Originarios', *Revista RedParques*, FAO. August 2012.

Tabarelli, M., Pinto, L. P., Silva, J.M.C., Hirota, M. & Bedê, L. (2005) 'Challenges and Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest', *Conservation Biology* 19(3), 695-700.

Tecklin, D.R. & Sepulveda, C. (2014) 'The Diverse Properties of Private Land Conservation in Chile: Growth and Barriers to Private Protected Areas in a Market-friendly Context', *Conservation & Society* 12(2), 203-217.

TEEB (2009) 'The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for National and International Policy Makers, Summary: Responding to the Value of Nature'. [Online]. Available at www.teebweb.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=I4Y2nqqIiCg%3D&tabid=1020&language=en-US (Accessed 10 August 2011).

Teh, C.L., Teh, S.L. & Chung, F.C. (2008) 'A Private Management Approach to Coral Reef Conservation in Sabah, Malaysia', *Biodiversity Conservation* 17, 3061-3077.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (2011) 'Brazil: Atlantic Forest'. [Online]. Available at www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/southamerica/brazil/placesweprotect/atlantic-forest.xml (Accessed 8 August 2011).

Tisdell, C. (2005) *Economics of Environmental Conservation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Vidal, J. (2008) 'The Great Green Land Grab', *The Guardian*, 13 February. [Online]. Available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/feb/13/conservation> (Accessed 10 July 2014).

West, P. & Carrier, J. (2004) 'Ecotourism and Authenticity: Getting Away From It All', *Current Anthropology* 45, 483-498.

West, P., Igoe, J. & Brockington, D. (2006) 'Parks and Peoples: The Social Impact of Protected Areas', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35, 251-277.

World Bank (2003) *Rural Poverty Alleviation in Rural Brazil: Toward an Integrated Strategy*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (2011) 'Mata Atlântica'. [Online]. Available at www.wwf.org.br/natureza_brasileira/areas_prioritarias/mata_atlantica/ (Accessed 8 August 2011).

Appendix 1

Estimated numbers and areas of PPA estates in 17 countries around the world

| Country | Possible PPAs reported in country reviews | | Notes |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|---|
| Australia | Number | c. 5,000 | All terrestrial, see country review for more details. |
| | Area | c. 8.9 million ha | |
| Brazil | Number | 1,100 | 74% by number are owned by Individuals, 23% by legal entities (either NGO or businesses) and 2.7% undivided. More details can be found in the full country review. |
| | Area | 703,740 ha | |
| Canada | Number | 516 | 126,210 ha terrestrial, 570 ha marine or coastal environment, see country review for more details. |
| | Area | 126,810 ha | |
| Chile | Number | 308 | An overwhelming number (77%) of the initiatives belong to small and medium landowners; 53% were private owners (this includes Individuals, family inheritances and indigenous private owners). |
| | Area | 1.6 million ha | |
| China | Number | 6 | |
| | Area | 13,122 ha | |
| Colombia | Number | 327 | Data as of April 2014 from the National Registry of Protected Areas (RUNAP) collected from members of the Sistema Nacional de Áreas Protegidas (SINAP). See: runap.parquesnacionales.gov.co/ for more details. |
| | Area | 60,869 ha | |
| Finland | Number | > 10,000 | |
| | Area | > 290,000 ha | |
| Germany | Number | > 762 | Estimated from various databases. Excludes protected areas owned by the DBU Naturerbe GmbH, which is not private. There are some coastal but no marine PPAs in Germany. |
| | Area | > 90,000 ha | |
| Japan | Number | ? | No data as yet. |
| | Area | ? | |
| Kenya | Number | 140 | Figures for Kenya include community and private Conservancies, many may not fit the definition of a protected area (and thus a PPA) (see country review). |
| | Area | > 6 million ha | |
| Mexico | Number | 692 | |
| | Area | 487,289 ha | |
| Namibia | Number | > 160 | Many of the private reserves noted here are not likely to meet the IUCN definition of a protected area and thus are not PPAs. |
| | Area | > 2 million ha | |
| South Africa | Number | >200 | Includes agreed areas and areas under negotiation. |
| | Area | > 1.7 million ha | |
| Republic of Korea | Number | > 10 | |
| | Area | > 38 ha | |
| Spain | Number | >1336 | The figures here are very speculative as they include land stewardship agreements (National LS Inventory, 2010) as well as PPAs. For example this figure includes the AFN Foundations' 174,109 ha of conservation lands, 41.2% of which is owned land and 58.8% managed. |
| | Area | 309,735 ha | |
| UK | Number | 4,413 | The UK is currently undertaking a project to assess all potential protected areas against the IUCN definition, this figure thus represents a work in progress. Data has been aggregated from NGO databases and there may be some double counting as some PPAs are managed jointly by more than one NGO. |
| | Area | 404,535 ha | |
| USA | Number | ? | See country review for a discussion of the various databases which record a wide range of differing data on potential PPA coverage in the USA. |
| | Area | > 6.7 million ha | |

