

**THE ORAL  
COMMUNICATION OF THE  
MENTAL AND SOCIAL  
REPRESENTATION OF THE  
CABANAGEM IN THE CITY  
OF ABAETETUBA IN THE  
STATE OF PARÁ (BRAZIL)**

**A COMUNICAÇÃO ORAL DA REPRESENTAÇÃO MENTAL E SOCIAL DA  
CABANAGEM NA CIDADE DE ABAETETUBA NO ESTADO DO PARÁ  
(BRASIL)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**JUSTIFICATION:** Abaete, during the Cabanagem uprising, was situated between Cametá, dominated by loyalists, and Acará, considered the birthplace of the Cabanagem. It played a significant role in the conflicts, making it important to understand how the mental and social representation of the Cabanagem is constructed through the oral traditions of the city's current population.

**OBJECTIVE:** To identify the mental, collective, and social representations of the inhabitants of the municipality of Abaetetuba, in the state of Pará (Brazil), in relation to the Cabanagem rebellion, in order to understand their current social condition and interpret how the Cabanagem rebellion is constructed in the memory of the people of Belém, in the state of Pará, Brazil. **METHODOLOGY:** This study is divided into 3 stages: bibliographic research and investigation in the codices of the Public Archive of the State of Pará regarding the Cabanagem; bibliographic research to deepen knowledge on the subject; and unstructured interviews with inhabitants of the municipality of Abaetetuba, seeking to identify differences in the narratives of the interviewees compared to bibliographic and documentary data, classifying these differences in oral communication as mental and/or social representations, and interpreting them. **CUNCLUSION:** The mental and social representations of the Cabanagem rebellion in Abaetetuba are permeated by readings and reconstructions of events in which social problems are constant and devastating

**Keywords:** Social representation; Mental representation; Cabanagem – Brazil history; Abaetetuba municipality – Brazil; History of Pará-Brazil; Abaetetuba City (Brazil) - social aspects; Social psychology.

## RESUMO

**JUSTIFICATIVA:** Abaeté, durante a revolta da Cabanagem, situava-se entre Cametá, dominada por legalistas, e Acará, considerada o berço da Cabanagem. Desempenhou um papel significativo nos conflitos, tornando importante compreender como a representação mental e social da Cabanagem é construída através das tradições orais da população atual da cidade. **OBJETIVO:** identificar as representações mentais, coletivas e sociais dos habitantes do município de Abaetetuba, no estado do Pará (Brasil), em relação à rebelião da Cabanagem, para compreender sua condição social atual e interpretar como a rebelião da Cabanagem se constrói na memória do povo de Belém, no estado do Pará, Brasil. **METODOLOGIA:** Dividiu-se em 3 etapas, levantamento bibliográfico e pesquisa nos códices do Arquivo Público do estado do Pará sobre a Cabanagem, pesquisa bibliográfica a fim de aprofundar o conhecimento sobre o tema e entrevistas não estruturadas com habitantes do município de Abaetetuba, buscando-se identificar diferenças nas narrativas dos entrevistados em comparação com dados bibliográficos e documentais, classificando essas diferenças na comunicação oral como representações mentais e/ou sociais, e interpretando-as. **CONCLUSÃO:** As representações mentais e sociais da Cabanagem, em Abaetetuba, estão permeadas por leituras e reconstruções de fatos em que os problemas sociais são constantes e assoladores.

**Palavras-chave:** Representação social; Representação mental; Cabanagem – História do Brasil; Município de Abaetetuba – Brasil; História do Pará – Brasil; Cidade de Abaetetuba (Brasil) – aspectos sociais; Psicologia social.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Abaetetuba, at the time of the Cabanagem rebellion, was called Abaeté and had not yet been separated from Belém. Located between Cametá, dominated by loyalists, and Acará, considered the birthplace of the Cabanagem, it played a significant role in the conflicts of that revolt. Given this, it is important to understand how the Cabanagem is mentally and socially represented through the oral communications of the current population of this city.

Representation is part of the individual, collective and social and, in one way or another, whether it is denied or accepted, it cannot be overcome because it contains and is contained in a whole that is not subtracted from human reality, under penalty of never understanding it in its entirety<sup>[1]</sup>.

Representations are the figurations of the environment, which occur through symbols, values, norms, knowledge, beliefs, among others, which are presented in a real or ideal way through social interrelations, in a way that they are ethnocentric or relativised in individual memory (Mental Representation), collective (Collective Representation), or social (Social Representation), are created and recreated, destroyed and reconstructed, materialising themselves through communication and language<sup>[1,2,3,4]</sup>.

