

"Endangered Peoples of the Amazon"

The Nadëb-Makú-Indians and the work of CIMI

(„Bedrohte Völker Amazoniens - Die Nadëb-Makú Indianer und die Arbeit von CIMI“)

A Touring Photo Exhibition by Christian Ender



Photo: Padre Gunter Kroemer with Matheus, Manaus, Brazil 2006

In 1972 CIMI (Conselho Indigenista Missionário) was founded by the Bishops' Conference of Brazil as a missionary council for indigenous peoples. Their goal was, and continues to be, halting the slow genocide of the indigenous population of Brazil.

Currently of a total of 760,000 Brazilian Indians there are 360,000 living in the Amazon region. They belong to 230 different indigenous tribes and communicate in 180 different languages. The main goal of CIMI is to protect the remaining peoples who have not been exploited by so-called "civilization" and to preserve their autonomy and preserve their right to their own land.

Padre Gunter Kroemer, co-founder of CIMI, has been working in the Amazon region for over 30 years along with 400 laymen and other priests.

In 2006 Christian Ender met Padre Kroemer in Manaus, Brazil at which time he helped him make contact with the Nadëb-Makú-Indians for his doctoral thesis.

On July 15, 2009, Gunter Kroemer died suddenly after a brief illness in the south Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. However, we are committed to continuing his work.

This photo exhibition began in 2008 and within one year, through the generation donations of visitors and the support of CIMI alike, was able to travel throughout Germany to continue sharing the work of Father Gunter Kroemer.

The aim of this photo exhibition is to make the plight of the indigenous people of Brazil and their struggle to retain autonomy known. In addition, we would like to raise funds to further support the work of CIMI. A portion of all proceeds we receive goes directly to the Nadëb-Makú-Indians to assist in their goal of maintaining their traditions as well as their independence.



Photo: Nadëb-Makú-Indian in the area of Japurá, Brazil 2006

The Nadëb-Makú-Indians

Our journey to the Nadëb-Makú-Indians begins with a boat trip lasting several days from Tefé to Japurá. From there we travel with a speedboat along the Boá-Boá river towards the north and after an hour and a half we arrive at two settlements: Jutai and Jeremias. In the combined villages live approximately 200 Nadëb-Makú-Indians. The word “Nadëb” signifies the indigenous language of these Indians. Other tribes speak Yuhup, Nukak, Hupdë and Cacua. In the meantime each settlement has a shared, common language, Nadëb, which as a rule is no longer passed down to subsequent generations. Instead the people speak mainly Portuguese.

The term „Makú“ refers to the ethnic group. Originally this was a derogatory term for nomadic Indians. We can see negative references in early 20th century literature, for example, to the particular physiognomy of the Makú. Today the Makú do not continue to live exclusively from hunting and fishing. Having developed a settled way of life, they now cultivate manioc – a root that now acts as a staple of their diet. However, for hunting purposes they still use a traditional blowgun with poisoned arrows. Otherwise over the course of time, the cultural life of the Makú has changed dramatically. Festivals only take place among the inhabitants of one village, not in the Malocas of other villages, and tribal body paint and jewelry are not in use anymore. Today a generator can even operate a TV-set, as long as gasoline is available. In order to protect their own interests, the Makú have joined ten other tribes to found Uni-Tefé. This association now works closely with CIMI in advancing the rights of these indigenous tribes.



Photo: Japurá, Brazil 2006

About the Exhibition

The exhibition consists of a total of 36 photos, which were taken by Christian Ender in the spring of 2006 in Manaus, Brazil as well as in the Amazon region around Japura, Brazil. They are arranged on 19 posters measuring 2.5 meters x .80 meters.



Photo: Nadëb-Makú-Indian with child in the area of Japurá, Brazil 2006

Contact

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The exhibition is free. Donations for the work of CIMI are welcome.

More information – e.g. an interview with Padre Gunter Kroemer led by Christian Ender – can be obtained through www.cender.de.



Photo: Nadëb-Makú-Indian processing manioc, Brazil 2006

Donations

All proceeds will be directed exclusively to CIMI, whereby part of the proceeds will directly benefit the Nadëb-Makú-Indians.

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