Source: Stolton *et al.* (2014)

Appendix 2

The IUCN protected area matrix: a classification system for protected areas comprising both management category and governance type.

| Governance types | Governance by government | | | Shared governance | | | Private governance | | | Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|--------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| | Federal or national ministry or agency in charge | Sub-national ministry or agency in charge | Government-delegated management (e.g. to an NGO) | Transboundary management | Collaborative management (various forms of pluralist influence) | Joint management (pluralist management board) | Declared and run by individual landowner | ...by non-profit organizations (e.g. NGOs, universities, cooperatives) | ...by for-profit organizations (e.g. individual or corporate landowners) | Indigenous peoples' conserved areas and territories – established and run by indigenous peoples | Community conserved areas – declared and run by local communities |
| Protected area categories | | | | | | | | | | | |
| I a. Strict Nature Reserve | | | | | | | | | | | |
| I b. Wilderness Area | | | | | | | | | | | |
| II. National Park | | | | | | | | | | | |
| III. Natural Monument | | | | | | | | | | | |
| IV. Habitat/ Species Management | | | | | | | | | | | |
| V. Protected Landscape/ Seascape | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VI. Managed Resource Protected Area | | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Stolton *et al.* (2014)

Appendix 3

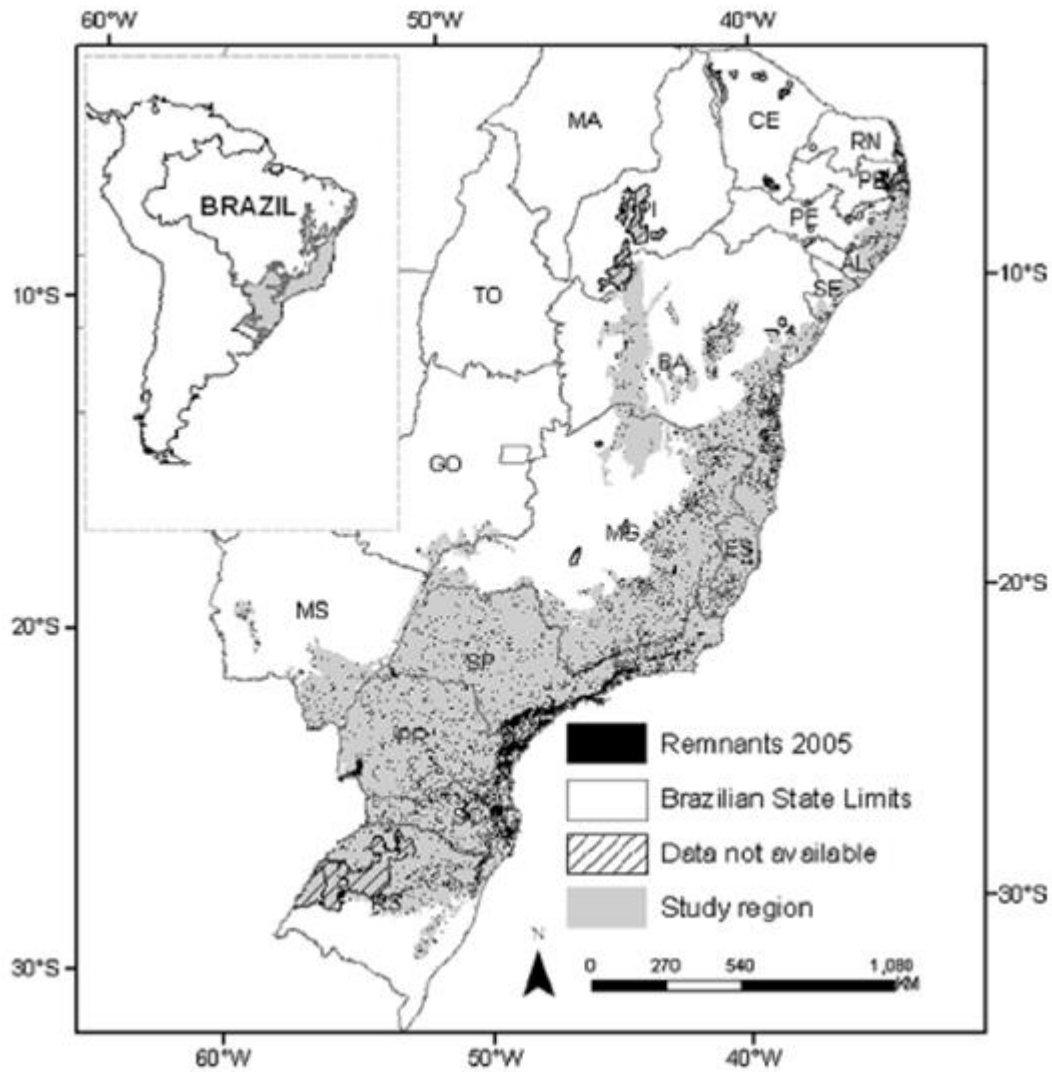
Criteria distinguishing PPAs from other governance types

