

Memories of Barcarena



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If a traveler wanting to know Brazil only had the time to visit one city, Barcarena, in Pará, would be a great option. From the time of its settlement to the present day, Barcarena has been the site of many meaningful chapters of Brazilian history. We can thus say that the narrative of the fifteen interviewees of the *Memories of Barcarena Project* also embodies the saga of the Brazilian people.

According to research on the history of Barcarena, the region where the city is located today was once part of the former province of Grão-Pará, an administrative unit during the Colonial Brazil and the Empire of Brazil periods. The lands we now call Barcarena were first inhabited by the indigenous Aruan people, who were catechized by Jesuit priests during the time when Brazil was a colony of Portugal. The Jesuits settled on land donated by Francisco Rodrigues Pimenta, where they founded the Gibrié Farm, which would later be known as the Gibrié Mission. There they erected a church – to this day still the parish church.

When the settlement was later promoted to the category of parish, the transition ceremony included invocation prayers to Saint Francis Xavier. In 1897, Barcarena became a district of the city of Belém, and in 1943 it was proclaimed a municipality. The installation of the Barcarena industrial hub began in 1985.

With its location close to Belém, Barcarena was one of the capital city's territories until 1938. This proximity made Barcarena the scene of significant events during the turbulent years of the Cabanagem movement – a revolutionary movement that took place between 1835 and 1840. Following Brazil's independence from Portugal, the region experienced extreme poverty and political abandonment, which fueled the uprising. While different sectors of society were involved in the Cabanagem (also known as the Cabanos War), most of the rebels lived in riverside huts, known as *cabanos*, and so they were called Cabanos.

Some say that the name Barcarena originated from the combination of two words, after a large vessel (commonly known as a *barca*) named Arena that was present in the settlement.

This history is in part how Barcarena collects layer upon layer of curious and peculiar stories, typical of the mosaic we call Brazil. The narratives of its residents tell us many different stories – from tales of the eternal mysteries of the Amazon, to thoughts on the evolution of the Brazilian economy, as reflected in the country's Northern Region and in the state of Pará. The Barcarena of today is revealed to us as the expression of many mixtures: modern and archaic; industrial and hand-crafted; indigenous, black and white. And then we have stories that tell us of warriors, and *quilombola*¹, riverside and indigenous peoples.

¹ A quilombo is a Brazilian hinterland settlement founded during the time of slavery by people of African origin. Quilombola is the denomination of Afro-Brazilian residents of quilombo settlements, the descendants of Afro-Brazilian slaves who escaped from slave plantations."

It is impossible to underestimate the influence that boats had on Barcarena. Boats have always connected the different areas of this vast municipality, pre-dating roads and bridges. Boatloads of settlers and priests traveled via the rivers. Africans arrived by sea. Using small boats, Cabanagem leaders Eduardo Angelim and Canon Batista Campos would move to and from Belém. In fact, ships still haul aluminum, alumina, bauxite and other important natural resources mined in the Pará hinterlands.

This book provides a record of the *Memories of Barcarena Project*, which was developed as a partnership of Hydro, Albras, and the Museu da Pessoa. When making it, we had the Museu da Pessoa's primary objective in mind: recording and showing life stories that the public would otherwise miss.

Acting on this task, we have sought to represent the city of Barcarena through the experiences of those who live there. We do not aim to provide precise historical data, nor to develop a detailed study of the chronological events of "formal" history.

Fifteen inhabitants of Barcarena have taken part in this project, selected based on a survey of different sectors of the local community. These men and women have allowed us a glimpse into the immense cultural wealth of their region. They have told us of their stories and experiences, of their traditions and customs, and of their oral memories.

And, so, we have docked nine boats – organized in chapters – that bring together themes that are dear to the outstanding people who have shared their stories with us.

The chapters entitled "The Boat of Mystery" and "The Boat of History" give us a foothold on the changing nature of Barcarena, permeated by its myths and chronological evolution.

"The Boat of Travel," "The Boat of Labor," and "the Boat of Necessity," in turn, show us the dimension of the region's inequalities and needs, and the reasons why, today, Barcarena is a plural and diverse municipality.

"The Boat of Laughter" and "The Boat of Surprise" break our expectations with strange, curious and remarkable stories from everyday life.

Finally, "The Boat of Transformation" and "The Boat of Tomorrow" close the book, reminding us that life is made of changes. Barcarena itself, a land par excellence, forms and defines its inhabitants' journeys and dreams.

We hope that our narrators recognize themselves in this book, and that you, the reader, enjoy navigating along, and that you never forget Barcarena!

Museu da Pessoa



Hydro is an industry leader, building businesses and partnerships for a more sustainable future. We develop industries that make a difference to people and society.

Our company is committed to leading the industry in creating a more sustainable future, building more viable societies by developing natural resources into products and solutions. We do this in innovative and efficient ways, always promoting a safe and secure workplace for our 31,000 employees in more than 140 locations, in 40 different countries.

In Barcarena (PA), Hydro owns and operates the largest alumina refinery in the world outside of China: Hydro Alunorte, where alumina is turned into aluminum.

The refinery directly employs over 2,300 people and is the first in the world to have received an ISO 55001 certification for its asset management system. It also holds six other international certifications that attest to the conformity of its management systems – for quality, health, safety, environment, assets, and social responsibility, among others.

Some of Hydro's main projects are in the Amazon region. We embrace the challenge of contributing to the development of the region by maintaining a transparent, respectful and egalitarian dialogue with all interested parties. Our operating strategy seeks to positively impact the areas where we work, and to contribute to their sustainable development – fostering a fair transition, promoting skills, education and income generation, and preserving the socio-biodiversity of the Amazon, while respecting human rights, inclusion and diversity.

Hydro believes that acting with social responsibility also means preserving and valuing regional memory and identity. This project is an important instrument for researching and documenting a people's heritage. Identifying and recording the social and cultural manifestations of a region means recognizing the knowledge and practices of the local people, making their history known, and strengthening their identity, guaranteeing their right to memory.

Hydro



Albras is the largest producer of primary aluminum in Brazil. Since 1985, Albras has been supplying the Brazilian and foreign markets with high purity aluminum ingots. The company has an annual production capacity of 460 thousand metric tons. Located in Barcarena, in Pará, it employs around 2,400 people, directly and indirectly.

Hydro is the company's main shareholder, with fifty-one percent of the shares in this joint venture. The other shareholder is NAAC - Nippon Amazon Aluminum Co. Ltd., formed by a consortium of Japanese companies, trading companies, consumers and manufacturers of aluminum products.

Albras was recognized as one of the three largest companies in the metallurgy and steel sectors for two consecutive years by the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*. Our company has received the Brazilian GHG Protocol Program's Gold certification for the fifth consecutive year, testifying that it meets the prerequisites of international standards in the environmental management of its operations.

In 2021, Albras also received an international certification from the Aluminum Stewardship Initiative (ASI), attesting that the aluminum we produce complies with high quality standards in addition to being manufactured in a responsible and sustainable manner.

Albras is proud to conduct important social services in partnership with the local communities of Barcarena. Through dialogue and collective actions, our company has developed several initiatives that foster high-quality education and personal development.

Furthermore, the company has a robust corporate volunteering program, where participants can dedicate their time, skills and resources to develop initiatives aligned with local social responsibility strategies. In 2023, Albras joined the Brazilian Business Volunteer Council (CBVE), an entity that promotes volunteering both in Brazil and abroad, in addition to providing a space for sharing and creating experiences.

More than that, Albras has a long-term commitment to Pará – one that goes beyond the generation of jobs and income. Our company invests in the generation of knowledge, economic growth and environmental development, and values the region's culture and history.

Albras

Benedito Zacarias was born in Abaetetuba, Pará. A metallurgist, Benedito is a career employee at Albras, and he currently helps to share the company's knowledge by training new employees.





About Memories of Barcarena

Hydro values projects that promote cooperation and sustainability between its operations and its neighboring communities. Together with the Museu da Pessoa, Hydro and Albras are proud to bring you the *Memories of Barcarena Project*, which tells some of this city's rich history as seen through the eyes of those who have lived it. The research and interviews weaving together this mosaic of inspiring stories bring to light the tradition, culture and life of the people of Barcarena.

From this perspective, *Memories of Barcarena* tells these stories and shows how they mix with the region's development driven by the aluminum industry, always in coexistence with transformations in economic and migratory cycles, as well as in ever-changing social and cultural dynamics.

The project celebrates the multifaceted nature of Barcarena's society and preserves memories of old residents – from the descendants of the founders to the indigenous people, *quilombolas* and riverside dwellers. By focusing on community member's views, the project showcases the rich diversity and subtle nuances of the Barcarena people's identity.

With the Museu da Pessoa's meticulous work, we were able to catalogue memories that tell an intriguing story of courage and vitality – our tribute to the people of Barcarena.



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The Boat of Mystery



Visagem

I heard a lot of stories. We had no TV, no radio, no cell phone. So what did we do to pass the time? Our parents, the elders, would get together and they would bring out the legends. My mother used to tell us of a crossroads where we lived, where no one could walk after midnight, because something that haunted people would always appear. They called it *visagem*. She used to see these things in the woods.

Antonio Palheta dos Santos

Visagem, in the popular language of the people of Pará, is a haunting, a ghost, the apparition of a dead person.

Just Keep Going

At night, when I was coming from church, I would sometimes walk alone along a small path in the woods – it was two kilometers to get home. It was dark, so we'd use a lamp, which people called *poronga*. This was how you'd make a *poronga*: you'd take a can, place a stick inside, make some holes in the can in a way that the wind wouldn't blow it out, and you'd go. And sometimes the *Matinta Pereira* would follow me home. Like, I'd be walking, and she'd come along, in the woods, whistling. It feels like she's going to pierce right through you. I can say this because I heard her. I never saw the *Matinta Pereira*, but I did hear her whistling. It feels like she's chasing you, moving by the side of the road. You walk, she walks; you stop, she stops. It happened to me, it happened to my brothers – it happened often. And you know what people told you to do? "Pay no attention, do nothing, do not throw stones. Just keep going, and she won't do anything." And we did as we were told; we'd just walk quietly from the mountain to the Curuperé [creek]. And when you got close to home, she would turn away and leave.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

The Curuperé Creek is one of the best known in Barcarena, and there are several communities living on its banks. *Curuperê* is an indigenous word used to define a small stream, or an intermittent tributary. Kurupĩ (ĩ = river; kurup (curuba) = gravel)

According to Brazilian folklore, Matinta Perera is an old witch who turns into a bird at night.

You Were Cold, My Love

I remember that when I was a teenager, we would travel to a place called Utinga Açu. And when we got there, we'd spend the night together under a mango tree, listening to stories. One of those times, I heard the story of the *bota*. It went like this: early in the morning, a man asked his wife if she had laid with him in the hammock. She said no, that she had just had her baby a few days ago, and she hadn't done it. But he insisted, saying that yes, she had laid with him, and that he had noticed that she was very cold. And she kept saying no, that she would have never laid with him, because she had just had a baby. A few days later, he started to get sick – it was the man's own daughter who told the story. He started turning yellow, had no appetite, couldn't sleep. And he spent a lot of time at the window, looking at the stream. That's when someone said, "He has been *mundiado*, bewitched, by the *bota*. It was the *bota* who laid with him." So they had to take him to another stream, and they had to pour garlic water on the way so that the *bota* wouldn't sink the canoe. And they said she really showed up to try to sink the boat. In the end, they took the man to a lady's house, where she said prayers, made medicines, and treated him for a week. That's when he recovered.

