# The Status is Dispo AC (DISPOSABILITY PTX AC) – PLAN

## K Framework

### I affirm. Part 1: Start Learning

#### [Doran] SCHOOLS IGNORE HISTORIES OF DISPLACEMENT – stories of colonialism are barely a blip on the curricular radar.

Doran: Doran, Eve. [Irish & Antinguan Sociologist based in Leeds] “Why don’t we learn about colonialism in school?” *gal—dem*, June 11, 2019. https://gal-dem.com/why-dont-we-learn-about-colonialism-in-school/ CH

“When someone pried about Antigua’s ‘native language’, I realised they didn’t understand its history of slavery” But why is it our burden to carry this knowledge of the system that oppressed us, of which its beneficiaries can choose to remain ignorant? For people living in Britain today racialised as black, we cannot escape this truth, we wear on our skin and our hair and carry the trauma in our genes. It is this colonial duality that caused me to be so abashed when during my first teaching post one of my year 12 students said they had never encountered the word “colonialism”, despite having studied GCSE history. I suddenly got that same feeling I had growing up – constantly having to explain my existence to people who demanded to know where I was “*from* from”. This was the same teaching post where dress codes equally worked to exclude students of colour – “multiple plaits”, which obviously refers to braids or canerows, were explicitly banned. It was not unusual for students to have little to no understanding of colonialism, those who had a keen interest in history were more knowledgeable yet still not fully aware of its continual implications. Only a minuscule portion of the history curriculum is given to colonialism, and the history of colonised countries before the empire is ignored. Yet I do not think that the history department should be solely responsible for imparting this knowledge, to assume this is othering and implies colonial attitudes have been left in the past. Schools do the minimum required to address ethnocentrism – by serving halal food in the canteen and quoting Martin Luther King Jr. during Black History Month they feel they have fulfilled their duty. Our histories and interests are being overlooked because we are being systematically kept out of positions of influence. The diverse nature of this country is not reflected in its educators, only 13.8% of teachers are from a minority ethnic background, and this number only decreases the further up the chain of command you go. Diversity is also something students are taught to tolerate, rather than celebrate. Schools are expected to allocate time to the teaching of British values, but the things that make Britain what it is today cannot be considered separately from its colonial acquisitions. Those of us bothered by the ethnocentric curriculum usually turn our attention to humanities subjects. When sociology students learn about ethnicity and educational achievement, the fact that black students, particularly black Caribbean, do not perform as well as other groups is attributed to the idea that they are more likely to be materially and “culturally deprived”. The difficulty in reaching the highest paid jobs in society is ignored, and the concept of a lack of culture is merely insulting. Maths and other STEM subjects also have their problems. A former biology teacher and examiner told me of students who had lost marks in exams because they had referenced sickle cell disease instead of the one suggested in the specification; although their answer was technically correct it was not indicated in the mark scheme and examiners without a profound knowledge of biology may not have picked it up. Sickle cell disease is most common in people of African descent, many black students would be familiar with the disease as a family member may be a sufferer. This may seem like a pedantic point to some but to me, it demonstrates how things that predominantly affect people of colour are of little interest to the institutions of this country. There has been a push towards “inclusivity” in education – schools make a show of sporadically holding diversity days that span all minority groups. But why is this exclusively extra-curricular? There are abundant opportunities throughout the national curriculum to represent the diversity of the population. We cannot achieve liberation when our histories are not equally honoured; any teaching of colonialism that does happen tends to legitimise the actions of the British Empire. This isn’t necessarily direct, but any omission of the atrocities of the empire only works to glorify it. “Australia Day” and “Canada Day” have been heavily protested in their respective countries as they signify the beginning of a long history of systemic oppression. But how do we protest the homage to empire happening in our classrooms every day?

#### [ROJ] Thus, the Role of the Judge is to Center Colonized Groups, as they aren’t included in mainstream curricula – we can have generic util debates any time, but this topic offers a unique chance to focus on marginalized groups.

#### [ROB & Silberling 1] Since colonization is rooted fundamental dehumanization, the Role of the Ballot is to Promote Liberation Strategies, defined as methods that counter dominant rules for how people live.

**Silberling 1:** Silberling, Louise S. [Post-doctoral associate in the Rockefeller Foundation programme in Latin American Studies, University of Texas–Austin] “Displacement and Quilombos in Alcântara, Brazil: Modernity, Identity, and Place.” *International Social Science Journal,* July 2004. https://tinyurl.com/3ss2bzz9 CH