| PPA criterion | Sub-criteria |
|-------------------|--|
| Protected area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area is legally designated and managed in accordance with the IUCN definition and associated principles OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area is managed in accordance with the IUCN definition and associated principles, and, though not legally mandated, is recognized as a PPA |
| Entities involved | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual or a group of individuals, NGO, corporation, for-profit owner, research entity or religious entity |
| Governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPA managers should be aware of any rights of use which are not in their control and efforts should be made to ensure that such use does not impact overall conservation objectives AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management is dedicated primarily to the purpose of nature conservation by its owner(s) or manager(s) |
| Permanence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area is legally designated for permanent protection of nature conservation (e.g. Act) OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designation to nature conservation is made through a permanent agreement (e.g. conservation covenant or easement) OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designation to nature conservation is made by a renewable agreement with the aim of permanence (e.g. time-limited conservation covenant or easement) |

Source: Stolton *et al.* (2014)

Appendix 4

Remaining forested areas in the Atlantic Forest region of Brazil



Source: Ribeiro *et al.* (2009)

Appendix 5

Estimated original area of the Atlantic Forest



Source: Galindo-Leal and Câmara (2003)

Appendix 6

Presentation of survey results

Part 1: Identification of respondents

1.1 Community

| Name of the community | Number of respondents | % |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Jabá | 61 | 39.4 |
| Mariana | 14 | 9.0 |
| Bamba | 34 | 21.9 |
| Upper Bamba | 10 | 6.5 |
| Upper Jabá | 17 | 11.0 |
| Esperança | 19 | 12.3 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.2 Gender

| Gender | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Male | 76 | 49.0 |
| Female | 79 | 51.0 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.3 Type of residency

| Category of resident | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Permanent resident | 145 | 93,5 |
| Weekender (<i>sitiante</i>) | 10 | 6,5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.4 Age (15 and above)

| Age group | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 19 and under | 6 | 3.9 |
| 20 - 29 | 25 | 16.1 |
| 30 - 39 | 39 | 25.2 |
| 40 - 49 | 25 | 16.1 |
| 50 - 59 | 30 | 19.4 |
| 60 - 69 | 18 | 11.6 |
| 70 and over | 9 | 5.8 |
| No response | 3 | 1.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.5 Education

| Level of education | Number of respondents | % |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Illiterate | 13 | 8.4 |
| Up to 4 years | 52 | 33.5 |
| 5 - 9 years | 47 | 30.3 |
| Secondary education | 33 | 21.3 |
| Graduation | 7 | 4.5 |
| Postgraduation | 2 | 1.3 |
| No response | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.6 Family status