Lia Apolaro do Nascimento

Utinga açu is an expression of the Tupi indigenous language that means clear-watered, large/long river or stream. Lit. translation. Combination of the terms 'y' ("river"), 'ting' ("white," "clear") and 'a' (nominal suffix). Açu (large, long, big). The community with that name is located on Trambioca Island.

Mundiado: charmed, bewitched, in the popular language of Pará.

The Night Hunt

Once we were in a wait. A "wait" is what we call when we go in the woods, set a trap, hide and watch... You can do it where the *inajá* fruit falls. *Inajá* is a palm tree that bears fruit, a little fruit, that falls on the ground and attracts animals: agouti, deer, paca. Paca is the best! So one day me and my uncle went out lanterning. "Lanterning" is when you go hunting at night. That's what we called it: lanterning. "Come on, let's set it up, it's looking good," he said. "We're sure to catch some paca tonight." But when we arrived, we saw what looked like a huge pig snorting, huffing. My uncle looked at the creature from afar. "Boy, that has to be something from the devil, because there is nothing like that animal around here." And there really wasn't. That big pig got to the tree, and it rubbed against it. *Vaque, vaque, vaque*. I saw it. You know, people talk about Saci, that kind of stuff, but they're, like, fishermen's tales. Things that people read about in books and then tell each other. But I believe in werewolves. What I saw that day was a kind of werewolf.

Raimundo Cordeiro Espíndola

Saci is one of the most famous characters in Brazilian folklore, a one-legged, mischievous black boy with magical powers.

A *boto* is a pink river dolphin from the Amazon. Legend says it can turn into a man and seduce human women. A *bota* would be a female dolphin.



Indigestion

The Mapinguari is like a very large monkey, and people tell two different versions: one says that it has a very large mouth on its belly; and the other that its mouth is on its back. In any case, it's never a good thing to come across the Mapinguari in the forest. One of the stories my mother used to tell went like this: a certain gentleman was traveling from one community to another. And in the Amazon, everything is very far, you know. In some places you need to walk for a day or two to get from one house to the next. And this man had spent the whole day walking, thirsty and hungry. Around three in the afternoon, he finds a shed in the middle of the forest. *Now, I wonder who lives in this shed. I've never seen anyone here. I never knew anyone lived here.* But I'm so very tired, I'm going to lie down here. The shed was all open, with no walls. The man lies down in the shed, he's very thirsty, very hungry. And when he looks up, right there, hanging from the straw roof, he sees a skewer – a nice-looking and nice-smelling barbecue. It is a large roasted liver, really well done. And he smells it. And he thinks, *Now, whose could this be, here?* So, he calls, he shouts, he calls, he looks. But no one shows up.

He waits for like a couple of hours, but no one shows up. So you know what he does? He thinks, *I'm going to eat this liver. There's no one here. I call and call, and no one comes. I don't know who left it here.* He climbs up one of the poles, he picks up the spit, and he eats the liver. It is delicious. And when he's done eating, he falls into a deep sleep. He wakes up around ten in the night, and it is pitch black. The only reason he wakes up is because he hears a scream coming from the middle of the forest. Someone is shouting, "I want my liver. I want my liver." And he wants to get up, but he is numb, he can't. And something is approaching, coming closer. And he really wants to get up, but he can't. Then, suddenly, the Mapinguari appears in the darkness, asking "Did you eat my liver?" And the man says, "I did. I didn't know whose it was." "That was the liver of the last traveler who passed through here. I ate him, carved his liver out, roasted it and put it up there. And you dared to eat something that you didn't know who it belonged to. Because of that, I'm going to eat you. And I'm going to roast your liver and leave it here to attract someone else."

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos



Fire

When I was young, my father had an accident, he got cut by a saw, and he went to the hospital with my mother. My sister and I stayed home. And, out of the blue, my sister starts crying, saying “I saw it, I saw it, I saw it.” She was frantic. A long time later, we were having a chat at home, and I asked, “Silvia, I’m curious and I wanted to ask you something.” My sister is known as Silvia, even though her name is Raimunda. “Silvia, when Dad had the accident, that left an impression on me.” “What did, Brother? The cut?” “No, I only knew he had gone to Belém. I didn’t even know what Belém was. But you kept saying, ‘I saw it, I saw it.’ And you’d close your eyes, ‘It came from there, I saw it, I saw it, I saw it.’ What did you see, Sis?” And she answered, “Ah, there were two balls of fire, *fru, fruuuuuuu*, they were big, coming towards me like, *tchun*, and then they stopped right there, and *summmmmm*, they were gone.”

Nazareno Muniz

Noose Around the Neck

My grandmother used to tell that many hangings happened here, right on this land [where the Cabana Clube in Barcarena is now located]. There was a *samaumeira* tree here, and that was where they would tie the rope. Who knows? Maybe we’re right on top of the grave of some soldier who fought in the Cabanagem. The workers are afraid to be here on their own, because they see a lot of *visagem*. They say they hear chairs being dragged, and that they see a lot of ghosts, white shadows, people walking. And when they turn around to look, there is no one, the person has disappeared.

Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo

Cabanagem was a popular revolution that took place between 1835 and 1840 in the province of Grão-Pará (an administrative unit created at the end of the Colonial Brazil period that continued into the Empire of Brazil period, and which encompassed the country’s northern region, including the current state of Pará). The name Cabanagem comes from the fact that the rebels consisted mainly of poor people who lived in huts (*cabanas*) on the riverbanks – thus called Cabanos.

At the time, Grão-Pará was a society made up of indigenous peoples, mestizos, slaves, dependent workers and a white minority that consisted of Portuguese traders and a few English and French. Living conditions were difficult for a large part of the population, and there was a lot of poverty and hunger. The elites, in turn, were unhappy with the Regency and fought for more political representation.

The Additional Act of 1834 gave more autonomy to the provinces, but a dispute between local elites over the appointment of their new president triggered the popular uprising. The rebels invaded Belém, executed the president of the province, and proclaimed an independent republic. The revolution left more than thirty thousand dead, including rebels and loyalists. The rebels targeted mainly white people, especially the Portuguese elite.

The revolution broke out in Belém, but spread inland. The Cabanos were defeated by loyalist troops in 1840, but their ideas have reverberated, echoing to this day. The term *cabanagem* is currently thought of as a synonym for popular resistance.



Nazareno Muniz in a photo
from his personal collection.



The Boat of History

Let the Name of the Mission be Changed

In 1653, a priest named Father José Delgardes arrived with a group of Jesuits to what is now Vila do Conde. This is considered as the starting point of the history of Barcarena. There were some Portuguese already living in the region, but they could not get the Indians to work. So the Jesuits came to Vila do Conde – as they came to many places in Brazil – with the intention of catechizing the Indians. And there they built a church, the Church of Saint John the Baptist, the patron saint of Vila do Conde. The church was inaugurated on March 3rd, 1653. Later, gold was discovered on the banks of the Uraenga River, which today is known as the Arienga River. This gold was used to make the utensils of the Vila do Conde church: the candelabra, the vases and more – all made with gold taken from the Uraenga. Gold there was so plentiful that they also used it to make many objects for the Church of Saint Alexander in Belém [one of the most traditional churches in the State of Pará], for the Church of Our Lady of the Snow in Vigia, and for another church in Marajó. Of course, the Indians were already living at Vila do Conde when the Jesuits arrived. There were three tribes that inhabited the current municipality of Barcarena: the Mortigura, in Vila do Conde; the Gibrié, in Vila de São Francisco, which would later become the municipal seat; and the Carnapijó, in the island regions. They were all part of the large Tupi-Guarani branch, and were called Tupinambarana. The word *rana* indicates something that is a bit fake. The Tupinambá lived on the coast, and those who lived here, inland, more towards the Tapuio region, were told, “Ah, you are Tupinambá, but you’re a bit *rana*.” In any case, the Mission at Vila do Conde would become one of the five largest in the State of Maranhão e Grão-Pará. Father Antônio Vieira, one of the most important Jesuits in the history of Brazil, lived in this mission. Father Bettendorff, from Luxembourg, one of the

most prolific authors of books about the Jesuits in Brazil, also lived there. This mission became so important that every ship and boat that sailed to the Lower Amazon, to Santarém or to Manaus would stop to exchange products on the way there and back. This led to a population explosion – so much so that the area became known as Noah’s Ark. But this ended when the Marquis of Pombal, from Portugal, sent his brother, Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, to govern the state. He came bringing a document known as a directory, which determined laws for the Colony. One of the first things this directory said was that the names of all indigenous persons had to be changed, and all Indians had to be baptized into the Catholic church. So if a guy’s name was Tibiriçá, Mundurucu, or Paraguaçu, that name should be taken away, and he should be given a “civilized” name. That is what the document said: that every indigenous name was immoral. And the indigenous names of the places were also changed. So, for instance, the Mortigura Mission became Vila do Conde, which is a Portuguese city. Lots of people think that a nobleman, the Count of Vila Flor, had lived in the place, giving it its name. There was never any count who lived here. We were named after a Portuguese city, following the demands made in that directory brought by Governor Mendonça Furtado. The Gibrié Mission stopped being the Gibrié Mission to become Barcarena, after the city of São Pedro de Barcarena, in Portugal, because the governor’s wife, Violante Velazquez, lived there. Just like Vila de Beja, a village close to us, used to be the Mission of Samaúma and became Vila de Beja, after another Portuguese city. The Tapajó Mission stopped being the Tapajó Mission and became Santarém. Throughout the Lower Amazon, the names of places were changed to those of Portuguese cities.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos



Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the Marquis of Pombal (1699-1782), was an influential minister of King Dom José I of Portugal. He ruled with an iron fist and endeavored to modernize Portuguese society. He brought finances back to health, and boosted manufacturing, aiming for the country's economic independence. The Marquis of Pombal also supported education, with the reform of several universities. He prohibited the enslavement of Indians and fought against the discrimination of Jews. He was the main agent responsible for expelling the Jesuits from the colonies.

The original Barcarena, in Portugal, is a village located close to the sea, in the municipality of Oeiras, in the metropolitan area of Lisbon. Signs indicate that its occupation dates back more than two thousand years. Its main attractions are the Parish Church of Saint Peter and the Gunpowder Factory, now converted into a cultural center.



Valter dos Santos
Freitas and Mário
Assunção do
Espírito Santo.



Rural zone

What we now call [the municipality of] Barcarena did not exist until the 1960s. What did exist was Vila de São Francisco, a Jesuit colony founded in the 17th century. There were small communities around this colony, such as Tracuateua, where my family is from. Vila de São Francisco was, then, Barcarena, and Barcarena was just a district of Belém.

Luiz Antonio Valente Guimarães.

1738

My great-great-grandfather was called Manoel Joaquim dos Santos. He came from Marajó with his wife, Maria Joaquina. My black grandfather. He settled here in Barcarena around 1600, and he bought a large portion of land, which is today our *quilombola* community of Gibrié de São Lourenço. There is a document to prove this: in 1709 an individual called Francisco Pimenta donated his lands to the Jesuits when he left for Portugal. On the map it shows that the border of these lands was us, the São Lourenço lot. This map is in the City's archives, and it says, "Lands of São Lourenço." The title to our land dates back to 1738.

Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo

Figures from the Past

The municipality of Barcarena was one of the places where people would meet to set goals, to organize the Cabanagem movement – especially Vila do Conde and Ilha das Onças. That was where they would mobilize for battles. There were other places, many other municipalities in the state of Pará, but Barcarena was one of the main locations for the movement. Two of Cabanagem's greatest icons, Eduardo Angelim and Batista Campos, were buried here in the municipality. Batista Campos died here at Furo do Arrozal. Around that same time Eduardo Angelim also died, and he was buried in Trambioca, near the beach. Our grandparents used to tell this story. They'd say, like, "Ah, I was at a meeting Eduardo Angelim held here, in front of the Catholic church." "I saw him, I was in a meeting with him. I was young. I didn't go to the battle in Belém, but I saw a lot of people go." Eduardo Angelim was nineteen years old. In front of the Vila do Conde church, the Church of Saint John the Baptist, he called on the population, and he left with three hundred people, who went on foot to Belém. And as they passed other communities, more people joined the ranks, as they rallied for the battle. It was kind of like they left Conde with two, three hundred people, and arrived in Belém with thousands. And they did manage to win the battle and took on the state's government. Our Mortigura and Gibrié ancestors took part in these battles. They were not original Indians, it was already a mixed generation, but they certainly fought along with the Cabanos.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

Lots of People

For a long time Barcarena only had a few small villages, a few families who lived in Conde, Itupanema, São Francisco. Those were the centers. In Conde, in São Lourenço, we must have been some fifteen families. But a lot of people moved here with the arrival of the Project. It was a good period for work, because the metallurgical and construction companies that came here needed a lot of labor. But the people here had no training. The jobs we could take were those of watchmen, bricklayers, carpenters, which were the easiest. I, myself, worked as a bricklayer, and I am glad I made good use of this opportunity and sent my children to study. Not everyone was as lucky.

Valter dos Santos Freitas

Gathering on Cronge Avenue

I spent my childhood in the city, on the city's first street, which is Avenida Cronge da Silveira, on the seafront. I lived there for twenty-seven years, going to the shops, farmers' markets, to the municipal market. There was the small, open market for those people who came from the countryside to sell flour, tapioca, fruit. And we had the covered market, which we called "the covered market" because it was already permanent. We played a lot at the covered market. There were stalls and we liked to run around, playing hide-and-seek. There was a snack bar at the bus station, Galo de Ouro, and they had round stools that rotated. We used to spend hours there spinning, spinning on the stools. That was our amusement park.

Lia Apolaro do Nascimento

Francisco Cronge Bezerra da Silveira was an urban planner and director of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). He was responsible for planning the new seat of Barcarena in the 1960s. The municipality's main avenue was named after him, as homage for his work in transferring the municipal seat from the old Vila de São Francisco to the left bank of the Mucuruça river.





The Boat of Travel



Immigrants

When I was doing my doctoral project, I wanted to study the history of the Cafezal Farm, which is the history of a house – a slave house that used to be here, a house with many memories, and that no one has ever studied. I started reading and came across the story of an earlier farm owner, a Portuguese man called Fortunato. I thought his story might be interesting, so I submitted my doctoral proposal and started researching his life. The project was approved, but as I started collecting material, I realized I didn't have enough to write a doctoral thesis. I had already been researching for six months when my advisor asked, "So, Luiz, what have you got?" "I have some stuff about Fortunato, and some about Cafezal." "Do you think it is enough for a thesis?" "No, I don't." So he suggested, "Why not expand it? Research Portuguese immigration?" And that is how I ended up surveying thirteen hundred Portuguese people who had immigrated here. And the thing is that while I was studying the story of Fortunato and of these Portuguese people, I also discovered something that I find very interesting: that ours is a city of immigrants. If we ask each resident, everyone came from somewhere else, or is here for some reason. I learned about Barcarena by studying the stories of migrants. The stories of the Portuguese that lived back then helped me better understand and even explain experiences that I have here today.

Luiz Antonio Valente Guimarães

Located on the banks of the Aicaraú River (also known as Cafezal River), the old Sant'Anna do Cafezal Farm marked the city's history, and still lives on in the imagination of its residents.

The farm was made up of two large, interconnected pavilions that formed a "U." The large house was built in the neoclassical style, and the property also housed a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Saint Anne – inside of which was an image of Saint John Nepomucene that had been brought by the farm's first owner.

The farm went through many administrations and different economic phases. Its third owner, Fortunato Alves de Souza, modernized the property in the second half of the 19th century, increasing the production of sugarcane and spirits. The property is the object of many myths and legends, such as a pit where rebellious slaves would have been thrown, and the information that it had 360 windows. None of this, however, is corroborated by documents.

The farmhouse was demolished in 1987, and what remains of the old farm ruins is inside a private property in the community of Cafezal.



Fortunato Alves de Souza (c.1817 - 1902), born in the parish of São Martinho de Frazão, diocese of Porto, in Portugal, was an influential Portuguese merchant and politician who immigrated to Brazil and built his fortune in Pará. Having arrived in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1839, he soon headed to the province of Grão-Pará, where his two brothers were already established. Starting with a small commercial firm located on Mercadores Street, on the corner of Largo das Mercês, in Belém, he became a prominent trader. He was deeply involved with the Portuguese community, which in 1876 granted him a commendation of the Order of Christ, making him a commander. Fortunato owned lands, slaves and businesses. He stands out in the history of Barcarena mainly for installing a mill at the Cafezal Farm, which encouraged sugarcane cultivation and the production of sugarcane spirits.



Antonio Palheta dos Santos, photo from his personal collection, and the Quilombola Community of Cupuaçu.



Noah's Ark

At one point in the 17th century, the Mission of Mortigura, at Vila do Conde, had more residents than Belém, and so it was nicknamed Noah's Ark. Do you know why? This is where an important element comes in: the Aruã from Marajó. These Aruã were a developed people, like the Incas, the Mayans and the Aztecs. They made mortuary urns, built brick houses, and had advanced technology. Since many Aruã were won over to the Catholic faith, and the nearest catechization center was Vila do Conde, they were brought here to be catechized. Many stayed and took up residence. I, for one, can say that I am a descendant of Mortigura and Aruã, because they and the Carnapijó (and the Gibrié, and the Ariguena, and others) were the forefathers of the mestizo people we have here today.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

Calabria

My father was born in Calabria, and he moved here from Italy at the age of eleven, fleeing the war. In fact, his father, Antonio Apolaro, defected and settled in Barcarena. Antonio deserted at the invitation of a cousin of the Cosenza family, who had come earlier. When my grandmother arrived, with two children, she stayed here. Many members of the Apolaro do Nascimento family and of the Cosenza family ended up falling in the war. Other Italian families, too. And those who fled are heroes for us, because otherwise we wouldn't be here telling this story. So what was their cowardice became an act of courage and survival. My dad used to tell that they came on ships, and that the travel was like an adventure. He saw a lot of people get sick and even saw babies being born during the trip. He talks a lot about their arrival in Brazil, and about their experience with a new type of food, a different taste, all very different from what they were used to.

Lia Apolaro do Nascimento

Wandering through the Country

When I was five, my grandparents decided to move from Caxias, in Maranhão, to a village called Dois Irmãos, in the city of Barra do Corda. We went together, my mother, my father, my sister and I, and they continued working in the grocery business. We lived there until the end of 1977, when my father left my mother with my sister, and went to work logging wood somewhere by the Belém-Brasília Highway, near Aurora do Pará. We spent six months there, and many people were starting to migrate to the new town of Tailândia on the borders of highway PA-150. Workers from the region of Paragominas, Mãe do Rio and Irituia had moved there. And in October 1978, my father decided to go too. He even built a house (on Travessa Bragança, I remember it well), but at one point he got excited with the idea of gold mining, and he said, “We are going to Curionópolis.” We sold everything in Tailândia and left early in 1983. We lived in Curionópolis for a couple of years, and then one day my father said, “No, we are moving. We’re going to Parauapebas.” In Parauapebas he would spend three, four months mining, then go back home and stay for fifteen, twenty days, and then back to mining. Early in 1986, when we were getting used to this life, my father said again, “We’re going back to Tailândia.” How can you understand someone like that? At that time, I had completed a training course at Senai [the Brazilian National Service for Industrial Training] to become a lathe operator, and was offered an internship at Cemig [the power utility company in Minas Gerais]. But it was no use. The truck parked in front of our house, and off we went back to Tailândia.

Wagner Rolins da Silva Alves

Escaped

My father was born in Juazeiro do Norte, in Ceará. During the Cangaço era, he ran away to Belém, afraid of dying. He was a *volante* at that time, and those were people that were marked for death. Even if he had gone to live in the capital, he would still be at risk, so he had to move far away. He fled with his family and came to live in Ilha das Onças, where he met my mother. At that time, the island was inhabited by Europeans. Not much later, other northeasterners also started arriving at the island, fleeing these same things, and also fleeing hunger.

Ronny Nascimento

Cangaço was a phenomenon of Northeastern Brazil in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This region of Brazil is known for its aridness and hard way of life. Many men and women (known as *cangaceiros*) decided to become nomadic bandits. They practiced a form of “social banditry” against the government, and roamed the hinterlands looking for money, food, and revenge.

Volantes were members of the police force, sent by the government to destroy the *cangaceiros*.

Ilha das Onças is an island located in the Guajará Bay, part of the municipality of Barcarena. It is approximately nineteen kilometers long, and can only be reached by river. The tides have an incisive impact on the dynamics of the island, and today its main production is açai. The island is crossed by the long and wide Piramanha River.

The Point

Around 1985, some four hundred houses were delivered at Vila dos Cabanos (in Barcarena). Since I had arrived a little earlier, I was part of a group that welcomed families coming from other states. At that time, the Anglo-American School was our meeting point. That was where we would talk, support each other, cry on each other's shoulder. Some came willingly, attracted by the possibility of better salaries. Others complained about being where they didn't want to be – especially teenagers. "Why did you come here?" we'd ask, and the answer was often, "I came to make some money." And I could understand that, because I also had come from somewhere else. I was born in Valença, in Piauí, and then lived in Maranhão, in Altamira [PA], in Amapá, in Santarém and in Breves [PA]. I tried to help, because I knew what they were going through.

Irene da Silva Gomes

Vila dos Cabanos is a district of the municipality of Barcarena. Until the 1970s, it was home to a community of fishermen and small farmers, with little infrastructure. Once it was decided that the industrial hub was to be installed there, the Barcarena Development Company (CODEBAR) was created in 1979. This company was responsible for executing and managing local urbanization works and services. Vila dos Cabanos was planned to house Albras and Alunorte employees and their family members. At the time, both companies belonged to Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD), in partnerships with other private companies. CODEBAR managed Vila dos Cabanos until 2010, and it later became a district of Barcarena.