Appadurai (1996a) and Gilroy (1993) go beyond Habermasian and other Western-based discussions of modernity towards alternative modernities. Comaroff sees the ‘‘rise of a (re)new(ed) politics of identity couched less in the language of nineteenth-century European modernity than in the rhetoric of alternative modernities’’ (1996: 167). I find the term ‘‘alternative modernities’’ to be a useful way of thinking about the politics of alterity, identity, culture, ethnicity; and the ways in which quilombolas1 (or other ‘‘subaltern’’ groups) use their narratives and affirmations of identity, and their alternative visions, to undermine, subvert, and contest modernisation. Thus, we can understand the project of modernisation by elements of states, corporations, and the international order, whose narratives, ideologies and projects seek to undermine, subvert and contest the heterogeneity of people (in the name of benefits to society; and in the name of benefits to the free market, in the case of neoliberal states and corporate allies), especially of the poor, by “homogenizing” ideas of citizenship, by naturalising state/capital rights to determine definitions of how to direct and define labour, land, and capital, as well as place. Challenging hegemony brings with it the dangers of engaging with dominant discourses, values, and practices (Gramsci 1971, Hanchard 1993, Roseberry 1996); thus, both the liberating and ‘‘incarcerating’’ poten- tials of quilombo creation are in tension between the quilombo movement (residents, leaders, and allies) and its relationships to the state and other groups. The phrase “alternative modernities,” by sharing the root “modern-“ with modernisation, nicely includes the tension of the dialectic of hegemony, of the shared narratives, between the two opposing forms. **There are conflicting state-making narratives at work within Brazil: accounts of a pluralistic, democratic state with social wel-fare entitlements; a sovereignty argument deployed now by the political left in the face of global capital flows and regulation; a ‘‘strong state in the international system’’ argument by elements of the military and neoliberal in the state; and arguments within Brazilian society draw- ing on an international human rights frame**. This of course complicates notions of state-making which hold territorialisation – the right to make and enforce borders and boundaries – as a primary objective of nation-states. In contrast to state narratives of ‘‘civil society’’ and equality under the law, liberation narratives have tremendous power to insist on re-imagining the relationship between sub-altern and dominant groups in society. The **liberation narrative – such as the employment by the movimento negro and the quilombo movement of the figure of Zumbi of Palmares – suggests** a freeing of subjects **from bondage and the unfree aspects of control over** their **labour and material bases of reproduction, as well as the ability to define themselves as a community with their own** everyday **practic**es. Quilombo communities originally formed in order to free themselves from a relationship of bondage, upheld by dominant classes and the state; now they are calling upon the state to uphold their rights to citizenship and entitlement: ‘‘I lost my mother, relatives and friends. All attacked by grileiros.2 I ask the President of the Republic to look to Saco das Almas, to all of Brazil, to all blacks who suffer because it was the blacks who made and constructed this Brazil’’ (Claro Costa, from Saco das Almas Brejo, a quilombo in Maranha ̃ o; Encontro Nacional 1995). This ‘‘construction’’ of Brazil has its roots in the countryside, where African slaves were employed on the cotton, sugar and other planta- tions that were once the primary basis of the Brazilian economy. The narratives of ‘‘con- structing’’ Brazil as slaves, and narratives of ‘‘liberation’’ of those who resisted the plantation economy are combined in quilombo arguments, as well as the implied idea of land rights as a form of reparations for slavery.

**This comes first,** since it determines *whose* pleasure or pain we maximize when we endorse a policy – there’s no such thing as benefiting “everyone” if these calculations let some people regulate others’ life choices.

## Part 2: Dig Deeper, Watson



#### [Messier] WATCH OUT FOR FLYING GLASS – the image above shows Elon Musk and Rick Perry digging up people’s homes to build a space launch site in Boca Chica, Texas –SpaceX’s latest power grab.

Messier: Messier, Doug. [Managing Editor of ParabolicArc.com, a daily blog that covers commercial space] “SpaceX Tells Boca Chica Residents: Sell Now or Else!” Parabolic Arc, October 3, 2020. http://www.parabolicarc.com/2020/10/03/spacex-tells-boca-chica-residents-sell-now-or-else/ CH

Vice reports that SpaceX gave a Friday deadline for two Boca Chica Village homeowners to sell their homes or Elon Musk’s launch provider would pursue “alternate approaches” to get them to vacate the settlement near the company’s south Texas spaceport. In an email obtained by VICE, David Finlay, SpaceX’s Senior Director of Finance, told Boca Chica Village residents that this would be SpaceX’s final and best offer and threatened the company would need to pursue alternate means to obtain the homes if the people of Boca Chica Village turned down the money…. “As we have discussed, as the scale and frequency of spaceflight activities at the site continue to accelerate, your property will frequently fall within established hazard zones in which no civilians will be permitted to remain, in order to comply with all federal and other public safety regulations. This email therefore represents SpaceX’s best and final purchase offer.” Finlay’s email gave a hard deadline for the residents of Boca Chica Village to sell their homes. “The offer will expire on October 2, 2020,” the email said. “Please be advised that should this offer expire, SpaceX may need to pursue alternative approaches to ensuring that launch operations within the State designated South Texas Spaceport at Boca Chica Beach can be conducted within all necessary public safety requirements.” The residents said they were adamant about not accepting the offers. Most residents of the small village have already sold out to SpaceX. The residents who remain say the offers would not allow them to purchase similar homes close to the shoreline. The letter doesn’t explicitly say so, but the most likely alternate means would be to have the government expropriate the properties through eminent domain to provide a safe zone for SpaceX’s state-designated spaceport. That process would involve condemning the properties. The homeowners would be compensated. However, the amount would likely be less than what SpaceX has offered. The company has said their offers to Boca Chica residents have been three time the appraised values of the homes, which would be about $150,000. Homeowners say they are getting zero support from local officials, who are more concerned with the jobs and economic impacts of SpaceX’s operations than their rights as homeowners. An interesting is is the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) decision to approve a spaceport less than two miles from a residential area. SpaceX’s plan was to launch Falcon 9 and Falcon Heavy boosters from the site, which is just north of the Mexican border. The facility is now being used to test much larger Starship and Super Heavy boosters that could launch from Boca Chica. The story says the FAA has now determined the village is not safe for human habitation. SpaceX has warned residents to move outside prior to tests so they do not get hit with flying glass from broken windows in the event of an explosion. The company has also recommended residents leave the area before tests, which are conducted at all hours of the day and night. Residents who remain in the village are skeptical of safety claims. They note that SpaceX has advertised the position of a development manager to build its own resort adjacent to the spaceport. “Boca Chica Village is our latest launch site dedicated to Starship, our next generation launch vehicle. SpaceX is committed to developing this town into a 21st century Spaceport. We are looking for a talented Resort Development Manager to oversee the development of SpaceX’s first resort from inception to completion,” SpaceX said in its job advertisement.