In one of his most remembered experiments, Bartlett studied what happened when Cambridge students theatrically reproduced a story inspired by Native American culture ('the ghost war'). Strange characteristics of the original story were altered when the story was retold. The story became conventionalised in terms of the culture in which it was transmitted. Moscovici showed a similar process in psychoanalysis. This is a process that Moscovici called 'anchoring'.

The unfamiliar becomes familiar, both in Bartlett's work and in Moscovici's<sup>[5]</sup>.

The "Cabanagem" was a revolutionary movement that took place in the Brazilian Amazon, more specifically in the Province of Pará<sup>1</sup>. It was an insurrection of the people of Pará against the policies of the Brazilian Empire; it was the culmination of a long series of rebellions that, for many years, shook the Province of Grão-Pará. It was a clash between two antagonistic cultures, between two different ways of thinking and feeling, which culminated in the armed struggle that, for five long years, set Pará ablaze<sup>[6]</sup>.

The Cabanagem in Pará was the only political movement in Brazil in which the poor actually took power. It is the only and isolated episode of extreme social violence, when the oppressed - the lowest rabble, blacks, tapuios, mulattos and cafuzos, as well as whites so degraded that they seem to have no right to whiteness, almost an exponential class - take power and reign absolute, eliminating almost all forms of oppression, destroying the social hierarchy, destroying the military forces and replacing them with something that makes the powerful tremble: the people in arms. At this moment, short in history, a great rebellion took place in Grão-Pará that did not have any consequential forms of political organisation around the new popular power<sup>[7]</sup>.

The Cabanagem was not a war of races, nor a fight of the destitute against those who had property. The Cabanagem was an insurrection of the people of Pará against the policies of the Brazilian Empire, it was the culmination of a long series of rebellions that for many years shook the Province of Grão-Pará<sup>[6]</sup>.

The objective of this research was to identify the mental, collective, and social representations of the inhabitants of in the municipality of Abaetetuba in the State of Pará (Brazil) in relation to the Cabanagem rebellion, in order to understand their current social condition and interpret how the Cabanagem rebellion is represented in the memory of the people of Abaetetuba, in the state of Pará, Brazil. In terms of specific objectives, the aim was to learn about facts, legends, and myths, among others, narrated by the population where information about the current histories of that event is anchored, in populations of cities that had some significant role in the Cabanagem; to identify the mode of preservation, not only of the official history, but also of the forms of communication narrated by the population of city.

It should be noted that this paper is part of a research group, conducted in various cities, where the author studied the mental and social representations of the Cabanagem revolt.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This study involved a bibliographic survey and research in the codices of the Public Archive of the State of Pará on the Cabanagem, in order to deepen knowledge on the subject. Unstructured interviews were conducted in the Municipality of Abaetetuba. Interviewees were asked to recount stories about the Cabanagem in Abaetetuba, their sources of information, etc., to understand how supporting sources directly or indirectly interfere in the construction of mental and social representations. Interviewees were asked if they had loyalist or Cabanagem ancestry, or if they were unaware of such a fact. Interviewees were invited to compare their time with that of the cabanos, for a better understanding of the (re)construction of

the history of the Cabanagem, and whether they believed in the possibility of a new Cabanagem, so that, through these answers, their social problems could be identified through the representative (re)constructions they gave to the event. The interviews were transcribed, coded, and analysed. The analysis sought to identify differences in the narratives of the interviewees compared to bibliographic and documentary data, classifying these differences in oral communication as representations, which were categorised as mental or social representations<sup>[1]</sup>.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

For JCS-AB1: the Cabanagem was a popular movement that sought to overthrow the government; at the time, they organised themselves at several strategic points to be able to meet and discuss the movement.

VRF-AB-6 states that: The Cabanagem was a political movement that took place in the state of Pará, obviously, and it represented a call for freedom, a call for the free expression of a community, of a population that wanted to have its political representation recognized, that also wanted to be part of the power structure, and that could express its opinion, could interfere, that could be part of the socio-political context of the time. As far as I know, these people who were part of this movement, the Cabanos, were excluded from this socio-political context, and lived on the margins of the entire process that was being carried out in the political context that prevailed at the time here in Pará.

UCPF-AB3 states that: the Cabanagem represents a manifestation, a movement that came from the inhabitants of the interior, called

riverside dwellers, who protested against the power of the time, which was Belém, the capital, and also Cametá. This movement seized power, so it was the representation of people who were revolted even with the structure, with the government, and who took power here in Pará, the largest movement in Pará.