| Family status | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Married | 78 | 50.3 |
| Single | 55 | 35.3 |
| Divorced | 8 | 5.2 |
| Widowed | 4 | 2.6 |
| Living together (<i>ajuntado</i>) | 9 | 5.8 |
| No response | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.7 Number of family members living together in one household

| Number of household members | Number of respondents | % |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1 | 15 | 9.7 |
| 2 | 28 | 18.1 |
| 3 | 41 | 26.5 |
| 4 | 35 | 22.6 |
| 5 | 22 | 14.2 |
| 6 | 7 | 4.5 |
| 7 | 3 | 1.9 |
| 8 | 1 | 0.6 |
| No response | 3 | 1.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.8 Number of dependant children attending school

| Number of children | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 0 | 71 | 45.8 |
| 1 | 46 | 29.7 |
| 2 | 23 | 14.8 |
| 3 | 10 | 6.5 |
| 4 | 1 | 0.6 |
| 5 | 1 | 0.6 |
| No response | 3 | 1.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

1.9 Spare time activities

| Preferred spare time activity | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Go to church | 6 | 4.3 |
| Sport activities | 15 | 10.6 |
| Family visits | 11 | 7.8 |
| Socializing activities | 19 | 13.5 |
| Go for walk | 5 | 3.5 |
| Go for bath in river | 3 | 2.1 |
| Fishing | 3 | 2.1 |
| Other outdoor activities | 4 | 2.8 |
| Watch TV | 9 | 6.3 |
| Sleep | 7 | 4.7 |
| Relax | 5 | 3.5 |
| Internet | 2 | 1.4 |
| Other indoor activities | 7 | 4.7 |
| Work | 8 | 5.7 |
| Household | 6 | 4.3 |
| Farm work | 6 | 4.3 |
| Manual work | 1 | 0.7 |
| Travel | 20 | 14.2 |
| Study | 2 | 1.4 |
| Nothing | 2 | 1.4 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>141</i> | <i>100</i> |

Part 2: Employment

2.1 Number of people regularly working

| At work | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 102 | 65.8 |
| No | 53 | 34.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

Note: When asked, 102 respondents answered to work regularly; however, one of them answering the following question (2.2) considered himself a student and the other was on sick leave, thus not at work and thus I have included them in the following table as well, raising the number of respondents to 55.

2.2 The reason for not being at work

| Reason | Number of respondents | % |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Retired | 23 | 41.8 |
| Unemployed | 18 | 32.7 |
| Housewife | 8 | 14.5 |
| Student | 5 | 9.1 |
| On sick leave | 1 | 1.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>55</i> | <i>100</i> |

2.3 Type of employment

| Employment | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Mineral Water Company | 10 | 9.8 |
| County | 12 | 11.8 |
| Ornamental fish production | 3 | 2.9 |
| Brewery | 2 | 2.0 |
| Agriculture | 24 | 23.5 |
| Local commerce | 16 | 15.7 |
| Public transport | 1 | 1.0 |
| Housecleaning (<i>fachineira</i>) | 7 | 6.9 |
| Petrobrás | 1 | 1.0 |
| Construction worker | 3 | 2.9 |
| RPR | 2 | 2.0 |
| Restaurant | 1 | 1.0 |
| Selfemployed | 4 | 3.9 |
| Education | 2 | 2.0 |
| Taxi | 1 | 1.0 |
| Military forces | 1 | 1.0 |
| Hairdresser | 1 | 1.0 |
| Petrol Station Attendant | 1 | 1.0 |
| Caseiro | 4 | 3.9 |
| Other | 1 | 1.0 |
| Palm Production | 1 | 1.0 |
| Hotel Fazenda | 3 | 2.9 |
| No response | 1 | 1.0 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>102</i> | <i>100</i> |

2.4 Work position of those employed in agriculture

| Work position | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Salaried employee | 5 | 26.3 |
| Caseiro | 3 | 15.8 |
| Day agricultural worker | 10 | 52.6 |
| Sharecropper | 1 | 5.3 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>100</i> |

Part 3: House and its environmental infrastructure

3.1 Category of housing

| Residence type | Number of respondents | % |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Own house | 122 | 78.7 |
| Renting house | 14 | 9.0 |
| In house of friend/relative | 2 | 1.3 |
| Other | 3 | 1.9 |
| Fazenda housing | 8 | 5.2 |
| No response | 6 | 3.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