#### [Irwin-Hunt] Demand for launch sites is GROWING, despite the harm they cause.

Irwin-Hunt: Irwin-Hunt, Alex. [Global Markets Editor and co-host of Rising Ecosystems Podcast at fDi Intelligence] “Spaceports: will they lift communities on Earth?” fDI Intelligence, June 18, 2021. https://www.fdiintelligence.com/article/79925 CH

The cosmos, once the exclusive realm of major powers and selected defence contractors, is opening up like never before. Technological advancement, falling costs and the entry of new state, commercial and billionaire participants are fuelling promises of our futures both on Earth and launched into the atmosphere. Demand for space launch is picking up, with locations across the globe vying for a share of the booming space industry, a coveted prize for any government for political and economic development reasons, and increasingly for technological sovereignty. While the value chain has spread, with as many as 72 countries now having space programmes, setting paths for the development of their local space ecosystems, spaceports, the inevitable infrastructure gateway to the cosmos, are still a prerogative of a few countries. Things may soon look very different, though. “Traditionally, space launch has been the preserve of a few hubs such as in Kazakhstan and the US run by governments that were focused on heavy launch,” explains Farooq Sabri, a principal consultant in the space team at consultancy London Economics. “But now there is pent-up demand for lower cost launches, which has encouraged a lot of investment into spaceports.” From northern Europe to New Zealand, spaceports — ground-based facilities used for orbital launches — are being planned and developed to provide capacity for the ‘new space’ age. Local economic developers hope to create hubs for a global space industry that Morgan Stanley predicts could grow from roughly $366bn in 2016 to more than $1100bn in revenue by 2040. As long-fabled space tourism, exploration and colonies edge closer to becoming a mainstream reality, spaceports are aiming to facilitate constellations of smaller, cheaper satellites being launched into low-earth orbit (LEO) to meet insatiable demand for broadband connectivity and Earth observation data. Consultancy Euroconsult projects that an average of 990 satellites will be launched into orbit every year until 2028, marking a rapid acceleration from the annual average of 230 satellites in the previous decade. But as countries globally vie for a slice of the growing space pie, questions remain over the viability of so many spaceports, their impact on the environment and local communities, and whether the LEO satellite boom is over-hyped. Launching an industry In 2019, the global space economy was valued at $366bn, with the satellite industry accounting for almost three-quarters of the total, according to BryceTech, an analytics and engineering firm. Carissa Christensen, the chief executive and founder of BryceTech, tells fDi there are two main threads to space activities: the satellite value chain and in-space activity, the latter of which includes human space flight, space stations and exploration. “The space industry is extraordinarily diverse, with businesses that have different rhythms, drivers, jobs and outcomes, and they are all linked by launch,” she says.

#### [Fox] AND THE HARM IS GLOBAL AND CYCLICAL – private space appropriation forces *quilombo* peoples in Brazil off their land, continuing a legacy of anti-Black violence.

Fox: Fox, Michael. [Independent multimedia journalist based in Brazil; former editor of the NACLA Report on the Americas] “Hundreds of Black families in Brazil could be evicted to make way for space base expansion.” *The World*, February 16, 2021. https://theworld.org/stories/2021-02-16/hundreds-black-families-brazil-could-be-evicted-make-way-space-base-expansion CH