MRCM-AB4 states that: The Cabanagem was a resistance movement; it was a very desperate political moment in our state. The large oligarchy was in power; a small group of people who controlled politics were causing chaos. So, the workers, who were called the Cabanos, the river dwellers, came together and felt they should do something. Why did they do it? To try to seize power, in fact, as they did. They took power because the political situation was very critical, people were suffering, so something needed to be done. That's why people organised themselves and seized power, right?

In these social representations, one notices the figure of the rural dweller, the riverside dweller, the peasant, among others, who, punished by exploitation, revolt and fight against oppression. It is the rustic, suffering, hardworking man who seeks freedom in the struggle against the domination of the Portuguese elite. The struggle is not precisely against power, but against how and by whom that power was exercised; that is, a minority did nothing for the people of Pará. The issue of organisational unity as the only way for the people to combat the yoke of the oppressor is also contained in the social representations of Abaetetuba. It is as if the interviewees wanted to say, between the lines, that alone they would not transform their realities, but that united they would.

Abaetetuba is located between Belém and Cametá, two cities that at the time were home to the oligarchies of the state of Pará, and this is

reflected in the social representations of the people of Abaetetuba.

Having a mental representation of the Cabanagem as something bad, JN-AB2 states that: The Cabanagem was a group that had ideals, but they even became bandits, because they kidnapped cities, for example: Igarapé-Mirim was almost wiped out.

This representation is filled with feelings of hatred towards the Cabanos, as the interviewee states that his grandmother's family was destroyed by those warriors. It is natural that a person who grew up hearing macabre stories about the Cabanagem would have such a mental representation, since representation is a social construct and, according to the position the group takes on a fact, this will materialise in the representations created, constructed, and (re)constructed by its members. Furthermore, the family is still considered a very important unit in the interior of the state of Pará, where people often gather to listen to stories from the elders and make decisions about common or individual problems.

For CDS-AB5: The Cabanagem was a broad, complex movement, in the sense that there were several Cabanagens within the Cabanagem. So, we cannot analyse the Cabanagem as being just a single movement, with a single objective; there were several movements within it, and each group had an objective, just like the French Revolution, just like the English Revolution, just like the Russian Revolution. So, there were several social movements within a larger movement that was called Cabanagem.

The Cabanagem was not a single movement; it had a heterogeneous form, with a diversity of collective and social representations that were not very clear. Furthermore, regarding this

diversity of groups, the Cabano leaders often fought among themselves, not submitting to central command, and continuing to fight even after the Cabano Presidents had surrendered. These facts demonstrate the diversity of objectives.

Another important fact to observe is that the interviewee compares the diversity of interests in the Cabanagem to the French Revolution. The fact is that French Guiana bordered Pará, where the state of Amapá is located today, and the cultural reference point for the people of Pará at the time was France, to which many members of wealthy families travelled, allowing the libertarian ideals of the French Revolution to enter Pará. Even within Freemasonry, which held ideals of liberty and was established in Pará, there was fear among the loyalists that the cabanos would reach French Guiana and reinforce the guard between Marajó Island, Macapá, and Cametá. Another fact is that the French warned Vinagre that Pedro da Cunha was approaching Belém to seize power, among many other facts that, in a way, show the proximity of some cabanos groups to the French and their ideals.

Regarding Abaetetuba's position in the Cabanagem rebellion, the interviewee CDS-AB5 states that: Abaetetuba was one of the centers of the Cabanagem movement.

Cametá, which many claimed was an unbeaten city against the Cabanagem rebellion, suffered two invasions and, within its borders, was repeatedly inhabited by Cabanos; that is, wherever there was an enslaved, exploited man, there the ideal of the Cabanagem was present. Abaetetuba could not fail to have Cabanos, as its proximity to Cametá, Belém, and Carapijó in Barcarena would be a highly coveted strategic point for fighting the loyalists.

Regarding the Cabanagem invasion, JN-AB2 says that: they sacked Igarapé-Mirim, came to Abaetetuba, and when they arrived at the mouth of the Abaeté River, they encountered resistance, as they already knew they were coming to invade. They prepared themselves with armed boats, rifles, clubs, axes, machetes, and chased them away, preventing them from invading Abaetetuba. They tried, some died, they fled into the woods, but they didn't invade Abaetetuba. So Abaetetuba almost suffered a setback from the Cabanos; they had ideals, they were against the government. They looted Cametá, they came causing havoc, Vigia suffered greatly.