Noah's Ark Again

When Albras started here, my family came. Almost everyone came because the plant needed support. But there was no structure in place for people to live yet. Some lived in hotels. I used to drive to Abaetetuba and back every day. I only moved in October 1985. I was the last one to come and live in the Vila. We had people from all over: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais... but mostly people from Macapá, because they had an industrial background there, and so there were a lot of knowledgeable people.

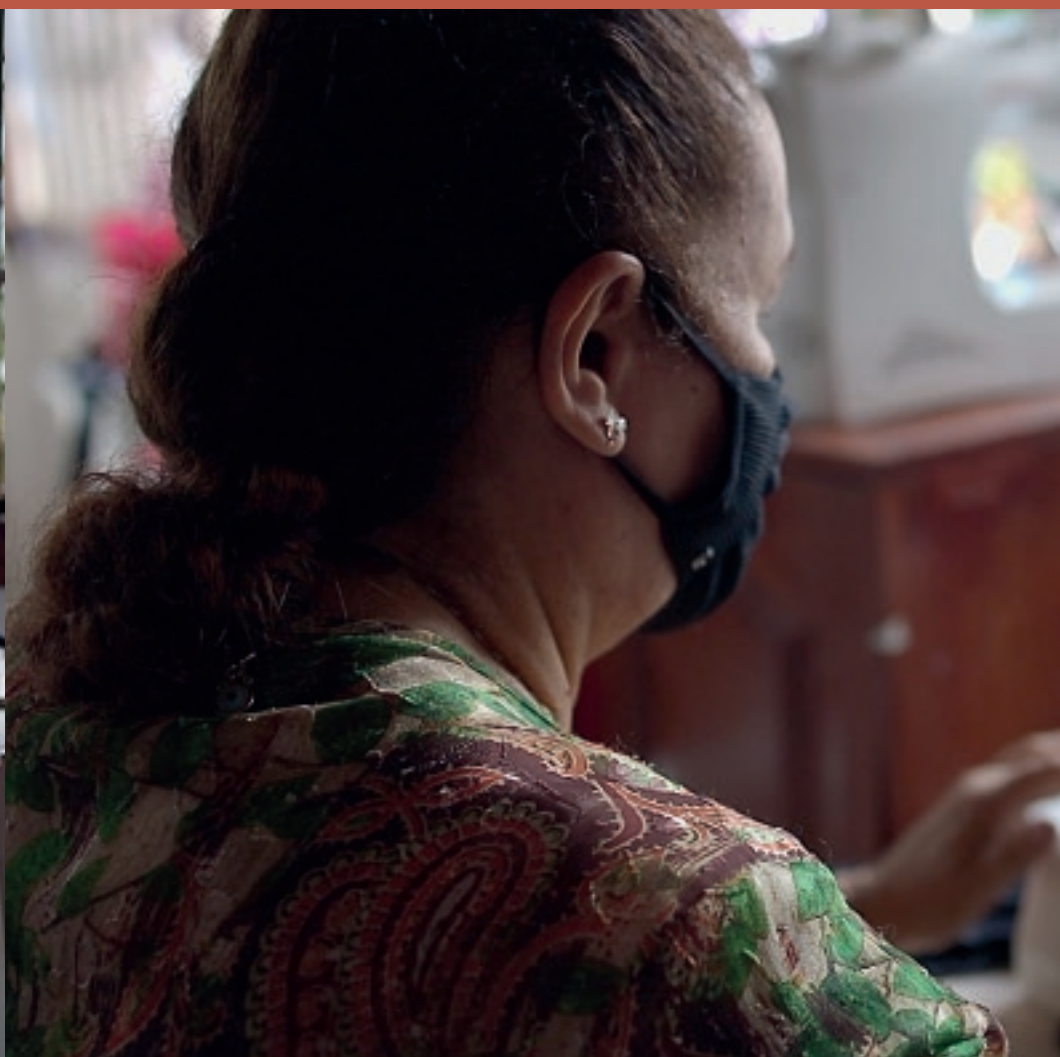
Benedito Zacarias Azevedo da Silva

No *Justificativa*

I was the presiding officer of a polling station in Barcarena, and today I see this as a matter of understanding the idea of belonging, or not belonging, to a place. I remember that even after ten years, many residents would not have transferred their voting document from the place where they felt their life really was. Many people – from São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, anywhere – had this idea that Barcarena was a place of transit. They were here, but they weren't going to stay. And so they were not willing to transfer their voting document here. The voting queue was sometimes very small, while the queue for justifying [the fact that you were not voting] was huge. This would go on for a long time, until a resident would look back and realize, *Wow, it's been ten years, twenty years, and I'm still here. I'm not leaving. I'm not going back to my place.*

Luís Antonio Valente Guimarães

In Brazil, voting is mandatory. Everyone is required to register to vote, and to have a voting document. When people move, they should transfer their voting document to their new place of residence.



Irene da Silva Gomes



The Boat of Labor

Early Morning in the River

We would wake up early, and my father would say, “Let’s go fishing.” And we had to go. The early morning was cold, and all, but we had to go and catch fish. When we got there, we’d make the *matapi*, which is the tool we use to catch shrimp. Now you can buy a *matapi* at the markets, but we used to make them ourselves. Even today I could still make one. We’d take a stem from an *anajá* or a *bacabeira* [palm trees], we’d make the *matapi*, place it there and leave it. No one would take someone else’s *matapi*, there were no thieves. And besides that, we’d also catch other fish. We’d often catch hake, mackerel, *mandi*, *mandubé*, *filhote* [types of catfish], mullet – all with a hook. It was a big line hook, a longline. When someone caught a *piraíba* [a large species of catfish], we would all get excited, because they can weigh more than a hundred kilos, so there would be a lot of food. Today, people hardly ever catch a fish this size here.

Antonio Palheta dos Santos

Day after Day

Since I was very little, I used to help my mom make firewood – we have a wood-burning stove. Collecting açai, looking for the *guarumã* [plant] to make sieves, make baskets. I’d go with her to do all of that. She would come with a bundle of firewood, and I would be next to her bringing another. When she got home, she would fix the fire, then put water in the pan to heat it, to soak her feet. She would mash the açai in a bowl and strain it through a sieve. Every day was like that.

Maria de Nazaré Menezes da Costa

I’m Going Straight in Here, That’s What

In 1984, late in 1984, a construction company’s truck came to the factory where I was working. We made plywood sheets – thick plywood, like this – which these people took to drive piles at Albras. The construction company guy saw me working and said to me, “I need a forklift operator. What do you say?” And I asked, “Hmm, how much do you pay?” And he said, “I’ll give you two grand.” And I immediately thought, *Wow, things must be good over there*. So I was curious, and I came to have a look at the project. They were building Albras at the time and, coincidentally, they had an opening for a forklift operator. I saw that and I thought, *I’m going straight in here, that’s what*. I waited for the right moment and, instead of going to the construction company, I came directly to Albras. My cousin wrote a resumé for me on one of those typewriters, and I ended up getting called.

Benedito Zacarias Azevedo da Silva

Albras is the largest producer of primary aluminum in Brazil, with a nominal output capacity of 460,000 metric tons per year. Though the company was founded in 1978, it was not inaugurated until 1985. Hydro is currently the company’s main shareholder, with fifty-one percent of the shares. The other shareholder is NAAC - Nippon Amazon Aluminum Co. Ltd., formed by a consortium of Japanese companies, trading companies, consumers and manufacturers of aluminum products.

Not Yet

After my dad passed, my mom never wanted to have another relationship. She always said that her man was the one God had given her, and that God had taken away. And she went on with her life. At that time, we were renting a small mud house, and she found work cooking for a man named Jamil Paganini – a man who worked with wood. Before leaving at six in the morning, she'd make some black coffee, and she'd leave us a bit of milk and bread, and she'd go. And from then on, we'd wait for her to come back. The house was small, with one door and one window, and every now and then my sister would say, "Wagner, go and have a look, check if Mom is coming." I'd look out the window, "Not yet." The midday sun, one o'clock, and we'd be already hungry, but she'd only come home after she'd served lunch over there, after she'd washed the dishes and left everything organized at this man's house. It wasn't until half past one, two, that she'd come back bringing our lunch and dinner in the lunch box.

Wagner Rolins da Silva Alves

C-10

We used to call my dad's truck the C-10. I don't know whether that was the make or model, but it had a wooden body and it was painted blue. He drove it to services in rural areas. He would put some boards on the back, and people would sit there. Another thing that happened a lot was that when a dead person arrived at the town border, he would offer to take the deceased's coffin and family in the back. Weddings, too. The bride would go in the front, and the guests in the back. If someone sick arrived, usually in a hammock, they would take the hammock off the boat, put it in the back of the truck, and take the person to the hospital. This pickup truck was used for everything: moving, transporting engines from the port to his workshop, family outings. One thing that I remember clearly was the Seven of September [Independence Day in Brazil], when he'd take us to the square, park there, and we'd watch the school parade from our VIP seats in the truck. The C-10 marked our lives. So much so that, when my father was a city councilor in the nineties, one of the things he fought for was a hearse for the municipality. I don't remember the exact phrase he used, but what he asked for was this: a hearse, so families could say their goodbye with dignity.

Lia Apolaro do Nascimento

The Cool One

When my mother started working as a housekeeper, my brother Eliel and I, we liked to clean yards here at Vila dos Cabanos, because it was much better. We were already used to cleaning the yard at home, lots of land, lots of plants, *tchah*, *tchah*. We were used to doing it. But the first time we came here to work, when the time came to get paid, the guy gave us like the equivalent of five hundred reais today. Man, that's some easy money we were making! We would clean two or three yards, and we'd be rich on the other side. Today it would be like living in Brazil and working like, I don't know... In France? Like you're getting paid in euros, you see? And if you were getting paid there and then coming here, it was like, you're the cool one. You get it?

Nazareno Muniz

The Murucupi River's spring is close to the area corresponding to the Albras/Alunorte industrial district. It runs through Vila dos Cabanos, Bairro do Laranjal, São Lourenço and Boa Vista, and flows into Furo do Arrozal, covering a total length of approximately eight kilometers.

I Didn't Give Any of Them Away

At first, I fished on other people's boats, and in time, thank God, I managed to get my own. It had an old, second-hand engine. I worked hard, my woman helped a lot, and we advanced. Some more time passed, and I started to trade. My first trade was inside this Murucupi: nuts, *uxi*, *umari*, *bacaba* [Amazon fruits], vegetables. If a guy plants in winter, he can plant whatever he wants: *maxixe* [a type of gherkin], *caruru* [a type of leaf]. All of it grows well. And we would trade it all: palm heart, *caruru*, hibiscus, beans, pumpkin. We'd fill the small canoe and take it to Belém to sell. We'd get there, and four hours later we'd already have made some money, and we'd come back. With that, I paid for the engine that I still owed, and then I bought a better one, and I had a bigger boat built. As a friend used to say, "The cow was fattening up a bit." We raised all our children at home. All nine of them. We didn't have to give any of them away.

Raimundo Cordeiro Espíndola

Nazareno Muniz and, below,
Irene da Silva Gomes in a photo
from her personal collection.





Valter dos Santos
Freitas in his plot.