3.2 Source of water

| Main Water Source | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| River | 102 | 65.8 |
| Spring | 53 | 34.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

3.3 Dependence on wood for cooking

| Cooking fuel | Number of respondents | % |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Wood-fired oven | 48 | 31.0 |
| Other | 106 | 68.4 |
| No response | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

3.4 Presence of a grease trap at residence (*caixa de gordura*) - a filter in a drain to prevent cooking oil from entering and thus polluting local water sources

| Grease trap | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 139 | 89.7 |
| No | 16 | 10.3 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

3.5 Presence of a septic tank at residence

| Septic tank | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 147 | 94.8 |
| No | 7 | 4.5 |
| No response | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

Part 4: Acquaintance and perception of the RPR among the local people

4.1 Answer to question: Have you ever heard about the RPR?

| Aware of the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 151 | 97.4 |
| No | 4 | 2.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.2 Frequency of visits to the RPR headquarters

| Frequency of visits | Number of respondents | % |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Never | 92 | 59.4 |
| Once | 17 | 11.0 |
| More than once | 34 | 21.9 |
| Frequently | 12 | 7.7 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.3 Local people's perception of the RPR's identity

| Primary perception of the RPR | Number of respondents | % |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Fazenda | 20 | 12.9 |
| Company | 7 | 4.5 |
| NGO | 76 | 49 |
| Private reserve | 52 | 33.5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.4 Answer to question: How well do you think you know the RPR (as an organization)?

| How well do you think you know the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Almost nothing | 76 | 49.0 |
| A little bit | 65 | 41.9 |
| A lot | 8 | 5.2 |
| Very well | 6 | 3.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.5 Answer to question: Do you know the RPR work and activities?

| Do you know the RPR work and activities? | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 114 | 73.5 |
| No | 41 | 26.5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.6 Answer to question: Can you mention any of the RPR activities?

| Mentioned RPR activities | Number of respondents | % |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Environmental education | 30 | 30.9 |
| Reforestation | 21 | 21.6 |
| Jobs for locals | 3 | 3.1 |
| Tourism | 17 | 17.5 |
| Environmental protection | 19 | 19.6 |
| Research | 7 | 7.21 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>97</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.7 Answer to question: How well do you think you know the RPR activities?

| How well do you think you know the RPR activities? | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Nothing | 81 | 52.3 |
| A little bit | 61 | 39.4 |
| A lot | 8 | 5.2 |
| Very well | 4 | 2.6 |
| No response | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8 The importance of the RPR activities according local people

4.8.1 Scientific research

| How important is scientific research for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 6 | 3.9 |
| Important | 66 | 42.6 |
| Very important | 64 | 41.2 |
| Don't know | 10 | 6.5 |
| No response | 9 | 5.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.2 Forest protection

| How important is forest protection for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 1 | 0.6 |
| Important | 45 | 29.0 |
| Very important | 99 | 63.9 |
| I don't know | 2 | 1.3 |
| No response | 8 | 5.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.3 Tourism

| How important is tourism for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 12 | 7.7 |
| Important | 70 | 45.2 |
| Very important | 55 | 35.5 |
| I don't know | 10 | 6.5 |
| No response | 8 | 5.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.4 Reforestation

| How important is reforestation for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 3 | 1.9 |
| Important | 51 | 32.9 |
| Very important | 91 | 58.7 |
| I don't know | 1 | 0.6 |
| No response | 9 | 5.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>100</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.5 Protection of rivers and springs

| How important is river and spring protection for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 1 | 0.6 |
| Important | 44 | 28.4 |
| Very important | 97 | 62.6 |
| I don't know | 3 | 1.9 |
| No response | 10 | 6.5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.6 Employment opportunities for local people

| How important is offering employment for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 3 | 1.9 |
| Important | 59 | 38.1 |
| Very important | 81 | 52.3 |
| I don't know | 3 | 1.92 |
| No response | 9 | 5.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.7 Environmental education

| How important is environmental education for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 6 | 3.9 |
| Important | 61 | 39.4 |
| Very important | 79 | 51.0 |
| I don't know | 2 | 1.3 |
| No response | 7 | 4.5 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.8 Courses and lectures

| How important is the giving of courses and lectures for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 11 | 7.1 |
| Important | 64 | 41.3 |
| Not important | 61 | 39.4 |
| I don't know | 10 | 6.5 |
| No response | 9 | 5.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.8.9 Species reintroduction

| How important is species reintroduction for the RPR? | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Not very important | 8 | 5.2 |
| Important | 48 | 30.7 |
| Very important | 79 | 51.0 |
| I don't know | 12 | 7.7 |
| No response | 8 | 5.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.9 The relationship between the RPR and local communities