MRCM AB4 comments that: people organised themselves and went, they seized power in Rio Acará, in Cametá, it all started in Cametá, the people organising themselves and everything. In Cametá they organised themselves in the village of the Parijós, an ancient indigenous tribe, which was also very strategic, it had indigenous people in the middle, it was a mix of people, river dwellers with indigenous people, peasants. So they went in search of this power, to try to do something. So, there were some brave people, people who fought like Eduardo Angelim, the Vinagre brothers, who fought very hard, they arrived, they seized power, but that didn't last long. But there was a time when they held on there, they seized power, removed the rulers and stayed in power for a while. But then they left, other people took over, the great oligarchy took over again, right? But in truth it was a movement of popular expression, of great repercussion that, today, as an example, marks the history of Pará, right?

Referring to the Cabanos as bad people, JN-AB-2 says: They arrived at my grandmother's family and eliminated everyone. Some slave

decided to take a child of about six years old, protected him in a shelter, and went down the river, saving him from death. They were killing people left and right, children, women.

Regarding poverty today, compared to that of the Cabanos era:

JCS-AB1 says: I don't think that issue of poor people not having anything to eat existed in the past; today there are many people who don't have anything to eat. I think poverty today is worse because in the past, a person would have a little flour and trade it for food; there was no way to get money like there is today. If you don't have money, you're going to go hungry, right? I think poverty today is worse than in the past, certainly, during the Cabanagem uprising. It's difficult to have something to eat but not have anything to buy it with; we experience this situation a lot here in the municipality.

UCPF AB3 comments that: Many things have improved in terms of progress, but on the other hand, we know that many problems still exist in Pará. Data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, which is a government agency, indicates that poverty has increased, as has the concentration of income in the hands of a few. Poverty exists, of course, the standard of living for many people has improved. The issue of medical services, which at the time was precarious—we know that many died—today it is easier to seek medical care, right? There is a certain structure, but if we think about it, there are still many people who go hungry constantly. So, from one aspect, it has improved in terms of ease, and from another, poverty exists, and today some centres are overcrowded, precisely because the conditions in the interior have not yet been met, right? This represents the Cabanagem, a movement of people from the

interior, and today the interior is in this state of abandonment, so much so that many people migrate to large urban centres.

For MRCM-AB4, poverty: back then, for example, there was a great deal of poverty, you understand? Our rivers weren't polluted, people could still easily get food, especially those living along the riverbanks, right? That's when the rural exodus began. Today we see a great deal of misery because the rural exodus reaches the big cities, for example, Belém. Belém is overrun by those large informal settlements, taken over by people who come from the interior of the state and arrive in the big city looking for work and don't find it, they seek to educate their children more, but when they get there, they find none of that and suffer even more. So that's why I think those people still lived better, they could still cultivate their fields, make cassava flour, eat the flour, go hunting, fish, they could still survive, and today it's very difficult, our rivers are already polluted, people no longer have land, the lands are very devastated. At that time, it was also a very critical moment, but today, for me, the situation is even more critical, it's alarming. Because people go to the big cities, to those squatter settlements, those little pieces of land, people have nothing to do, they steal, they kill, and all that stuff, that's why it generates all this violence that exists today.

CDS-AB5 says: I believe that this poverty isn't very different today. There is social exclusion, it occurs through information, through exclusion from the market. At that time, I believe that this exclusion, if we were to draw a parallel with the exclusion of a certain historical moment, wasn't very different. I believe that the poor of today were the same, excluded from all values. If we were to put things on a scale, today the poor have access to mass communication, to better infrastructure, and so on, but if we were to draw a parallel and put

everything on the scale, I believe that no, social exclusion today is terrible. The issue of information, the advice of people through the press, the mass media, this creates an appeal to the people. I think that poverty creates a mechanism of disguise, so it seems different, like the slavery of the past, of the medieval period, just as today's poor, this citizenship is very far from the majority of the population.

This doesn't differ from the opinion of VRF-AB6, who comments: "I think that poverty, generally speaking, clearly demonstrates the situation in which we live. I'm generalising because what we see throughout history is that this social division between the poor and the rich has always existed and still persists, and there are the 'miserable poor,' which I imagine included the Cabanos, those people who were part of the movement, the revolt, the Cabanagem Revolution. Today we don't have a Cabanagem revolt in that sense, but we certainly have the landless movement, which is a demonstration of this rejection, a demonstration of the poverty in which the country lives, a demonstration of the lack of inclusion of a segment of the population within the socio-political context that, in any case, ends up excluding a certain segment of the population.

