

Chronology

1900–1930

At the turn of the century, the different Indigenous groups who will later be known as the Yanomami are living in relative isolation in Brazil's northern Amazon. They begin to be contacted by the encroaching non-Indigenous society as groups such as the Brazilian Commission for Border Demarcation, the Serviço de Proteção aos Índios (SPI), and religious missionaries delve deeper into the forests. Poraco Hiko is born around 1905 in Xihopi community. Vital Warasi is born around 1915 in Poripotha community; he will later become a respected shaman and a leader in his community on the Lôbo D'Almada River.

1931–1945

Claudine Haas (who will change her name to Claudia Andujar after moving to the US and marrying) is born in 1931 in Switzerland, as the only daughter of a Swiss Protestant mother and a Hungarian Jewish father. She grows up in Northern Transylvania (in present-day Romania). Following the German military occupation of Transylvania during the Second World War, Haas's father, alongside other members of his family, is sent to the Oradea ghetto and later deported to Auschwitz in Poland and Dachau in Germany, where they all perish. Haas and her mother flee to Switzerland. André Taniki is born around 1945 in Okarasipëki community.

1946–1954

Religious missionaries and workers from the SPI intensify their presence in the Yanomami region. Haas moves alone to New York, where she settles in the Bronx. She marries the Spanish refugee Julio Andujar in 1949. The couple divorces, but Haas keeps her husband's surname to conceal her Jewish origins. Claudia Andujar studies at Hunter College in Manhattan, begins to paint, and works as an interpreter at the United Nations headquarters.

1955–1957

Andujar leaves New York to reunite with her mother in Brazil. She arrives in São Paulo (where she continues to live today) and begins to take an interest in photography. Davi Kopenawa is born around 1956, in Mõra mahi araopë community, close to the border between Brazil and Venezuela.

1958–1968

Orlando Naki uxima is born in 1958 in Haranari u community. As a child, his father had been captured by inhabitants from the Catrimani region during an attack against the Yawari, an isolated Yanomami group from the other side of the river. In 1963, the US evangelical Christian New Tribes Mission builds an outpost at Toototobi, near Marakana community where Kopenawa and his parents had recently moved. In 1964, a coup d'état supported by the US government leads to a military dictatorship in Brazil that lasts until 1985. Andujar develops her career as an artist and photojournalist, and MoMA acquires two of her photographs. In 1966, she becomes a staff photographer for *Realidade* magazine, inspired by photographers such as W. Eugene Smith. In 1967, an epidemic of measles brought to Toototobi region by an American missionary kills Kopenawa's mother and relatives. She also meets African American photographer George Leary Love, whom she marries in 1968.

1969–1972

Andujar visits the Yanomami for the first time on assignment for *Realidade* magazine in 1971. With financial support from a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation grant, she makes the first of many trips to the Catrimani River basin in the northern Brazilian Amazon. Joseca Mokahehi is born in 1971 in Watoriki (Demini).

1973–1976

After almost a year in the hospital due to a tuberculosis infection, Kopenawa learns some Portuguese and then returns to his community to support his people. As part of national investment plans, in 1973 the Brazilian dictatorship promotes the construction of the Perimetral Norte highway, cutting through Yanomami territory. The disregard for Indigenous populations during this construction results in the deaths of hundreds of Yanomami. Agencies of the Brazilian dictatorship discover gold, uranium, and cassiterite in the Yanomami region, attracting prospectors and miners who spread further disease, pollute rivers, and contribute to deforestation. In 1974, Andujar divorces Love. Kopenawa starts to work for the Brazilian Fundação Nacional do Índio (today known as Fundação Nacional dos Povos Indígenas, FUNAI) as an interpreter.

1977

Construction of the Perimetral Norte highway is officially abandoned halfway through the process due to lack of funds. Andujar meets Kopenawa for the first time when she visits a community decimated by an epidemic of measles. The dictatorship expels Andujar from the territory for denouncing the violations against the Yanomami people. She receives a second John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation grant and files several petitions to return to the Yanomami region, which are repeatedly rejected by the dictatorship. Orlando Naki uxima dies of measles.