“I cried like a child. Crying in the car, looking back,” said Silveira, who is now a great-grandmother. “It was really hard when we arrived. Really hard. We didn’t have any crops, or fruit trees or places to fish … If it wasn’t for help from other communities, we wouldn’t have survived.” In the early 1980s, in the final years of Brazil’s military dictatorship, hundreds of Black families like Silveira’s were removed from their land to make way for the construction of the Alcântara Satellite Launch Center. The families were relocated to agrovilas, or agricultural villages, where the government promised they would receive food, support and compensation. Ultimately, they received little help, according to Silveira and other community members. Today, hundreds more Black families from the region could be evicted to make way for the launch site’s expansion as part of a 2019 agreement between Brazil and the United States. The treaty grants the US permission to launch nonmilitary and commercial rockets from Alcântara. President Jair Bolsonaro's government has said it hopes the agreement will become a key source of revenue for the Brazilian state by opening the door to the facility’s rental for commercial launches from abroad. Alcântara’s location is key because of its proximity to the equator, launches burn less fuel and rockets can carry larger payloads. It could yield “tens to hundreds of millions of dollars a year,” said Carlos Moura, head of the Brazilian Space Agency. Dozens of Brazil’s 3,000 *quilombo* communities — Brazilians of African descent — surround the Alcântara Launch site. Roughly 800 families are now scheduled to be removed to make way for the launch site’s expansion, though their removal is on hold, in part due to the coronavirus pandemic. 'At risk of becoming extinct' For some, the expansion project’s planned evictions are part of an all-too-familiar cycle of disregard for the *quilombo* inhabitants. “Never, in these 40 years has the threat of removal of these communities been so real because the Bolsonaro government is known around the world as one that does not respect the constitution or legislation. And it’s a government that is clearly racist,” said Danilo Serejo, a lawyer with the Movement of People Affected by the Alcântara Launch Site, who was raised in the Canelatiua quilombo. From the Mamuna quilombo’s communal yucca fields, residents can see the top of the installations of the Alcântara Satellite Launch Center, which borders their land. They are sustainable farmers. They fish in the ocean, a short walk from the village. Their fruit trees are plentiful. “This land is abundant. Land. Ocean. Fields of crops. Everything you plant here will grow,” said resident Lorenza Vera, whose family has lived on this land for generations. “We are Black, Indigenous, quilombola peoples. We are being threatened today. Just like in the past, we are at risk of becoming extinct,” Vera said. “We are living the same things as in the past. Running the risk of being extinct from our place of origin, our roots and our identity.” Can Biden put a stop to the expansion project? The expansion project has received pushback in the US, and some hope the Biden administration will put a stop to it. In January, nongovernmental organizations and Brazil experts delivered a policy paper to the Biden administration, asking it to reconsider agreements with the Brazilian government because of Bolsonaro’s disregard for “democracy and the rule of law.” The Alcântara accord was listed among the top issues. “As Trump and Bolsonaro administrations negotiated this accord, *Quilombo* communities were promised that there would be no land expropriation,” the document reads. “But those promises were unceremoniously broken amid Brazil's deepening pandemic in March 2020 when the Bolsonaro administration announced its plan to illegally expropriate 12,000 hectares of forested Quilombo land of some 800 Quilombo families who have long practiced sustainable rotating agriculture and forest preservation.” The paper highlighted that the Alcântara Launch site was already larger than the 7,300-hectares Spaceport America, in New Mexico, and urged the Biden-Harris administration to take a “firm stand against any expropriation of Quilombo land.”

#### [Pereira et al 1] In fact, the *quilombolas*’ disposable status leaves them NO security – they’re under CONSTANT threat of displacement.

Pereira et al 1: Pereira Jr., Davi [*Quilombolo*; works at the Latin American Studies, at The University of Texas at Austin; researcher in Cultural Anthropology], and Chanda Prescod-Weinstein [American theoretical cosmologist; Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy and a Core Faculty Member in Women's and Gender Studies, University of New Hampshire] “Science Shouldn’t Come at the Expense of Black Lives.” *Scientific American*, June 4, 2021. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/science-shouldn-rsquo-t-come-at-the-expense-of-black-lives/ CH

Star Trek portrayed a vision of the future that was more equitable and just than the world we live in—but the way it articulated space as a “final frontier” recalls a legacy of violent frontier exploration and colonialism in the name of displacement and resource extraction. *Quilombolas* from the ethnic territory of Alcântara, are all too familiar with this history. Quilombolas, the descendants of enslaved Africans who escaped from plantations in Brazil to create their own settlements, called *quilombos*, have historically faced racism and exclusion at the hands of the Brazilian state. One current example is their displacement from their land in order to expand the development of an equatorial launchpad that promises to enhance international investment in Brazil as a destination for space launches. Although *quilombo* lands are explicitly protected in Brazil’s constitution, and these families have been living there for at least 200 years, the *quilombolas* of Alcântara have never formally been recognized by the Brazilian state as owners of their land. This absence of recognition allowed the military to take about 56 percent of Alcântara’s territory and remove 312 families in order to build the Brazilian Air Force’s Alcântara Space Launch Center in the 1980s—all by claiming that the area was essentially uninhabited. Beyond the trauma of forced displacement, the removal deprived these families from their main sources of food, exacerbating food insecurity in the area. This is not just a matter of tragic, decades-old history. In 2021, it may all happen again. In 2019, Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro signed a technology safeguard agreement with former President Trump that will allow Americans to use the Alcântara space base to launch rockets and satellites. This time, displacement threatens even more families and 12,000 hectares of quilombo territory. This means that 800 families risk being forced to leave their land at any moment. As with the debate about the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) on Mauna Kea in Hawaii, the discussion about quilombo land rights and dignity is being framed as a discussion of science versus tradition.

## Thus, I affirm:

#### [Advocacy] Resolved: The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust. I defend a global ban on private ownership of outer space.

