

2019 Marianne Schmink Outstanding Dissertation Award in Tropical Conservation and Development

Our congratulations go to **Dr. Myrian Sá Leitão Barboza** for being selected the 2019 recipient of the Marianne Schmink Outstanding Dissertation Award from UF's Tropical Conservation and Development Program in the Center for Latin American Studies. Dr. Barboza is the 10th recipient of this prestigious dissertation award that honors Dr. Marianne Schmink for her significant and transformative contributions to graduate education, the Center for Latin American Studies and the TCD Program. Dr. Marianne Schmink was instrumental in establishing the early interdisciplinary research and training programs that evolved into the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) program in the 1980's. Dr. Barboza completed her dissertation in the Department of Anthropology under the supervision of Dr. Augusto Oyuela-Caycedo (advisor) and Dr. Marianne Schmink (co-advisor). Her dissertation was entitled ***“Tükuna cosmopolitical cartography: the gendered meaning and use of territories by Katukina indigenous people (Biá River, Brazilian Amazonia)”***.



Myrian Barboza and Katukina Women and children
(Photo by Bruno Caporino 2009)

The Schmink Dissertation Award selection committee was impressed by Dr. Barboza's ability to integrate indigenous knowledge and perspectives with western scientific knowledge as she documented how Katukina peoples understand and manage Amazonian landscapes. Myrian's dissertation offers a new native perspective on space and time and contributes to the understanding of gender roles and indigenous perspectives in the construction of Amazonian territory. Myrian's dissertation research highlights how the Katukina have established relations of use, sharing, and appropriation over time in their landscapes, and how their management of landscapes has affected biodiversity, through comparative examination by gender groups. The committee noted that her dissertation was an outstanding example of interdisciplinary research as it reveals new insights regarding indigenous land management, including the dynamics of management for sustainability, especially relevant with changing climate in the region.

Dr. Barboza's research methods combined ethnography, participant observation, experimental gastronomy and participatory mapping to address how the Katukina established rules for use, sharing, and appropriation in territories over time, including the effect of gender, and how agriculture activities developed on territories not owned by “intangible beings” (non-human agencies who have intentionality analogous to humans). Myrian also proposed an ethnographic incursion of sharing, through the collaboration of two indigenous, an artist and an archaeologist, from different ethnicities: Larissa Tukano and Jaime Waiwai, who significantly contributed to the solidification of Myrian's research. In order to offer a vibrant view of Katukina life and environment, Dr. Barboza made use of four different visual arts: photography, watercolors, drawing, and cognitive (mental) mapping. All these mediums - performed by Myrian, Larissa, Jaime and the Katukina - served to capture the Katukina world in innovative ways imbued with creativity while lending a degree of subjectivity, sensitivity, and affection to the work. It provoked subsidiary and social significance for Myrian's research descriptions of storytelling practices. Furthermore, illustrations and the related text complemented her study by producing a creative and unique style of narrative.

Dr. Barboza found that social and physical worlds of Katukina people are constructed and reconstructed through influences of spirituality, kinship, mobility, and dietary practices, and these worlds are strongly conceptualized in gendered terms. For example, the perception and use of territory are influenced by “intangible beings”, which are masculine external agents that “own” territories resulting in limitations on Katukina’s women’s, men’s and babies’ mobility and use of important social spaces. However, when land is modified for agriculture, these lands are not owned by intangible beings and women were able to develop agricultural cultivars and transform dietary practices and territory. The results highlight the importance of considering indigenous cosmopolitics and non-agricultural activities to agricultural domestication models.

Myrian has complemented her research with a TCD Practitioner Experience grant where she returned results to the Katukina people and worked with them to produce a manual based on their indigenous knowledge. In addition, through a Schmink Innovation award from TCD, she led a collaborative training program bringing together native people and educators to develop innovative instructional curricula grounded in traditional knowledge. Dr. Barboza also received three awards for her photography, poster and numerous travel and research awards from across University of Florida. Prior to coming to UF with a competitive scholarship from Brazil’s post-graduate education agency CAPES, Myrian worked as a consultant for Brazil’s indigenous foundation FUNAI, and as a researcher for OPAN, an NGO focused on indigenous rights. After leaving UF, she resumed her professor position in the Archeology and Anthropology Program at the Federal University of Western Pará (UFOPA) in Santarém, Brazil.

Currently, Myrian was awarded the **2019 Marilyn Little Scholarship** from International Center/UF and published some results of her dissertation in the special issue “*Body, earth, perspective: gender and its transformations in ethnology*” of *Amazonica Revista de Antropologia (ARA/UFPA)*, an important Brazilian Journal of Anthropology. In the paper “*Katukina Body Territorialization: Ethnographic Glimpses into Feminine Indigenous Perspectives*” Myrian, Larissa and Jaime argue that Katukina men and women participate in the process of territorialization, but, being women and their fluids the main target of intangible beings’ desire, their bodies imprint important marks on the territory, reinforcing their uniqueness. They propose a new concept “body territorialization” (Corpoterritorialização, in Portuguese) based on feminine indigenous perspectives. Myrian, in collaboration with different researchers, is also revising a paper about Amazonia gardens, which has been accepted by the *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*. Dr. Barboza hopes her work can contribute to the empowerment of indigenous people by enhancing their knowledge, strengthen local indigenous social movements, and encourage the innovation and use of pedagogical tools and academic concepts in indigenous schools.

The Selection Committee included Dr. Richard Stepp (UF Center for Latin American Studies & Department of Anthropology), Dr. Timothy Murtha (UF Center for Latin American Studies and Department of Landscape Architecture) and TCD alumna Dr. Amanda Stronza (Texas A&M University). The TCD program congratulates Dr. Barboza on her selection as the 2019 recipient of the Marianne Schmink Outstanding Dissertation!



Katukina males drawing for Barboza’s booklet and to be used as research material in her Dissertation (Photo by Larissa Tukano 2017)



Katukina Women and Larissa Tukano preparing accessories for the games that are part of their ritualistic celebration (Photo by Myrian Barboza 2017)