The Boat of Necessity

The Lost Island

One of these days, I was on a bus, and a guy got on and sat next to me. He was a little drunk, and he hugged me and said to his friends, “This guy here, he is a great teacher.” I was embarrassed; the bus was full, and he kept talking. I lowered my head, awkwardly, but he kept going, “You read me a story when I was five or six years old, sir, and I have never forgotten it. If you like, I can tell you every single detail of that story.” And I said, “Really?” And he, “Yes. If you like, I can tell you the name of the story: it was *The Lost Island*. And I even remember the name of the author: Maria José Dupré.” I remembered the story, but I did not remember the author’s name anymore, yet he did – a grown man. And he went on, “I love this story, I’d like you to find it for me, because I dream of reading it to my son.” That really touched me! The Mountain School was a shed, a straw roof supported by wooden poles that had been taken directly from the woods. There were no walls, it was all open. There were no desks either – the children would sit on benches and rest their notebooks on their legs, like this, or they would kneel on the floor and write on the bench. Despite all this, it’s great to remember what we did there. It gives me a good feeling.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

Snake

Early in August 1986, my father was bitten by a snake in Tailândia [in Pará]. The place where he worked, logging wood, was far from the village, but he tied his leg anyway and walked four kilometers until he reached highway PA-150, where he caught a ride to Tailândia. Tailândia was still a village, with not a lot of resources, but they bandaged him up and sent him home. A few days went by, he was getting better, and one morning he said, “Wagner, let’s go to Mr. Antônio Chicó’s. We need to get some groceries to the guys.” Mr. Antônio Chicó was a merchant there. And so we went. About half-way through the journey, when we were already in Tailândia, my father began to get short of breath. We took him to the health center, and from there he was transferred to the Abaetetuba Regional Hospital. Six days later, on August 9, 1986, he passed away. We were totally dependent on him, and we went through really hard times. I was sixteen.

Wagner Rolins da Silva Alves

Slacking

I didn't study, because my father didn't want me to. I was good at learning, I liked it, I wanted to study. But he'd say, "You are not going to school. I don't want you to learn to write, and then go around writing notes to boys." If he got home, for example, and you were there with a piece of paper, teaching me, he would take the paper away and tear it up, and say, "That's slacking." It turned out that he got two guys to work with him, and in the end one of them came to like me. I was sixteen, I was still young, and I had my first daughter.

Maria de Nazaré Menezes da Costa

Mango Tree

My husband came to Barcarena in January 1985, to take on a job at the hospital, and I stayed in Breves waiting, because there were no houses here. He went before us, and he said, "When there's some structure, you can come with the boys." In the meantime, I was waiting. One month, two months, and nothing. So one day I put all our stuff in a little boat and off we went. I arrived at the São Francisco [Port], and I said, "Tell him I am here." When he saw me, he was in a shock. "Irene, are you and the boys going to live under a mango tree?" I thought there was a village already, but that was just an imagination in my head. Nope. In 1985, the Albras factory was being built and there really was no structure. There was the hospital, a couple of boarding houses and a kind of restaurant. And that was it.

Irene da Silva Gomes

Last One to Go to Bed, First One to Get Up

In October 1984 my father passed away, and my mother was left to raise the kids on her own. But just before he died, my father gave me away. This happened because a lawyer he knew said, "I want that Indian girl over there." So I went to Belém. Why, out of thirteen children, just me? Once I asked my mom this, and she said that it was so I could study to be a teacher. But that's not what the guy wanted. He wanted me to stay there and take care of his children. At that time, you'd often hear people say, "Ah, such-and-such is going to live in Belém with doctor so-and-so, and she is going to get a degree." Most of the time it was a lie. All these girls went through hard times. I was ten years old, and I went to live in a house where I was the last one to go to bed and the first one to get up.

Sandra Amorim

Lanterning

At times when food was more difficult, we would go out hunting at night. We called it "lanterning," lanterning in the darkness. We went out to kill – paca, armadillo, agouti, and even some larger animals, like deer, peccary. We killed to survive, to feed ourselves, not to sell.

Valter dos Santos Freitas

Good Trouble

When I was little, we lived in a straw house, straw from *inajá* [palm tree], *ubim*. *Ubim* is a type of roof, I think it's something from the Indians, because the houses were made of wood before. You'd put a picket or a little nail, *tíc*, and lay the straw there, like a tile. Our house was like that. Then it happened once that my brother and I, we were messing around, and we took a plastic bottle of bleach, and we lit a fire. Can you imagine? My brother was the one who taught the game: you had to stay close to whoever was spinning the fire. Everyone in a circle, spinning it, and it would drip: *tchu, tchu, tchu*. And if you moved away, it could drip on your belly. So you had to stay close to the person whose turn it was to spin. One day, in the good-night fire, one of those drops fell on the straw, *tchu, tchu, tchu*. We managed to put out the fire and not burn the whole house down.

Nazareno Muniz

Guarumã is an Amazonian plant found in humid places, on the banks of rivers and streams. Its fibers can be used to make several types of artifacts, such as baskets and sieves. The *guarumã* also has the potential for adsorbing metal, acting as a natural bioadsorber.

Guarumã

My grandfather on my father's side was a stern man, old style. He wasn't very loving and, to make things worse, he found himself a mean wife who'd hit the kids. My father had a hard time with her. He told that only my grandfather and this new wife of his could sit at the table. The children had to sit on the floor to eat. My father didn't think that was right, and one day he complained about something. This stepmother immediately grabbed a *guarumã* stem and hit him on the face. They used *guarumã* to make baskets, so there were a lot of those stems in that house. And this stepmother grabbed the stem and hit him in the face. He almost went blind. You know what he did? He nursed his face, healed, and then one day he grabbed a *guarumã* stem, and he gave her a good thrashing. But then, there was no other way, he had to run away. He ran away, and ended up close to where my mother lived. They met, liked each other, and then the two of them ran away again, together, because that's how it was back then, the young ones would run away.

Ronny Nascimento



Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

Francinaldo

Francinaldo was one of the poorest students I ever had – his financial situation was very precarious. I would say that opportunities to get ahead were like zero in his family. When I met him, he was around eight years old, and he didn't know any letters. I remember he came to school and, just like that, within a few days, he learned how to read and write. He was very, very bright. Even during theater season, when it was very busy, he did great. I had a lot of students that were good at theater, but no one like Francinaldo. He could read really

well, and he would also help me. I would teach in the morning and in the afternoon, and after that I taught a literacy class, and he would come and help me. He knew how to teach other students how to read. He could do it as well as I could. I feel sad I didn't help him more, especially financially. He needed someone to help him so that he wouldn't have to work so hard, but could use his intelligence instead to get ahead.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos



Raimundo Correia Espíndola,
known as Mr. Onofre.



The Boat of Laughter

Damned Nycron!

Ah, the parties! I used to love a party, and I'd always dress very neat. My aunt (at that time I was living with an aunt) would take our clothes, wash them and put them in a tapioca starch. Then she'd add Vaseline (that ointment we used to put on the hair), and lime –she'd take the peel and squeeze it into the mix, and it would turn hard. Then she'd shake the clothes and hang them to dry. When the clothes were dry, we'd each iron our own, with a charcoal iron. I was pretty good at ironing. I'd leave the board ready, prepare the iron, scour the bottom first to remove all rust, all really neat, and then I'd iron. And everything always went very well – until the Nycron, the Nycron pants. Yup. I bought a pair, but you were not supposed to iron them. Nycron clothes were supposed to never get wrinkled, the “sit-down-get-up” Nycron. All you had to do was wash it, shake it and fold it, and that's it, nothing else. But I tried ironing it, with a very hot iron, and it got all melted and glued. I ruined my pants.

Raimundo Cordeiro Espíndola

Nycron was a synthetic textile. In the 1960s it became quite well known in Brazil, because the makers ran TV ads. The idea conveyed in the humorous ads was that Nycron would not rumple, even if one moved all day - or, as the ad went, even if you would "sit down, get up, sit down, get up, sit down, get up."

Crooked Arm

We would hang from a branch like this, two, three of us hanging, so the branch would come down, and then, *tchum*, we would jump into the river. That was our life. You know the game you call hopscotch? We called it *macaca*. There was that, too. And the other one was *bole-bole*. Do you know how to play *bole-bole*? You take some stones, a bunch of them, as many as you can hold in your hand. And then you throw them up, and pick them up with the other hand, but you can't let the stones fall. That is *bole-bole* for us. We also liked to climb trees, all the time. My arm is crooked because I was climbing a tree. I'd climb and fall, climb and fall. My grandmother was a “puller,” and she put it back twice. But I fell so many times that one day she said, “I'm not going to pull it in again, you son of a... It can stay like that.” And that's how I got this crooked arm.

Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo

Terror at School

The Cônego Batista Campos State School has always been a reference in the municipality. A meeting point. There were no schools in the hinterlands, in the villages, on the islands, and so parents would send their children there. It was a place where many friendships started. I remember the people, the teachers... and I really remember how afraid we were of being sent to the “dark room.” There was a lot of talk that, if you misbehaved, you’d be sent to the dark room. And to make matters worse, there was a tale of a hole behind the school where they’d buried a killer clown. Maybe someone made up this story because of the circuses that used to come to Barcarena. The circus was an event that really stirred the whole city, and I guess the intention was to connect it to the good memories we had, of laughter, of joy. The idea of a clown that was the opposite of that was just terrifying. Everyone tried to behave as well as possible, so they would not fall into the hole. It was deep, and we were afraid that the killer clown was really buried there. That was always in our minds, we were always careful with each other, so we’d not get sent to the dark room or thrown into the hole. And I used to cry, but I wasn’t afraid for myself, because I already knew how to read and write, and I could do it all quickly. But I had friends that didn’t do so well, and I was afraid that, at any moment, one of them would disappear.

Lia Apolaro do Nascimento



The Cônego Batista Campos State School was named after João Batista Gonçalves Campos. Canon Batista Campos was born in 1782 in Vila do Acará, in Barcarena. A journalist, lawyer and Catholic priest, he was attracted to liberal ideas and influenced by the developments of the Porto Revolution (1820), and he became a political activist in the province of Grão-Pará. He worked as a writer for the periodical *O Paraense* and was one of the leaders of the popular uprising known as Cabanagem (1835-1840). He is believed to have died in 1834 due to an infection caused by a cut from shaving – though other sources indicate that his death was caused by an illness contracted while hiding from political persecution.

Witch

We always worked in the fields. The whole family would go to the fields, and we'd make *tacacá* [a typical dish]. We would get the cassava, the tapioca, to take the *tucupí* [liquid extracted from manioc], and we'd put it on the fire to boil. Our gourds were pretty big. And on one of those days my grandfather nicknamed me, because of a plant found here on the Murucupi River. We had just bathed in the stream, and he told me, "Grab some garlic vine and put it in the *tucupí*." I went and got some, and I came back with some small fruits, too, and I threw it all in there to boil. But afterwards I did not want to eat the *tacacá*, because I had thrown the garlic vine and the fruit in, but I'd also thrown some *ioi-oça* in, which is a plant that grows here. What happened is that it poisoned the *tucupí* and they almost died. Everyone had diarrhea, and, from then on, he started calling me witch. "You witch! You were going to kill us!"

Sandra Amorim

ioi-oça is a vine of the *Combretaceae* family, of the *Cacoucia coccinea* species, native to the Amazon region. It has opposite oval leaves, and violaceous flowers arranged in terminal spikes of rare beauty. It can be used to kill foot fungus infections.