## Part 3: Identity Theft

#### [McCoy et al] IT STARTS WITH DEHUMANIZATION – leaders strip *quilombolas* of their status as people to justify stripping them of their land.

**McCoy et al:** McCoy, Terrence [Foreign correspondent, *The Washington Post*], and Heloísa Traiano [Research Fellow at Escola de Comunicação da UFRJ]. “A story of slavery — and space.” *The Washington Post,* March 26, 2021. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2021/brazil-alcantara-launch-center-quilombo/ JP/CH

The clash, now unfolding in local and international courts, is the distillation of one of Brazil’s most urgent and polarizing dramas. **What is more important: Developing a vast country with unrealized potential and a lagging economy? Or protecting** some of **its most vulnerable communities? Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, a right-wing nationalist friendly to business interests, has made clear where he stands. He has vowed to exploit the riches of the Amazon rainforest, supported illegal gold miners, ceased awarding land rights to Indigenous peoples —** and has described *quilombola* residents in language so offensive that federal prosecutors sued him. “I went to a *quilombo*,” Bolsonaro said in the widely condemned public speech in 2017, before he was elected president. “The **skinniest African descendant there weighed seven arrobas,” the measure by which cattle is weighed**. “They don’t do anything. Not even to procreate are they worth anything. More than $200 million per year we spend on them.” **Alcântara’s quilombola communities have since dug in.** They’ve begun to organize and joined legal actions. **In Mamuna, the pillar of the forest communities, the resistance is led by Pinheiro**. For years, she has organized collective action against the launch base, including building barricades to keep out space companies. **She understands her community has little power**. They are sustenance fishermen and farmers. Many are illiterate. All are poor. **But they’d been on this land long before Bolsonaro came to power. Long before United States took an interest in it. They aren’t going to give it up without a fight.**

#### [Pereira et al 2] AND states tell marginalized groups to give their land up in the name of “common humanity,” yet make it so they never reap the benefits.

Pereira et al 2: Pereira Jr., Davi [*Quilombolo*; works at the Latin American Studies, at The University of Texas at Austin; researcher in Cultural Anthropology], and Chanda Prescod-Weinstein [American theoretical cosmologist; Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy and a Core Faculty Member in Women's and Gender Studies, University of New Hampshire] “Science Shouldn’t Come at the Expense of Black Lives.” *Scientific American*, June 4, 2021. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/science-shouldn-rsquo-t-come-at-the-expense-of-black-lives/ CH

Alcântara is an ideal space launch site because it is on the equator, where Earth’s rotation gives rockets an extra velocity boost. In addition, Alcântara is a region that has traditionally been economically underresourced in the global capitalist economy. As with the debate about TMT, the argument goes that science is a hallowed activity and the region can benefit economically from the expansion of the Alcântara launch pad. However, as one of us argued with Keolu Fox in the Nation, the setup of science versus tradition or religion is a false juxtaposition. The question of whether we should stop scientific projects in the name of promoting social justice highlights more of a false dilemma than the reality. In fact, we believe that framing the issue this way masks a much deeper problem of democratic governance. Bolsonaro’s government, at the behest of the United States, is making decisions that advance the business interests of a growing, billionaire-driven private space sector under the guise of being science-driven. The reality is that these authoritarian moves are driven not by curiosity about the universe but rather by the satellite market. Our leaders are arguing that the rights of Alcântara’s *quilombolas* should take a back seat in order to promote technological efforts that will supposedly benefit all of humanity. However, the groups suffer a double loss. In addition to having their fundamental rights violated, they are excluded from the supposed financial and technological benefits of this science-advancing project. There is a violent logic which situates Black people in the Americas—descendants of kidnapped and enslaved Africans—as responsible for the scientific “backwardness” of humanity. This encourages people to turn against those of us who are calling for an ethical approach to science by encouraging the general public to see us as anti-science. It is notable that many people’s first introduction to *quilombolas* is through this question of whether it is okay to displace them in the name of science. Not only is it not okay, but it is also fundamentally unnecessary. We as a global community have access to other launch sites, and we can work together to come up with other approaches to our growing need. We can also come together to decide whether we do in fact have a growing need and, if so, what values are driving this. As we face global warming, a planetary transformation that has been driven by technological development, it’s time to acknowledge that our old way of doing things is killing us. It’s time to democratize how decisions are made about land use and put the people of the land in a leadership role. We call on Biden to withdraw the U.S.’s request for further development of Alcântara, and we demand global support for quilombola land claims.

#### [Silberling 2] Next, *quilombola* displacement targets not only the land, but the IDENTITIES of the people affected.