4.9.1 The presence of the RPR is good for my community

| Is the RPR presence in the area good for my community? | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| A little bit | 18 | 11.6 |
| Good | 58 | 37.4 |
| Excellent | 72 | 46.5 |
| I don't know | 6 | 3.9 |
| No response | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.9.2 The RPR has brought something good for my community

| Has the RPR brought anything good for my community? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 70 | 45.2 |
| No | 85 | 54.8 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.9.3 Answer to question: Can you mention anything good the RPR has brought to your community?

| Most frequently mentioned | Number of respondents | % |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Nothing | 24 | 36.9 |
| Environmental protection | 20 | 30.8 |
| Reintroduction of animals | 3 | 4.6 |
| Enough and clear water | 4 | 6.2 |
| Jobs for locals | 10 | 15.4 |
| Environmental education | 4 | 6.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>65</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.9.4 The RPR is a hurdle for my community

| Is the RPR a hurdle for my community? | Number of respondents | % |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 8 | 5.2 |
| No | 142 | 9.6 |
| I don't know | 5 | 3.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.9.5 The RPR gives more attention to foreigners and researchers than to people from local communities

| Does the RPR give more attention to foreigners and researchers than to local people? | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Absolutely not | 20 | 12.9 |
| I don't think so | 36 | 23.2 |
| I think it so | 34 | 21.9 |
| Absolutely yes | 45 | 29.0 |
| I don't know | 20 | 12.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10 Local people interest in participating in the RPR activities

4.10.1 Answer to question: Would you like to participate in any of the RPR activities?

| Would you like to participate in any of the RPR activities? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 99 | 63.9 |
| No | 55 | 35.5 |
| I do not know | 1 | 0,6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10.2 Interest among local people in participating in walks guided by forest rangers

| Interest in participating in walks | Number of respondents | % |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Not interested | 71 | 45.8 |
| Interested | 18 | 11.6 |
| Very interested | 56 | 36.1 |
| I don't know | 5 | 3,2 |
| No response | 5 | 3.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10.3 Interest among local people in participating in community meetings organized at the RPR seat

| Interest in participating in community meetings | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not interested | 55 | 35.5 |
| Interested | 25 | 16.1 |
| Very interested | 60 | 38.7 |
| I don't know | 11 | 7,1 |
| No response | 4 | 2.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10.4 Interest among local people in participating in meetings with educational content organized at the seat of RPR

| Interest in participating in educational meetings | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not interested | 55 | 35.5 |
| Interested | 26 | 16.8 |
| Very interested | 64 | 41.3 |
| I don't know | 6 | 3.9 |
| No response | 4 | 2.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10.5 Interest among local people in participating in reforestation

| Interest in participating in reforestation | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Not interested | 56 | 36.1 |
| Interested | 18 | 11.6 |
| Very interested | 70 | 45.2 |
| I don't know | 6 | 3.9 |
| No response | 5 | 3.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10.6 Interest among local people in participating as a volunteer in the RPR activities

| Interest in participating as a volunteer in the RPR activities | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Not interested | 67 | 43.2 |
| Interested | 26 | 16.8 |
| Very interested | 41 | 26.5 |
| I don't know | 16 | 10.3 |
| No response | 5 | 3.2 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

4.10.7 Interest among local people in accompanying researchers in their activities

| Interest among local people in accompanying researchers in their activities | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Not interested | 79 | 51.0 |
| Interested | 19 | 12.3 |
| Very interested | 40 | 25.8 |
| I don't know | 11 | 7.1 |
| No response | 6 | 3.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

Part 5: Questions related to the RPR community newsletter

5.1 Answer to question: Do you know the RPR community newsletter?

| Do you know the RPR community newsletter? | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| Yes | 68 | 43.9 |
| No | 87 | 56.1 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