An Unfortunate Choice

My father owned a sound system in Belém, and he'd play all the great artists from Pará. He'd play Pinduca, he'd play Vieira, he'd play all of them. And wherever my father went to play, I followed. Sometimes they'd make a fuss to let me in because I was underage, thirteen, fourteen years old, but the truth is that we'd always manage to get around it. My father liked the nightlife. I think he wanted to get away from home, to get away from my mom. I remember very clearly that one time he went, "Hey, let my son sing." I already knew a few things, and I chose to sing a song that went, "I'm too young to understand, but I didn't know that Daddy was going to live with another family." It was a song by Paulo Sérgio. And I chose to sing exactly that one.

Ronny Nascimento

The Brazilian Literacy Movement (MOBRAL) was created by the Federal Government through Law No. 5379, of December 15, 1967. Its goal was to eliminate illiteracy among adults. The program was launched in September 1970, funded with resources from the Sports Lottery, Income Tax, and donations from state and private companies. The movement also called on the population to make their contribution with the slogan, "You are also responsible." MOBRAL was a countrywide movement; however, due to lack of dialogue with educators, low salaries, and scarcity of teaching materials and structure, the program did not meet its goal. In 1985, during the transition to a democratic government, it was extinguished by then President José Sarney.



The Boat of Music

Pineapple Festival

In the 1970s, there was a movement in Brazil called Mobral, which was aimed at promoting adult literacy. In addition to teaching people how to read and write, Mobral was also meant to help people advance in financial terms to a better life. There were sixty pineapple producers here in Barcarena at the time. They planted pineapples but had no way of selling their product, and the fruit would go bad. So the director of Mobral here at the time, Mr. Adílson, had the idea of creating a festival to sell the product. The idea was that people would come to take part in the movement, and they would not only buy the product, but also promote it in other municipalities. This is how the festival was created. The idea was to have music, yes, but the main thing was to make food using pineapples: sweets, that sort of stuff. The problem is that, over time, the festival failed to boost pineapple sales, and pineapple stopped being the attraction. Not entirely, of course, because we do have great producers. But the truth is that the festival continues nowadays much

more because of the concerts of famous musicians and because of the action. So the Pineapple Festival should, perhaps, be more of a cultural festival and less of a pineapple festival.

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

The Pineapple Festival is the greatest cultural event in the municipality of Barcarena. It attracts thousands of people to the city, being one of its main tourist attractions. In line with a national policy of creating regional identities encouraged by the Federal Government, the festival was born in 1979, as a project of MOBREAL, in partnership with the Barcarena City Hall. Sixty pineapple producers were identified, and the idea was to promote and advertise the fruit to the public, in addition to fostering a common identity for Barcarena.

Ay, Ay, Ay!

You see, I'm from a time when parents were afraid to talk about certain things. Today, it's simple. If you have a question, you look up the information on the internet, on digital platforms, and that's it. But it was not like that in our time. Some things weren't talked about. So one day they called Mrs. Domingas, a midwife, to the house. My brother Eliel and I slept together, and we believed in storks, so we wanted to see a stork arriving, bringing the baby, the son of Silvia, our sister. We woke up with the mayhem. Like, "Come on! Push!" Dona Domingas was there, and she was urging Silvia. Our house was made of wood, and if we stood up on the bunkbed and stretched our heads, we could see. There was a bed in the living room, and Dona Domingas was in there saying, "Come on, Silvia." And we thought, *Cool, now we're going to see how the stork brings the baby.* And as we were sticking our heads in there, my mom noticed the movement, and just went like this with her hand, and said, "If you peek, you're getting a thrashing." Then we *tchum* got down, and we couldn't see anymore. We could only follow the audio: "Ay, ay, ay!" After a few minutes, we heard Mrs. Domingas saying, "Listen, if you want to have your baby in the hospital, you can go ahead. If you don't need me here, I'm leaving." And my mom, "Stay, Mrs. Domingas, you're going to deliver this boy." And to my sister, "Silvia, if you lose this boy, you're getting a thrashing." So Silvia did it. She gave birth to Jamílson.

Nazareno Muniz





Nazareno Muniz



Silvio Angelim



The Boat of Surprise

The Shard that Became a TV

There were three television sets on Cronge da Silveira [Avenue]. There was one neighbor who didn't let anyone watch, the TV was just for her. But the others did. One of these neighbors was a friend of my mother's, so every night, when the soap opera was about to start, we would run to her place. We would have hardly finished dinner, and everyone was out running. My father used to get outraged. At that time, I was about seven years old. One night, we'd had dinner, and my mother had already gone. I went later, but as I was almost getting there, I realized I had forgotten my sheet. This sheet was to protect me from the *carapanãs* [mosquitoes] and to cover me, because sometimes I would fall asleep. So I ran, grabbed the sheet from home, and went back. At that time, Cronge was a dirt road. From time to time, the City would send someone to weed it, and they'd leave piles of waste by the road, and the truck would come later to collect them. And someone, for some reason, had left a broken glass bottle there, in that pile. I was running with the sheet under my arm, and because the street was dark, I stepped on that glass. When I got to the house, I looked at my foot, and it was gushing blood. I remember that my mother was frantic, and while some neighbors put me on a small sofa, others went to get Merthiolate, bandages, that kind of stuff. That day my father got upset. And my brother, who was older and worked in a sawmill, said, "From now on we are not going to anyone's house anymore." Then, a few days later, he bought a twenty-inch black-and-white TV set, and we started watching TV at home. Thanks to my foot getting cut, we got a TV.

Luis Antonio Valente Guimarães

Seven Fences

My mother was engaged to a cousin. Back then, the parents would choose husbands for their daughters, so it was predetermined. You'd be at the window, a cousin would walk by, he'd look, your father would go over and talk to the other family and say, "Your son looked at my daughter. I think they will work out." And they would arrange the wedding already. It was like that with my mother. Her father saw the cousin walking by one day, thought he would be the ideal husband, and very early, when she was fifteen, the two were engaged. The cousin went to Rio de Janeiro to study medicine, and it was all arranged, everything was set. But then my mother met my father. She says she fell in love and jumped over seven fences (there are almost no walls in the Northeast) on the day before her wedding to her fiancé. She did this to get married to my dad, without permission, in a church.

Irene da Silva Gomes

Four-Year Plan

In 1999, Mrs. Lurdes invited the church group to go to the Pentecost event in Belém, at the Olympic Stadium, which we call Mangueirão. At that time, I was fifteen, sixteen years old, and I was already in love with Maria Elisia. So we went to the stadium: me, her and four other young people. We got there, we watched the event, and when it was time to leave, Mrs. Lurdes said, “Hold each other’s hands so no one gets lost.” There were a lot of people there, like sixty thousand. I took Maria Elisia’s hand, and I was a little embarrassed, because my hands were sweaty. And I thought, *Oh my God, I’m holding Maria Elisia’s hand!* And from then on, we started talking more, we became close, and we started dating in secret. Her father was kind of stern, so I was afraid to go up to him and ask. But I was at her house all the time. First, I’d go to take music lessons with Mr. Roberto Dias, from Vila do Conde. After the classes stopped, I kept going, to drink a glass of water. Often, and always respectfully, never crossing a line. We really liked football, so I’d make up excuses to watch the matches there. “The TV at home is not working.” I’m very playful, but at her house I’d change. When I was with her family, I wanted her father to think, *This is the boy I want for my daughter.* We did this for three, almost four years.

Silvio dos Anjos

Savior and Saved

One day some people came for a visit. Three brothers and a cousin, who had come from Belém on holidays. At that time, we would make a canoe, put a sail on it, and take it to the river to play. No problem, children who grow up by the water soon learn how to get by. So there we went, and we started playing. But these boys couldn’t swim, and at one point one of them started thrashing. When I saw it, I jumped off the canoe, swimming, to save the boy. I got him and took him to the riverbank. If I hadn’t been there, he would have died, because his brothers also couldn’t swim. And maybe they’d try to save him and even end up dying with him, because the water was deep where he was; it was hard to get there. Today he is a grown man. Every time he comes to town, he comes to my house, brings me a gift, thanks me, because I was an angel that showed up in his life. And so, after many years, God sent me an angel too – I have a lot of faith in God. One day, a six-year-old grandson of mine was on the boat with his other grandfather, and he jumped into the river. He jumped, but he didn’t know that it was deep. And my nephew, who was close by and watching, jumped in to help. No one could see where the child was, because he was already at the bottom, but my nephew felt his little leg and pulled him out. If it weren’t for that, he would have died.

Antonio Palheta dos Santos

The King on my Tail

I liked going to a corner near my house, where we would get together to drink a few. At that time they played a lot of music by Leandro and Leonardo, Zezé Di Camargo, Chrystian and Ralf, Chitãozinho and Xororó. And sometimes you'd hear *trimmm*, and it was the sign that you could sing. And I'd sing, "Instead of you thinking about him. Instead of you crying over him...." And my friends would go in: "Think of me, cry for me."

I sang, since I was a small child, I sang. And something great happened one day when I was at home, and I was not expecting that at all. Guess who showed up? Mestre Vieira. Vieira, the King of Guitarrada. And he said, "Boy, I saw you singing in that band." It was a church band. "I saw you singing, boy. I liked it. I want you to come and sing with us." And that really scared me, but I gathered courage, and I went. I got there, I looked around, and there were two or three singers, and I thought I couldn't do it. So I turned around and walked away. Then on another day Mestre Vieira finds me again. "Hey, when are you coming to sing with us?" And I, "I'm coming, Mr. Vieira." That happened once, then again. Some time passed, everything is fine, and I'm laying some bricks in my house, *tuc, tuc, tuc*. I'm just doing my job, and suddenly I feel something behind me. I turn around and Mestre Vieira is parking his bicycle there. "What's up, boy?" "All good with me, sir." "You said you were coming, I waited for you, you didn't show up."

I said, "Okay, Mestre Vieira, I'm coming." So he gets off his bike and leans there. "Are you building this house yourself, boy?" "Yes." "Is it going to be long?" "No, I'm almost done." I kept on working for a bit, and when I turn around, Mestre Vieira is still there. "I'm going to wait, and when you're done, you come with me." Man, I started shaking. Well, he waited and took me to his place, where he showed me everything. I almost had a heart attack. And then there was another time, when I joined the band, and a few days later, he said, "Nazareno, we're going to record a CD, *Lambadão do Vieira*, and you're going to do the lead singing." "Okay." Then he'd schedule a time, and I could never make it. And then he arranged to record at Digirecords, at Ó de Almeida [Street], in Belém. "Nazareno, tomorrow, seven o'clock, I'll stop by." I went and slept till seven. When the time comes, the car arrives. "Hey, Nazareno." "Ah, Mestre Vieira, I haven't even had a shower yet. When are you going there again? Maybe I can come the next time." And he said, "No, you go ahead and shower." And Mestre Vieira waited. It's not that I was so good, it was something from above, really. He took me, and I recorded *Lambadão do Vieira*. That was in 2002, and the CD came out in 2004. After that, people would say, jokingly, but with a bit of envy, "Yup, Nazareno is a professional now."