**Silberling 2:** Silberling, Louise S. [Post-doctoral associate in the Rockefeller Foundation programme in Latin American Studies, University of Texas–Austin] “Displacement and Quilombos in Alcântara, Brazil: Modernity, Identity, and Place.” *International Social Science Journal,* July 2004. https://tinyurl.com/3ss2bzz9 CH

Further, Malkki’s (1992) interrogation of ‘‘rootedness’’ (as a natural and unproblematic state) brings us again to trying to understand the notion of home and belonging as constructed, rather than naturalised – and challenges the idea of a quilombo being ‘‘rooted’’ in a particular place. If we look at ‘‘localities’’ (cf. Raffles 1999) rather than ‘‘local’’ places, then we understand place to be always made in relationship to other places. Rapport and Dawson’s (1998) treatment of ‘‘home’’ as including practices, memories, and stories, and as something plurilocal that is ‘‘taken with’’ migrants and exiles in a ‘‘world of movement,’’ is useful for thinking of how those who are resettled will remake their ‘‘homes’’ within ‘‘places’’ which are not fixed and do not have fixed social relations (1998: 4–5). This can be contrasted to an increasingly vocal, and sometimes violent, defence of place in a world increasingly full of nonplaces; and often reified identity in a world of increasingly globally fluid identities. These tensions between homogenising tendencies and heterogeneous claims are taken up again at the end of this paper in a discussion of hegemony and alterity. How to think of the relations between place and identity, when both are shifting? These ‘‘imaginings’’ of the quilombo communities will be re-imagined by the communities themselves when they are moved. ‘‘Place’’ is interesting to look at socially, because in addition to thinking of a location on a map (in a ‘‘physical’’ cartography), it is also a site for production; it is where one is located spatially to others in one’s collectivity, and in relation to those with whom one has market relations; home is a space for family and all of the affective things one has related to place, as well as religious meanings attached to place. Most importantly, place can be understood as a relation rather than a thing, just as identity is a relation and not a thing. It is produced socially. Place and the meanings attached to it are constructed; thus, one location can have multiple meanings for different groups and individuals, and those meanings are open to contestation. In the struggle over Alcântara, the struggle and its meanings (as well as material outcomes) are transformed, as are relations to the place. If the physical location and spatial arrangement of quilombos are shifted, there would be a shift in how *quilombolas* relate to each other as a community and as a collectivity. In making and remaking their identities – who they are in relationship to each other and to a new place (spatial considerations, ideas of memory in relation to place, affective relationships) – Alcântara’s residents will be deciding whether and how they are able to think of themselves as *quilombolas* on quilombos. Importantly, since the quilombos of Alcântara have been brought into the quilombo movement, their self-identification as *quilombos* (or as black communities), as opposed to just ‘‘rural worker’’ communities, has been made or strengthened. The struggle itself reinforced, or brought new meanings to, their sense of community solidarity and their traditions. While a move would shift their affective ties to those pieces of land and their spatial relationships, the struggle itself (against being moved) is part of a process of producing a shift in their self-identification – towards a self perception as people who struggle, as blacks, as a collectivity, and as quilombolas. Additionally, their self-identification as citizens who are addressing claims of entitlement to the state, however unresponsive the state may be, relates quilombolas, in a common discourse, with the dominant elements of the political economy. This engagement with the state and the ensuing codification and reification of what a quilombo is undermine *quilombo* communities’ ability to define and produce, as an ongoing process, their own alterity; these are the dialectics of hegemony.

#### [Silberling 3] Further, disposability politics props up the *illusion* of democracy while actually advancing the military-industrial complex.

**Silberling 3:** Silberling, Louise S. [Post-doctoral associate in the Rockefeller Foundation programme in Latin American Studies, University of Texas–Austin] “Displacement and Quilombos in Alcântara, Brazil: Modernity, Identity, and Place.” *International Social Science Journal,* July 2004. https://tinyurl.com/3ss2bzz9 CH

The role of the state in protecting and entitling its private citizens becomes marginal when faced with larger regimes of global capital expansion; here the state returns to disciplining its citizens (keeping them away from sites of global capital) and to exclusionary practices – in the name of “development.” Takings by the state in the case of Alcântara can be seen in the context of global takings by states in concert with global/transnational corporate interests. The military-industrial complex is a multi-located phenomenon, tied partially to nation-states, but circulating between and through them; the military in Brazil, in current international configurations/ narratives of democracy, must be subordinate to the (accountable, legitimate, representative) democratic state apparatus, which can then “legitimately” take land from its citizens. Then, development (and modernisation) in Alcântara become defined by the geo-strategic priorities of international corporations and states as well as by Brazilian government entities and corporations. The quilombo movement astutely moves its struggle over place to the international arena, calling on the OAS and international human rights narratives, during a time when African diasporic struggles are highlighted around the world. And the progressive elements of the Brazilian Supreme Court and office of the Attorney General seek to balance the conflicting interests and uphold the Constitution. Silva (1996: 60) interprets this in terms of the Supreme Court’s obligation to guarantee that everyone should respect ‘‘the rules of the game, constitutionally established in the construction of a nation, where difference is recognised and respected’’. Thus, on the one hand, difference is used as a legitimating basis for rights in an emergent democracy; yet on the other hand, the seeming requirements to maintain the authenticity of that difference poses a challenge for quilombos. Seeing quilombos as fixed, in relation to their own identities and to place, only serves the modernisation narrative of development, which, according to Wilmsen (1996) is actually orthogonal to modernity, which recognises difference, human rights, and construction by the people. ‘‘Modernity is the salient substrate (…) of all contemporary discourse on ethnicity’’ (Wilmsen 1996: 18). The *movimento negro* and the *quilombo* movement can be understood as engaged in a struggle to cut through, go around, or subvert the dissatisfying (and disempowering) dualisms of “traditional” and “modern” by constructing their own terms of the debate: asserting their ethnicity as a basis for special treatment; asserting their right to incorporate afresh traditional African symbols; asserting their citizenship and rights in an international human rights framework; and asserting their rights, as citizens, to affirm and define their relationship to place. At the same time, it is important to see how incorporating cultural symbols can lead to potentially incarcerating culturalist (apolitical) constructions of their struggle; how engaging with citizenship debates may be proscribing; and how historic ties to place as a basis for (ethnicised) land rights can be both empowering and limiting. The struggles in Alcântara over the launch site both challenge the quilombo movement, and, perhaps, might allow it to recapture the ‘‘modern’’ on its own terms.