5.2 The place in the community where local people usually find the RPR community newsletter

| Place | Number of respondents | % |
|--|-----------------------|------------|
| Bar | 32 | 47.1 |
| Local general store | 11 | 12,3 |
| School | 6 | 8.8 |
| Church | 1 | 1.5 |
| The seat of RPR | 7 | 10.3 |
| Local health centre | 1 | 1,5 |
| Bus | 1 | 1,5 |
| Coordinator of the RPR educational programme | 1 | 1,5 |
| Hotel Fazenda | 2 | 2.9 |
| Children | 4 | 5.9 |
| Other | 2 | 2.9 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>68</i> | <i>100</i> |

Part 6: The relationship between the respondent and the RPR

6.1 Connection between respondents and the RPR project

| Connection | Number of respondents | % |
|---|-----------------------|------------|
| None | 121 | 78.1 |
| With one of their employees | 18 | 11.6 |
| With one of the children participating in the RPR educational programme | 13 | 8.4 |
| RPR employee | 2 | 1.3 |
| Participant of the RPR educational programme | 1 | 0.6 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>155</i> | <i>100</i> |

Appendix 7

Research Project Information Sheet

Relationship between Private Protected Areas and Local Communities in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil: What are the Implications for Rural Development and Nature Conservation?

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project. You can decide whether you wish to participate or not. If you decide to take part, I will give you this information sheet to keep and ask you to sign a consent form. However, deciding not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Also, if you wish you can change your mind and withdraw from the project any time and without giving a reason. Before you make the decision, it is important for you to understand what the research is about, why is it being done and what your participation will involve. Please take your time to read the information included on this information sheet carefully. If you wish, you can discuss it with others or ask me questions if you feel that there is something you do not understand or need more information about.

Aims of the research project

The aim of this research project is to find out more about the relationship between private protected areas in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil and the rural communities living in their vicinity. I am particularly interested in the social impacts that private protected areas have on rural communities in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil, as well as in finding out more about how private protected areas shape the way how rural people see and interact with the remaining forest.

Who have I asked to participate?

People I have invited to take part in this research are people from rural settlements in the regions of Brazil with remaining Atlantic Forest, researchers, officials of private and public protected areas, as well as official representatives of various donor and sponsor organisations involved in private conservation in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil.

What will I ask you to do?

I will ask you to take part in an interview which will last no more than two hours. I will ask you questions about your current occupation and the organisation you work for, your opinion about the conservation policy and practice in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil, your views on the relationship between private or public protected areas and the neighbouring rural communities and your views on the people from rural communities and their interactions with the forest environment.

Is there any risk involved in participating?

The risk of being involved in this research is minimal. You are free not to answer any of the questions and withdraw from the interview at any time without giving a reason.

Are there any benefits involved in participating?

Results of this research will be used in my doctoral thesis. Upon conclusion of my research project, I will provide you, in an appropriate form, the information about the main findings of my research and will notify you about the publications that this research might generate in the future.

How will I maintain your privacy and confidentiality?

Everything you decide to tell me will be anonymised and remain strictly confidential within the limits of the law, unless you request otherwise.

The information you give me will be anonymised by using a numerical code. Name, address or any other contact information I might have for you in my file will be replaced by this unique numerical code and the list of codes linked to these data will be stored separately in a secure place.

In my doctoral thesis and future publications your name will be replaced by pseudonym, and the list of pseudonyms will be stored separately from other research data in a secure place and accessible only by me.

Who is organising and funding the research?

I am conducting this research as a student at the School of Global Studies at the University of Sussex in the UK, and my research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK.

Contact information:

Mr. Peter Slovak
PhD Candidate
Centre for the Comparative Study of Culture,
Development and the Environment
University of Sussex
Email: P.Slovak@sussex.ac.uk
www.sussex.ac.uk

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet!

Peter Slovak

Appendix 8

Research Project Consent Form

Title of the research project: Relationship between Private Protected Areas and Local Communities in the Atlantic Forest of Brazil: What are the Implication for Rural Development and Nature Conservation?

I agree to take part in the above project and confirm that I have had the project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet which I may keep for my records.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without giving any reason and being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the researcher.

I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations, unless I request otherwise.

Name of Participant:.....Date.....Signature.....

Researcher: Peter SlovakDate.....Signature.....