1978–1979

In São Paulo, Andujar joins a growing movement defending the rights of Indigenous peoples. With Italian missionary Carlo Zacchini, French anthropologist Bruce Albert, and others, Andujar co-founds the Comissão pela Criação do Parque Yanomami (today known as Comissão Pró-Yanomami, CCPY) in Brazil. Andujar is finally authorized to return to the Yanomami region. The CCPY delivers their initial plan for creating a continuous Yanomami territory to the Brazilian dictatorship. Andujar travels to the US and Europe to raise funds and mobilize support for the Yanomami cause. Over the following years, Andujar and her colleagues are covertly watched by the dictatorship's Serviço Nacional de Informações (SNI).

1980–1984

Kopenawa moves to Watoriki after marrying Fatima Larima, the daughter of the community's great shaman. Kopenawa is initiated as a shaman. Besides, Kopenawa starts to work in partnership with the CCPY. His lifelong quest to defend the Yanomami intensifies in the following years. In an attempt to curtail the rampant spread of disease decimating the Yanomami, the CCPY launches an urgent health and vaccination campaign. In 1981, Andujar travels with doctors to the Brazilian Yanomami territory to implement these programs. The CCPY publishes an extensive report on the health conditions of the Yanomami and the consequences of their contact with non-Indigenous peoples. The NGO Survival International presents the Yanomami case at the United Nations for the first time. In 1980, Morzaniel Iramari is born in Watoriki.

Ehuana Yaira is born in 1984 in Watorikĩ. Yaira will be the first known Yanomami woman to become a teacher in the region and to write a book in Yanomae, her native language.

1985–1987

Brazil's military dictatorship ends in 1985. The Organization of American States (OAS), the members of which include 35 independent states in the Americas, approves a resolution recommending the Brazilian government establish a Yanomami territory. Edmar Tokorino is born in 1986 in Watorikĩ. In 1987, after the Brazilian daily newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* mentions a "foreign conspiracy" to internationalize the Amazon, CCPY and medical-aid NGOs are expelled from the area, leaving the Yanomami without assistance. A new wave of prospectors and gold miners invade the region. Ailton Krenak, one of Brazil's most prominent Indigenous leaders, delivers a memorable speech at the Congresso Nacional in defense of Indigenous rights during the debates around the new democratic constitution.

1988

In response to political pressure, the Brazilian government announces a fragmented demarcation of Yanomami territory, amounting to less than 30 percent of the traditionally occupied lands. The measure provokes protest in Brazil and outrage around the world. The new Brazilian constitution is approved stating that Indigenous peoples shall have their "social organization, customs, languages, creeds, and traditions recognized, as well as their original rights to the lands they traditionally occupy, it being incumbent upon the Union to demarcate them, protect, and ensure respect for all of their property." Kopenawa is named a United Nations Global 500 Roll of Honour laureate. Vital Warasi dies of malaria.

1989–1990

The CCPY opens the protest exhibition *Genocide of the Yanomami: Death of Brazil* in São Paulo. Survival International shares its Right Livelihood Award with Kopenawa. In 1990, Andujar accompanies Kopenawa on his first international journey to receive the prize in Sweden and promote the campaign to demarcate Yanomami territory in Brazil. Poraco Hiko dies of pneumonia in 1990.

1991–1992

Kopenawa travels to the US for the first time, accompanied by Andujar. They meet with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, US congressmen, the OAS, and the World Bank. Days later, Brazil's President Fernando Collor de Mello rescinds the decree that divided Yanomami territory and seeks a new demarcation. The CCPY invites people to send telegrams to place pressure on the president. In 1992, on the eve of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (also known as the Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro, Collor de Mello signs a new demarcation decree designating a continuous Yanomami territory, the largest protected Indigenous territory in Brazil. That same year, Kopenawa addresses the opening session of the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations.

1993–1994

Sixteen Yanomami are murdered by gold miners in the village of Haximu in Venezuela. Three bills are introduced in the Congresso Nacional to suspend the ratification of the Yanomami demarcation—one of them by Jair Bolsonaro, a federal deputy who becomes president in 2018. Kopenawa travels to Geneva to speak at the United Nations.