#### [Tadiar] AND rejecting disposability politics means rejecting the hidden labor of colonized groups.

**Tadiar:** Tadiar, Neferti X. M. [Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Barnard College] “Life-Times of Disposability within Global Neoliberalism.” *Social Text,* 115, Vol. 31, No. 2, Summer 2013. https://tinyurl.com/2acpfkax CH

Beyond the moment of simple reproduction, within which the “free” work of slaves, colonial peoples, and subordinate women served to augment the surplus labor-time expropriated from labor through formal processes of capitalist exchange, I am also speaking of the arena of not only this kind of hidden labor-time in the reproduction of the worker but also forms of remaindered life-times, the time of social reproduction that lies beyond contemporary modes of exploitation of life as living labor. Such life-times consist of a diverse array of acts, capacities, associations, aspirations in practice, experiential modes, and sensibilities that people engage in, draw upon, and invent in the struggle to make and remake social life under conditions of their own superfluity or disposability. If the distinction between economic forms allows us to recognize that it is money as capital rather than simply “the market” or “enterprise” that serves as the key principle of subjectivation under neoliberalism, then it is important to recognize, and this is my second point, that such subjects include states, corporations, emergent sectors of elite classes in developing countries, and not merely individuals. The distinction thereby helps us to understand the differences and relations between the effects of neoliberalist structures and institutions at the level of subjects in the global North and the global South and their permutations at the level of social reproductive labor, by which I mean devalued naturalized practices of maintaining minimal “organic” or subsistence life (including its historically variable, nonbiological entailments). Such labor is not simply equivalent to particular sectors of the economy such as domestic and service workers or peasant farmers who produce and subsidize the services and goods that maintain the minimal life or necessary consumption of human capital. This is rather a whole array of nonsubjectified labor that arguably produces both the personal “free time” or valued and value- productive “surplus time” used for investment in human capital, which includes the saved time for the consumption of the image and the savings that become a fiscal resource for defined contributions and investments in the financial market. The distinction also allows us to take stock of modalities of being as activities of living that come to be expended and disposed of, as the very medium of financialization. Such disposable life constitutes precisely the displaced middle term of M- C- M’, the commodity that is merely the medium for the speculative genesis of value. While analyses of neoliberalism tend to be focused on the remaking of subjects under its new protocols of life, swathes of other life are merely viewed as the expended, surplused populations figured as forms of bare life, at- risk populations, warehoused, disposable people, urban excess (planet of the slums), out of which is to be gleaned new political subjects and potentials for resistance already convertible to the ruling political currencies of the day. It is of less interest to dwell on modes of life lived and practices of living that are remaindered in the process of production of biopolitical life, that is, both the waste of life and wasted life, what is not consumed in the consumption of life forces as the basis of the expropriation of value. Lastly, even as these times of remaindered life have been the focus of attention of a range of contemporary Philippine and Chinese cinema, which have made their way into the global cultural market sphere of international cinema, we cannot understand the political import of this aesthetic attention, particularly the significance of their respective modalities of temporalization in relation to the project of neoliberalism, without a grasp of the latter’s global and regional dynamics, including the arenas of peripheral social life that US- and EU- focused critiques of neoliberalism as global hegemonic rationality tend to occlude or at best ignore. A view of these peripheral arenas brings into focus the connections among land, people, and time comprising the less- considered dynamics of neoliberalism.

## Frontlines

### A2 Big Stick Impacts

#### 1. [Tadiar] WE ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSE – disposability politics is the REASON war and conflict exist – the infinite expansion of capital creates infinite colonization.

**Tadiar:** Tadiar, Neferti X. M. [Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Barnard College] “Life-Times of Disposability within Global Neoliberalism.” *Social Text,* 115, Vol. 31, No. 2, Summer 2013. https://tinyurl.com/2acpfkax CH