Nazareno Muniz



Joaquim Lima Vieira, Mestre Vieira, was a popular musician, artist and composer from Pará. Born in Barcarena, on October 29, 1934, he taught himself to play the banjo at the age of five. He then soon moved on to the guitar, the cavaquinho and the mandolin, which earned him the title of Best Soloist in Pará in a competition for amateur musicians at the Belém Radio Club. He was fourteen years old at the time. The need to work made him move away from music, a career he would resume years later. At the age of thirty, he still divided his time between composing and other jobs.

Vieira mixed rhythms such as merengue and mambo with carimbó and choro to create guitarrada, a new way of playing the guitar. He achieved success late in the 1970s with the LP *Lambada das Quebradas* (1978). Mestre Vieira is considered one of the creators of lambada. In 2005, the Barcarena City Council granted him the status of Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Municipality, as well as the title of Best Guitarist in the World. Mestre Vieira passed away on February 2, 2018.

The First Batch

July 6, 1985, was the day chosen for the beginning of the history of aluminum in Barcarena. It wasn't the inauguration date; it was the startup date. We had a lot of preparation before that, of course, months of training. And on that day, we arranged everything carefully, because there are sixty-four hours of preparation before the process starts. Warming up, assembling, all of that. You start up slowly. If I remember it correctly, we started the first batch around eight in the morning. Nobody would have imagined that Albras would become what it is today. I certainly never did. We thought it would be just those two reduction areas, which are the areas where alumina is transformed into aluminum. And that would be it. But today, when you realize the scale of the business, you cannot help but be amazed.

Benedito Zacarias Azevedo da Silva



Ronny Nascimento

Blood, Blood, Blood

My father would always leave at night to transport goods to Belém. But for it to work, everything had to be ready in the afternoon. One day, he had everything already packed at around three pm. It was all ready, but then he remembered that someone had ordered some spars, the kind you use to make kites. He said, “Ah, I’m going to pick some spars for that guy.” And I went along. That day he took the big canoe, because the small one wasn’t in the port. When he arrived at the stream, he pulled over the canoe and climbed up to remove the spars, close to the stream. When he went up to cut, my father struck the first blow with too much force, and he cut the jupati [palm tree] stem and injured his own foot. “Son, I cut myself.” Right there, blood

gushing everywhere, and he couldn’t walk anymore. He was crawling towards the canoe and all you could see was blood, blood, blood. I was very little, I must have been around six at the time, and I couldn’t help him. He still managed to row a little, but then he passed out from all the blood he had lost. So I took the big oar and managed to move it to my side, just so the canoe could go in the right direction to reach the Piramanha River, because that was like a street where all the boats passed. That river was my street. I shouted when I saw a fisherman, who pulled over to our canoe and took my father home.

Ronny Nascimento

Cetacean Stew

In the early 1970s, I worked with a guy named Genaro Apolaro. He lived on the mouth of the Murucupi. This land, from here to Itupanema, till a port close to the Praia Bar, it was all theirs. The port was called Porto da Enseada, and there were always a lot of sailing canoes there. They came from Abaetetuba, Muaná and even Cametá, under the strong Geral. The Geral is this wind that blows in the afternoon, bringing the sea spray to the shore. It was always packed there. And then one day this creature appeared, coming from the Marajó Bay. At first, she was floating, just above the water line, slowly, coming, coming, coming. When she passed nearby, Genaro went over to have a look, and she tried to go down, but the river is shallow there, so she couldn't, and suddenly she was floating again. Genaro rushed, he and another guy, on a little boat. And then I don't know if it was Genaro or the other one who hit her in the head, like this, pulled out a rope and tied it to her. Yup. Just like that. The creature went weak. Genaro said, "Geez, what kind of a fish can this be?" Nobody knew, and then someone said it was a whale. He tied the boat to her side, but she'd just drag it away – it was like nothing for her. At that time, Claudomiro Miranda had a station right there, and this guy who worked at the station, he had a big canoe, which he used to bring fuel from Belém. So this guy came and he pulled up to the side of the tied creature. A lot of people went to look, to watch. They wanted to take her out, they wanted to go for another round, but she'd just drag both boats; really, she'd just drag them. So they started hitting and began to tire the creature. It went like that, and by the time they got her to where Genaro lived, she was very

tired. She had spent the whole day and the whole night moving with them in the river. And when it was around midnight, I think, they managed to get her there, to Genaro's. He lived right at the mouth of the stream, and they managed to cove her. She was coved, so Genaro got the rope, tied it and brought it to land. I lived here in the stream, and when it was around five in the morning we heard this big bang, it sounded like thunder, *brummmm*. Big noise. It was she that had made the noise, had raised her tail and thumped, *pah*, and died. When Genaro saw it, he said, "Well, that's it now." You know what he did then? He called the other canoe, from the station, and they tied it to her side, and took her. When they arrived at the station, they split, and left her there. Then someone called a tractor, to pull this whale to land. It was a lot of work, I don't even know how many tractors were there, but they managed to move her to the side of the street, with the little square in the middle. When they brought the whale to land, Genaro opened her mouth and stood in front of her, like this. When they started cutting her, all that blood ran down onto the square, onto the street. And they were giving the meat away to everyone, to anyone who wanted it. I worked with Genaro, so when I got there, he said, "Raimundo, have you ever tried whale?" I said, "Never." "You're going to try it now." Genaro knew how to make a good stew. He cut the meat, like a jerky that you put on rice, something like that. He seasoned it, boiled it, and called me. "Let's see if you'll eat it." I said, "Yeah, let's see." So I tried it with him, and it went down well. It did, it went down well. Yes, it did.

Raimundo Cordeiro Espíndola



Silvio Angelim with his son.
To the right, Irene da Silva Gomes.

The Boat of Transformation



Over There it is the Neighbor's

Houses have always been spaced out in Curuperé. At the time when my grandparents had a large plot of land, the neighbor had another large plot of land, too. So you'd see a house here and another many meters away, even kilometers away. And the plots were not fenced. People would say, "My land goes as far as that tree." There were no lines, nothing to mark the borders, it was just a rubber tree, an açaí tree, a Brazil nut tree. My father, for example, used to say, "Up to that nut tree it is ours; we can take the *cupuaçu* [fruit], we can take the açaí, we can take the nuts. Now, from that nut tree to the other side, over there it belongs to mister so-and-so. No one can take anything."

Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

No Cash

Nuts, *bacuri* [fruit], flour, charcoal, we'd put everything in canoes and take to sell in Belém. We had no gas, no gas cylinders. How did we cook? Wood-burning stoves. My ancestors used to tie up bundles of firewood and take them to sell in Belém. Dry wood, fruit, shrimp, fish. In addition to selling, at that time there was also swapping. We still do this today. So if you make flour, I'll think, *Lucas made flour today. I am going over there to borrow two or three cans from him.* So I'd borrow from you, you'd lend me, and when I made mine, I'd give you some. Or *Lucas was in the river, and he brought in a lot of fish. I'm going there to swap a can of flour for fish, shrimp...* It was common. "I'm taking some tapioca, some *tucupi* [a dish] to exchange." This was how people used to live in the *quilombola* community. I mash some açaí, I swap it with Uncle Pedro, with Aunt Maria. Swap the açaí for a piece of *gurijuba* [fish], a piece of meat, some pork, a chicken. My mom says that she would go to the tavern and bring tobacco, sugar and coffee for my grandmother. And the shop owner would take eggs in exchange for salt, for sugar. There was no cash, there was no money circulating.

Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo



Roberto Carlos above, and
Sandra Amorim to the side.

Silly

I had the baby at five in the morning, and because my mother was sick, I couldn't count on her. My brother was the only one at home, and at one point he said, "I'm going to buy some fish and make you some broth." He came back, washed the fish, added lime and cooked it. Then my neighbor, who was like family, more than a relative, came into the house, and she saw me eating scaleless fish and she said, "You can't eat that, you just had the baby, it's bad for you. I killed a chicken for you." Life in the countryside was like that: there was a connection between people, solidarity. It's different now. The old customs have been lost. The youth now, my God, the things we used to say in the past, the things I heard from my father, that I heard from my grandfather: none of it is any good. For them it's like, "*Tsi*, that's silly."

Sandra Amorim





Drawer Trip

Around the 1960s the mayors wanted to move the city to the river bend, the Mucuruça River – because the curve is wider, and all the maritime circuit passed through there. The boats that come from and go to the Amazon take this route, and at that time Barcarena was farther inland, so it wouldn't develop. Then, in the 1960s, after many attempts, the city ended up moving its seat there. The mayor at the time was called Raimundo Alves da Costa Dias; he was known as Dicão. He managed to make true a dream of many mayors. And when the city opened there, in this small center, the government started trying to populate it, because everyone, including my family, lived in rural areas. We lived in Tracuateua, others lived in Mangarito, others in Murucupi. And the mayors started visiting people's homes, inviting them to move there. What did they promise? "Go to Barcarena, there will be a school there, and a hospital." In return, they also offered a plot of land. In other words, people could go there, get a plot of land, and on top of that they would also give them wood. All this just so they'd go there to live. Despite this, we only left ten years later, in 1970. And, even then, my father was reluctant, because my

mother raised pigs, chickens, and planted food. Nobody really wanted to leave the rural areas. But we were all growing up and needed to study. My brothers were teenagers, and the school here only went so far as, I don't know, the primary school. So my mother and father decided to go and live in Barcarena. This must have been in 1970, 1971. I was around two, three years old when they started building a small house on Cronge da Silveira [Avenue]. And there's a peculiar story about the moving. To this day, there's a small wardrobe in my mother's house, a small wardrobe of drawers, and I think I came here inside of it. It was a rainy day, and they put the furniture inside a canoe, a small boat: some chairs, some stools, some small tables, and this wardrobe, this small wardrobe. At some point it started to get cloudy and to rain, and I remember my mom opening a drawer and putting me inside.

Luiz Antonio Valente Guimarães

Just like Ronaldinho's

Today you go to the island, and there is a lot of açai and all. And the young people don't want to come to the city. Why don't they want to come to the city? Because there they become drug users, victims of drug trafficking, victims of robbery, of getting killed. It used to be glamorous. "Oh, I live in the city." Ask the young people on the island. The young ones on the island today have "martphones." Oh, what's it called? I don't even know how to say it. Like, this big. Young people have their own motorboats, and they can go from community to community, wandering and having a look. And when they get to the port, you know what they are wearing? The best shoes, those soccer cleats. But it's not just any cleats. Nope. They are wearing Nike shirts and soccer cleats. Not like us, not the cheap cleats. They wear the same kind Ronaldinho wears.

Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo

Looking, Contemplating

The port had a huge impact on Vila do Conde, because ships from other places, from all over the world, started to come here. It is a strategic position, with a favorable geographical location, and it is deep, with enough draught at high or low tide. All of this led to the choice of this place to implement the Project. That was one project, and others will come. The railway. Everything is growing and that is something that has to happen. What we hope for is that we are not affected too much, because we love the place where we were born, where we got married and had our kids, where we live. There's a river running through the area where we have our farm, and every now and then I go there just to watch the tide rising and falling. Just looking, that's all. I wonder if my grandchildren will have the joy of contemplating this.