1995–1998

The CCPY initiates a Yanomae–Portuguese education plan. Gold miners are convicted of genocide for the Haximu massacre. In 1997, The CCPY is awarded the Human Rights Prize by the Brazilian government. Andujar’s photographs of the Yanomami are featured in the 24th São Paulo Biennial in 1998. Mokaheši becomes the first language scholar, teacher, and health agent of the Watorikí community; he produces and illustrates Yanomami–Portuguese publications for educational and health programs. Aida Harika is born in 1998 in Watorikí.

1999–2009

Roseane Yariana is born in 1999 in Watorikí community. The CCPY trains Yanomami people as health-care workers. Andujar progressively withdraws from politics and continues to use her photo archive to raise awareness about the challenges facing the Yanomami. Mokaheši’s drawings and wood carvings are exhibited in art institutions in Brazil and abroad. In 2004, Kopenawa establishes the Hutukara Associação Yanomami to unite the Yanomami and strengthen the fight for their rights. Hutukara inspires the creation of other local Yanomami associations throughout the territory. In 2004, Andujar gains gallery representation for the first time (Galeria Vermelho) and demands all profits from her work be shared equally with the Hutukara Associação Yanomami. Kopenawa travels to Geneva to denounce the mining invasion in Yanomami lands at the UN. The NGO Instituto Socioambiental incorporates the archives and projects initiated by the CCPY, becoming a central supporter of the Yanomami people.

2007

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly by a majority of 144 states in favour and 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States).

2010–2017

The 2010 Census in Brazil identifies more than 800,000 self-declared Indigenous individuals, a rising population. Kopenawa’s seminal book *La chute du ciel. Paroles d’un chaman Yanomami* (co-authored with anthropologist Bruce Albert), is published in France and translated into various languages. Morzaniel Iramari makes his first short film, *Watorikí Xapiripë Yanopë* [*House of Spirits*], during a filmmaking workshop as part of the Indigenous Culture Points project. In 2015, Dário Kopenawa, the son of Davi Kopenawa, becomes the vice-president of Hutukara Associação Yanomami.

2018–2019

Bolsonaro is elected president of Brazil and refuses to protect Indigenous people and their land against the invasion of miners, wood extractors, and squatters. Kopenawa receives the Right Livelihood Award in Sweden, and, at the UN’s Human Rights Council in Geneva, he denounces the Brazilian government for dismantling environmental protections and Indigenous rights. The exhibition *Claudia Andujar: a luta Yanomami* [*Claudia Andujar: la lucha Yanomami*] opens at Instituto Moreira Salles in São Paulo and travels to Paris, Milan, London, Barcelona, and Winterthur in Switzerland.

2020–2021

The Covid-19 pandemic strikes the world, posing an extra burden on the Yanomami, who organize the campaign Miners Out, Covid Out. The situation in the territory quickly deteriorates with the increasing presence of illegal miners. Kopenawa is the first Indigenous person to become an honorary member of the Academia Brasileira de Ciências.

2022–23

The Brazilian Yanomami celebrate the 30th anniversary of the ratification of Yanomami Indigenous land. Kopenawa receives honorary doctorate degrees from Universidade Federal de São Paulo and Universidade Federal de Roraima. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is elected president of Brazil. Yanomami women from Rokoari community write an open letter to the new president asking for protection against illegal activities, as well as health and educational support: “We want you to know we are afraid and worried. The forest is sick. And when the forest is sick, all of us are sick.” In a historical move, Lula appoints Marina Silva as the head of the Ministério do Meio Ambiente e Mudança do Clima, Sônia Guajajara as the head of the new Ministério dos Povos Indígenas, and Joenia Wapichana as the first Indigenous woman to head FUNAI, the Fundação Nacional dos Povos indígenas. Photographs of the current health crisis are shared worldwide. The Ministério da Saúde declares a state of emergency in Yanomami territory. *The Yanomami Struggle* [*La lucha Yanomami*] opens in New York with the presence of Davi Kopenawa, Ehuana Yaira, Joseca Mokahezi, Morzaniel Ramari and Dário Kopenawa, who denounce the situation to the United Nations and the international media.