In these social representations, comparing the poverty of the Cabanagem era with that of today, the interviewees show concern about the hunger that exists in the interior of the state of Pará, since the production of cassava flour, which is part of the basic diet of the rural population, has decreased due to the lack of land for planting and the low market price that does not motivate production; Fishing, a means of survival for riverside populations, is now decreasing because of river pollution, resulting in a situation where, even though the products are available on the market, there is a lack of money to buy them. There is a lack of infrastructure in the interior,

especially in terms of schools for the children of rural people. This causes peasants and riverside dwellers to migrate to large cities, where they carry out disorderly invasions of urban properties. Furthermore, due to a lack of adequate professional training, in large cities they end up facing underemployment and even unemployment, which leads to violence, increased crime, generating more poverty and social exclusion. In social representations, the landless appear as a kind of modern-day Cabanos. Mass media ends up serving as an enlightening element for the population, becoming a differentiating factor between the Cabanagem era and today.

If the Cabanagem, in its essence, survived through the strength and courage of the impoverished people of the Province of Pará, and if poverty still persists in the region, would there be a possibility of another Cabanagem? Social representations regarding this are as follows:

JCS-AB1 states that: Other patterns may emerge, I think it certainly should happen, because we know the situation isn't easy. We see governments today funding many large projects, leaving the people starving, at the mercy of those projects, at the mercy of progress, you see that there's nothing left over, and we just need policies focused on the poor. I think a politicised Cabanagem, will certainly happen.

According to UCPF-AB3: the way it happened is difficult, but I believe that the population itself is organising itself differently, through political participation. It was a power grab, but now I think the people realise that we have to take power, but in a different way: participating in decisions, whether in electoral matters, in the

political process, or in the moment of electing people. I think that a power grab will hardly happen by force, but we are seeing that the population is becoming aware, participating, for example, in the public budget, participating in councils, and the 1988 Constitution opens space for popular participation, meaning that popular participation becomes a right; at the time it wasn't, it was restricted, a few people ruled and misruled, they were the owners of power.

MRCM-AB4 states: For sure, I believe in this and it's about to happen, you understand? So, long strides have already been made, proof of this is that the people are almost back in power. The people have already taken power in Cametá, the people have already taken power in Belém, and we need to take the state. I strongly believe that one day we will have a new Cabanagem. When a new Cabanagem happens, we will truly hold back, the people will truly hold back, it's not about the people's eagerness for power, it's about not continuing because what exists today is this political oligarchy in our state, which no longer looks after the poor, after all the poverty situations. We believe in this return of the Cabanagem people, who will take up arms again and will come to power. A state so rich that has this great wealth, but which is concentrated in the hands of a few, we need to divide this, we need to end these large landowners in our state, even in the country, we need to do something.

The opinion of CDS-AB5 is not very different, stating: There could certainly be a new Cabanagem at the local level; we can observe this movement of the landless in southern Pará, and we can say that there is a new Cabanagem. The attack by the landless, which already occurred in Eldorado do Carajás, could become the trigger for a revolt.

VRF-AB6: I think historical contexts are representative of the time, you know, not that there's going to be a new Cabanagem or anything, but I think we're at the mercy of a movement that will bring to light all this dissatisfaction that the people of Pará are experiencing, because misery is part of people's daily lives today, both globally and in Brazil. Misery is everywhere in the world. Specifically, here in Pará, I think we could have, at any moment, an explosion of popular dissatisfaction, I don't know what to call it. I think we experience this dissatisfaction every day, we have various demonstrations, we have transparent poverty, so this dissatisfaction manifests itself in many ways.

All of this translates into the considerations of JCS-AB1, who says: "In our municipality, today, we see a lot of inequality, and if we could each work to reduce this inequality that exists, both this poor distribution of income and the poor distribution of wealth that exists in our country, in our municipality, which is not very different, we see a situation of great poverty, of misery even, that our people are living in.

These social representations are permeated by dissatisfaction with state policies, which allow large mining projects to transfer wealth from Pará to other states, exempting them from some taxes because they enjoy privileged exemptions and discounts, leaving the craters from which the minerals were extracted as legacies for the people of Pará.