Antonio Palheta dos Santos

The Port of Vila do Conde is in Ponta Grossa, in the municipality of Barcarena, on the right bank of the Pará River, fifty-five kilometers on the river from Belém. It is one of the largest in Brazil. The port opened on October 24, 1985, and it is integrated with the Industrial Port Complex of Vila do Conde. The port has strategic geographic position, as well as a large extension of liable front, which results in easy maritime and river access. It covers a surface area of 3,748,891.74 m², and can also be accessed via paved and illuminated traffic roads, fully suitable for cargo transport. Port facilities include piers, storage areas and a liquid bulk terminal.



Valter dos Santos Freitas
and musical group.



The Boat of Tomorrow

Better

There is nothing to stop Barcarena from becoming a better, more welcoming municipality. Having been here for twelve years, I consider it a very good city to live in, despite all its problems. It's not a violent city, it's a peaceful city. If we compare Barcarena with the south of Pará, things are very different. Even politics here are not as heated as in other municipalities. It's a shame that previous managers, starting around the 1980s, haven't had a dynamic vision, a vision of the future. Still, in my opinion, there is nothing to stop Barcarena from keeping on progressing.

Wagner Rolins da Silva Dias

Stone Age

“Mário, do you want to go back to the Stone Age?” No, I don't want to go back to the Stone Age. What I want is to be respected as a person. Let the big companies come, but respect my water, my river. If a large project wants to come here, I, as a *quilombola*, must be consulted. My indigenous cousins from Santarém, from Baixo Acará, from Moju, Altamira, all of them must be consulted. How is this happening? What will be the cost? “Ah, but Indians are lazy.” Indians are not lazy. This is just not their culture. What is our greatest wealth? This is it, right here: this shadow, being able to go down to the stream, catch some shrimp, catch some fish, lie down in a hammock. Do you need a car? I don't. Do you want ten million in the bank? I don't. Do you want to sit in a fancy restaurant, eat a tiny piece of meat with some silly sauce, and four leaves, and pay four hundred reais for that dish? I don't. What matters to us is having a gourd with açaí, a little flour, some shrimp, a piece of fish. This is our culture.

Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo

Barcarena of the Future

I believe that all of Barcarena will become an industrial hub. I don't mean the other side, the seat, but here – because we see it in conversations, in seminars, debates, public hearings: it is a question of logistics. Access to the ocean is very easy, it is just 123 kilometers. It's an easy route, and businessmen have their eyes on this part of the city. And as for the Barcarena of the future, I can only say that I have been to many excellent cities where taxes are lower than here. We don't ask for much; we want healthcare, education. There is no basic sanitation in my community, so we have to build septic tanks. And it's not just us, it is the same in other communities. I think it's time these things changed.

Sandra Amorim

Postmortem

I want to open a music school. Not for me to teach, I'm not a teacher. But a school for underprivileged children, where they can do something with their time. And I think about a place for events, a soccer school, that sort of thing. In a year's time, who knows, I might be able to make at least the music school come true, because I have a lot of friends here who want to help, teaching. I want a mini Vieira to come out from the school, a guitar soloist. I want a guy who plays the banjo, the carimbó, to come out. I want the guy who makes music to come out. "Do you make music? Show it to us." That's what I want: I want to help the people on my island, in my city. Just the other day someone said some nonsense, and I told them, "I'm going to make history and people will remember me for my music, for the work I will leave behind. I'm Barcarena even after I die."

Ronny Nascimento

To the right, Lia Apolaro do
Nascimento, and below
Valter dos Santos Freitas.

The Antimodern Life

Has Barcarena improved? Yes. And if we have faith in God, it will improve more. But it is not a city that is prepared for modern life. My sister came from São Paulo the other day. She saw our house. “Listen, you need to build a wall.” And I said, “Sis, in São Paulo they arrive and just change everything, right?” “Yes.” “Well, here I can still sit at home, with my door open. I don’t want to be afraid like that.” We need to enjoy the antimodern life, while we can still live a bit of it. I am from the time of the oil lamp – I like it when the power goes out and the moon can show its beauty. I love it when the light goes out, *puh*, and everything turns off. During the pandemic, in the middle of this Covid, we didn’t hear any noise, and I would go outside to listen to the silence of the night.

Nazareno Muniz

A New Look at the City

I have a project I have kept since high school, a research project. I think it is from 1993. Because of this project I talked to people from the companies that arrived, people who migrated looking for a job, people who made it, people who didn’t. Some were relocated to one place, and others to another. Instead of an agreement between the public authorities and the companies, there were conflicts, and it was the people who suffered. Just so you understand, late in 1999 I got a job in a multigrade school in a rural area. There were twenty-five students, and we had thirteen desks. The older kids would sit down, and the smaller ones would lie on the floor. There were no materials, and lunch was so scarce that one day we had to go to the stream to catch some shrimp and make some pasta. My first class was taught on the sand, writing with sticks. That was our reality. A company would knock on the door of the Department of Education or of the City Hall, but they wouldn’t work together, they didn’t think collectively. But over the years, we have noticed an attempt at alignment. I, for instance, took part in some projects sponsored by companies, aimed at training teachers. We have the technological school, the technical school that will be ready soon, thanks to an investment of twenty-five million from this company that we used to see as a monster, the exploiter, evil – and that is now embracing this reconstruction. We still have a long way to go, but I imagine my children will study there, preparing to experience the progress that will come to the city.

Lia Apolaro do Nascimento



It Used to End There, But Not Anymore

Barcarena is a city that maybe cannot be thought of as small. Because of what we have here, it is a leading capitalist city in Brazil. Companies dictated a rhythm, and we cannot imagine that the city is going to go backwards. Instead, maybe we can imagine it growing exponentially in terms of population and economy, due to the demand for our resources. We never thought Barcarena would become the size it is now, and every now and then you hear someone saying, “Wow, the city used to end there.” Then you see a street, and it’s no longer the size it used to be. Now it goes much farther. The constructions are never still. I walk by a house this year; a while later, when I come back, it’s already different. We cannot look at things the same way. Not a day goes by when we don’t see a neighborhood that has grown, a new extent of something, a new company arriving, and a new demand of residents coming from other places. It’s a fact, that’s how it is. It’s difficult to imagine a static city.

Luis Antonio Valente Guimarães



Mini Biographies



Antonio Palheta dos Santos

Mr. Antonio is an electrician. He is also a representative of the Catholic community of Vila do Conde, in Barcarena, where he was born on November 8, 1957. Mr. Antonio is one of the main organizers of the village's religious festivities, including the candles of Saint Francis Xavier and of Saint John the Baptist, the two most important religious festivals in the region.



Benedito Zacarias Azevedo Silva

Born in Abaetetuba, Pará, on November 5, 1960. A metallurgist and a career employee of Albras, Mr. Benedito was present when the first aluminum batch was produced in Barcarena. He now helps to pass on the company's knowledge, teaching and training new employees for the plant.



Irene da Silva Gomes

A native of Valença, in Piauí, Mrs. Irene was born on June 2, 1958. She moved around a lot during her childhood, accompanying her father, who worked in the construction of the Trans-Amazonian Highway. In the 1980s, she decided to join her husband at Vila dos Cabanos, Barcarena, where she works as an educator, teacher and school director.



Lia Apolaro do Nascimento

A native of Barcarena, Lia was born on August 17, 1976. She is the daughter of Genaro Apolaro, the man responsible for hunting the whale that was beached in Barcarena in 1974 – one of the city's most famous stories. Lia is also a poet, educator and teacher, having worked in special education, with both children and adults in rural areas. She is currently at the Municipal Department of Education, teaching Portuguese language.



Luiz Antônio Valente Guimarães

Known in Pará as Professor Leno, he was born on August 25, 1970, in Barcarena. Of riverside origin, he lived in the rural zone until his adolescence, when he went to Belém to study with his brothers. Leno has a PhD in History from UFPA, and currently works to develop the education in his municipality. He is considered one of the most important historians of Barcarena.



Maria de Nazaré Menezes

Mrs. Maria de Nazaré was born on September 8, 1937, at Sítio Capuó, in Old Barcarena. She is a housewife, and has worked on the fields since her childhood. She is also the keeper of the mysteries of the region of Cafezal and of the farmhouse from the time of slavery.



Mário Assunção do Espírito Santo

Mário was born on February 2, 1975, a son of the quilombo Gibríe de São Lourenço – one of the largest in Barcarena, installed on land that has been registered since 1709. He is an educator and one of the local leaders fighting for the preservation and respect of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities in Barcarena, as well as the protection of the environment, and the recognition of traditional land ownership.



Nazareno Marinho Muniz

Born October 13, 1974, Nazareno is one of the most prominent composers of the Amazon and Barcarena. Disciple of Mestre Vieira and a star of the Pineapple Festival, he sings about Barcarena in his carimbó, brega and folk songs. Nazareno is currently working in educational and cultural projects to preserve the local culture.



Raimundo Correia Espíndola

Mr. Onofre, as he is known, was born at the mouth of the Guajará da Serraria River, in the municipality of Barcarena, on June 12, 1950. Now retired, he was a fisherman, both freediving and on large boats in open sea. His life made him the keeper of several Amazonian nature stories, *meuãs*, which blur the borders between fiction and reality.



Roberto Carlos Dias dos Anjos

Born in Vila do Conde, on the first of December 1966, Roberto Carlos is a writer and a keeper of the region's oral stories. He is also responsible for the maintenance and development of the School of the Mountain, which was named after him by the city council of Barcarena. A teacher and educator, he currently advises the Department of Education on the professional training of new educators.



Ronny Nascimento

Nivaldo Oliveira do Nascimento, known by the stage name Ronny Nascimento, is a son of Ilha das Onças, in Barcarena, and a disciple of guitarrada virtuoso Mestre Vieira. After being a soccer player, he became a renowned artist, releasing six LPs and five CDs since the 1980s. He is the composer of the song *Samba de Barcarena*, one of the symbols of his city.



Sandra Georgete dos Santos Amorim

Sandra was born in Barcarena on July 28, 1969, a daughter of the *quilombo* Sítio São João. In the early 2000s, she was one of the leaders of an important collective project of biological, archaeological and anthropological studies that supported the rights of indigenous and Afro-descendant people to her ancestors' land. The *quilombo* has been recognized, and she continues fighting for the environmental preservation of Barcarena, for the respect of traditional lands, and for political representation.



Silvio Angelim dos Anjos

Born on November 23, 1982, in Vila do Conde, Barcarena, Silvio currently works as a storekeeper. He is a representative of the Vila's active Catholic community, having been raised in the Juventude Obra Nova youth group. He is a member of the Grupo Remanso band, which plays carimbó, xote, lundu, brega and forró, among other rhythms of Northern Brazilian culture.



Valter dos Santos Freitas

Known as Mestre D'Bubuia, he was born on July 31, 1958, in the Gíbríe de São Lourenço *quilombo*, on the riverbanks of Barcarena. A fisherman since he was a child, in the 1990s, he decided to translate his Amazonian and *quilombola* experiences through the strings of the banjo. Mestre D'Bubuia became a master of the carimbó rhythm, and is currently working on his first album.



Wagner Rolins da Silva Alves

Wagner was born on February 22, 1970, in Caxias, in the state of Maranhão. He was in the military, and worked as a manager for several companies. He currently uses this experience to manage his own hardware store in the district of Novo Horizonte, where he has also acted as president of the residents' association since 2014.

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