



Denise Moura  
São Paulo State University (UNESP)

**Macro-jê ethnolandscape and cartography in the backlands of South Brazil.**

Macro-jê Amerindians were designers of landscape who recorded their social and cultural organization and worldview on the mountains, low and high lands, rivers in the backlands of South Brazil. Far more than geographic informants for explorers and mapmakers, these ethnic groups provided the first lines of the cartographic imagination of their lands by creating a structured cultural landscape that outsiders later observed, followed and transferred to drafts and drawings.

The action of transferring ethnolandscape to maps is called ethnocartography. This paper describes an ethnocartographic mapping process in eighteenth century Brazil in which the crematory funerary rituals and the handling of the Araucaria Forest, part of the Macro-jê cultural landscape in the current northeast of the state of Paraná, oriented mapmakers' journeys on the ground and became recorded in the first map outlines. This finding was reached by using a dialogical methodology that compared text in eighteenth century journal accounts and drawings made by mapmakers with contemporary archaeological and anthropological databases about the Macro jê. The research found that smoking from the funerary ritual on the hills and the preservation and cooking of pine nuts on the ground were registered in mapmakers' drawings in conventional cartographic language that disfigured the original meanings and demonstrate that landscapes and cartography in South Brazil were an ethnic encounter rather than a State project. The analysis hopes to contribute to promote recognition of the indigenous agenda in the process of Portuguese and imperial knowledge and cartographic construction in southern Brazil, instead of insisting on the old image that they were mere geographical informants of colonizers.

**Denise Moura** is Associate Professor at the São Paulo State University (UNESP) with research projects about the mapping process of the backlands and the Iberian frontier of the South Brazil during the Portuguese expeditions of 1768-1773. This project has received funding from São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP – proc. 2015/2011-3). Two articles published about the subject in *Portuguese Studies* and *Terra Brasilis, Nova Série*. A thesis and another article are in progress on the same topic.

**Contact:** [denise.moura@unesp.br](mailto:denise.moura@unesp.br)