Another problem identified in social representations is the political coalitions that favour economic interest groups, which often only carry out electoral projects on the eve of elections. This is the view that the interviewees have of the Alça Viária (ring road), a

construction inaugurated days before the elections, which, contrary to what politicians thought with this large project, would please the population of the region benefited by the set of four bridges. However, what is identified in social representations is that the poorest populations remained indifferent to the benefits of the bridges, as they continue without jobs, without money to pay for transportation to the capital, and now have to pay a toll to use it. In other words, the people do not want larger squares, large public buildings, among other things, but rather solutions to their most basic problems, such as basic sanitation, employment, health, education, and better food prices.

Electioneering projects, aimed at keeping old politicians in power who benefit political oligarchies, landowners, and major holders of economic power, among others, are viewed with suspicion.

Given this, those interviewed believe that a new Cabanagem could occur as a form of protest and a search for solutions to the neglect of impoverished populations. Some believe that the Cabanagem is happening, through the organisation of the population, no longer as an armed and bloody struggle, but through the creation of popular councils, conscious voting (which did not occur during the Cabanagem, since the poor, blacks, indigenous people, women, among others, did not have the right to vote), demands with the support of the communities, etc., becoming a new model of popular organisation and struggle.

The social representation of another group of interviewees is that it would be difficult for another Cabanagem to happen, with the following arguments:

JN-AB2 claims that: No, it's difficult, there's no longer an environment for that, there's no environment and nobody has that ideal anymore, the main thing was the ideal.

In this group, the social representation indicates a lack of ideals among the people, which is antagonistic to the predominant group where ideologies are still very strong.

MRM-AB4 says: People say that the Cabanos—those invaders, I don't know what—came to kill, because they don't know the true Brazilian history, the real reason they were doing what they did.

UCPF-AB3 comments that: Unfortunately, in schools we discuss this very little; we still have those books that come from the south, from the government, and we discuss it very little, so we only make some references.

MRCM-AB4 states that: in history books, the Cabanagem is portrayed, as in other states, such as the Farroupilha War and other movements. In Pará, the history is marked by the Cabanagem, which is much discussed, but also somewhat hidden here by the state itself. All the work done at that time is now forgotten, all that rebellion.

In these accounts, the interviewees claim that the population has little knowledge about the Cabanagem rebellion, as many books only cover the subject briefly, showing no interest in the people learning about, discussing, and reflecting on their history. There are, in fact, few books about the Cabanagem, and it is understood that most are reproductions of the stories told by Domingos Antônio Raiol in "Motins Políticos" (Political Mutinies). The existence of textbooks on the Cabanagem is unknown; there are only incomplete

chapters with inconsistencies, in most cases reflecting the loyalist side of the Cabanagem narrative.

When the interviewee refers to southern Brazil, their mental and social representation is that only people from Pará understand the Cabanagem rebellion, and books written in the south on the subject leave much to be desired. It is necessary for governments to create public policies to encourage scientific and educational production about the history of the North, the same for films, the construction of monuments, greater dissemination of information about the Cabanagem rebellion in elementary and high schools, among other things. This is not happening, as evidenced by the Cabanagem Memorial in Belém itself, which functions as a museum and tomb for the Cabanagem presidents, which is abandoned and outside tourist routes, its image surrounded by viaducts.

Regarding the origin of the interviewees: 16.66% claim to be descendants of loyalists; 16.66% did not declare their origin but leave clues in their interviews that they may be descended from Cabanos; and 66.66% stated that they are descendants of Cabanos. Many of these statements stem from the construction of the group's social identity, and many, as a way of affirming their situation, present reflections that social relations impose on them through conversations, experiences, or by acknowledging their social status.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The mental and social representations of the Cabanagem in Abaetetuba are permeated by readings and reconstructions of events in which social problems are constant and devastating, such as: the need for free expression, due to the fear of exposing their

demands; the search for freedom; issues of social exclusion, especially regarding programs to keep riverside dwellers and peasants in their places of origin; the daily struggle for survival; the exclusion of riverside dwellers' demands from state government public policies; the political dominance of the old political oligarchies; the riverside dwellers appearing as true anonymous Cabanos of history, that is, they are considered heroes of the Cabanagem, which they are in fact; the exploitation of peasants by economic power; the need for social organisation to strengthen their demands; Abaetetuba emerges with the pride of being a strategic city located between Belém and Cametá; River pollution is decreasing fishing, leading riverside communities to migrate to large cities, resulting in unemployment, lack of housing or precarious housing, among other problems, causing them to become squatters in peripheral areas and increasing unemployment statistics; hunger is occurring due to decreased planting because of low prices paid by middlemen and high production costs; large state government projects fail to satisfy the poorest population of Abaetetuba, among other issues.

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