The first point is that if we see the distinction between “risk capable” subjects and “at risk” populations as a distinction between money for exchange and money for credit (i.e., money as capital), we are able to understand the differences between forms of personhood and lived experience that obtain under neoliberal norms not simply as spatially distributed social differences (given racialized, gendered, and/or sexualized forms of identity or geopolitical areas/populations), in a static framework of contradiction, but rather as moments or aspects of a global dynamic of processes of accumulation set in motion, in which practices of lifemaking play diverse, conflicting roles as ever-diminishing resources and ever-displaced limits in the production of value. It is within the circuit of money advanced as credit that we witness the temporality of finance, or the time of speculation, that shapes the form and experience of the neoliberal homo economicus. As Melinda Cooper shows, M- C- M’ is the movement of money as capital “where time no longer mediates the exchange of usevalues, but enters, as it were, into ‘private relations’ with itself.”10 The practice of speculation, as an investment of capital, involves an anticipatory time of realization of value in excess of the present value for which it is exchanged. “In return of value to value, capital speculates on its own future realization as something in excess of itself.”11 It is precisely in its capacity to continue exceeding itself, unhampered by the limits of the organic life of labor, or what used to be called the time of labor’s reproduction, that the seeming “limitlessness” of capital’s movement (and the endlessness of wars of security) lies. As Cooper writes, the speculative animation of value establishes “an inversion of powers between past and future, production and profit, in which the after- life of a life that has not yet been lived, the purely speculative existence of a future profit, realizes and gives birth to the past of production,” a case of male parthenogenesis or self- birthing (son conceiving the father).12 The contraction of past and future, the evaporation of chronology or successive and cumulative time in the infinite extension of present action, the colonization of the future as a means of present realization, such temporal features of life under neoliberalism are, in my understanding, an accounting of the subjective experience of a subject inhabiting money as capital. Or put differently, it is at the level of the operation of money as capital (and the transformation of citizen- subjects into human capital) that much discussion of neoliberal political rationality, including Foucault’s, takes place. Such an analysis of neoliberalism becomes thereby confined to the terms of the most “advanced” form of capitalism (postindustrial financialization), eliding an entire arena of production processes mistakenly presumed to have been superseded by it in the purported transformation of the regime of accumulation “from managerial/industrial capitalism to shareholding/postindustrial capitalism.”13 I am speaking, in part, of precisely that circuit of money as payment or exchange, which dead- ends in consumption, as another sphere of lived subjectivities and “labor” that while lying beyond the threshold of neoliberal intelligibility nevertheless plays an indispensable role in the broader global economy over which and through which finance capital has gained sovereign power.

#### 2. [Tadiar] WE PRECLUDE – we only care about pleasure and pain if we value the people impacted.

**Tadiar:** Tadiar, Neferti X. M. [Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Barnard College] “Life-Times of Disposability within Global Neoliberalism.” *Social Text,* 115, Vol. 31, No. 2, Summer 2013. https://tinyurl.com/2acpfkax CH

Insofar as speculation bets on price differentials over time, time is value productive. Such value- productive time is inextricable from the abstraction of human life. For neoliberal subjects, life is indistinguishable from labor; therefore the time of labor is the value- productive time of life. However, while for the neoliberal subject as entrepreneur of his/her own life (as capital) one’s own time is value productive, for the investor, it is the time of others, the time of nonsubjects (their promised labor- time as embodied in the debts they take out or that is taken out on their behalf by their representative state), that can be bet upon or expended now for the extraction of value. The time of others is, importantly, graded to the extent that the worth of life-times varies considerably — life- time being the time of life making or time of social reproduction, which, with the devaluation of national currency and corresponding devaluation of the people that such currency represents, can be radically debased as a result of state economic policies (competitive currency devaluation, liberalization of protectionist tariffs, regulations), policing (repression of labor struggles, of alternative economies), and war (creation of displaced persons as surplus people through the destruction of communities and their means of subsistence, the making of uninhabitable conflict- ridden zones, forced migration, and other means). By means of the economic sovereign nation- state system, which determines the global exchange value of different populations, people are forced to increasingly subsidize (by shouldering) the costs of their reproduction (increasingly becoming “free” or zero- value labor) and to provide (through taxes) the surplus value directly appropriated through state “emergency” austerity measures and stimulus packages. The relative value of people’s life- times must thus be viewed in similar terms as the varying potentials (or purchasing power) of money as a medium of exchange, or the different rates of exchange of monetary currencies, which rest on the unequal political and economic relations comprising the international system of sovereign territorial states. In this view, the life- times of surplus people can be usefully seen as a form of “soft currency,” a medium of exchange that, unlike “hard currency,” cannot hold its value and may in fact depreciate rapidly, attesting to the importance of national sovereignty in the determination of money’s potential.29 As “soft currency,” that is, as medium of exchange rather than as measure or holder of value, the life- times of surplus people at the disposal of a state and its crony economic elites can thus function 30 as monetized assets used to leverage the latter’s position in playing the global financial markets. Such disposable life- times constitute the liquid reserves that the state risks in its bid for foreign investments. In effect, the disposable life- times that surplus populations represent are precisely the quantified abstract future that is “colonized” (or mortgaged) in the speculative maneuvers of transnational and national elites, with the crucial agency of the state apparatus. From the side of disposability, the life of surplus people is the future begetting the present, generating the surplus value now accumulated as finance capital, which appears to be begetting value out of itself. Put another way, the seemingly limitless resource that is the future (as part of the seeming limitlessness of life itself) is in actuality the lives of people whose own futures are offered up as exchange values extractable in the present.

## Case

**Sheng]**  US  heg causes instability by violating human rights- empirics in Latin America prove.

**Sheng**: Sheng, Zhong. [People's Daily]. "A close look at U.S. hegemonic practices disguised in human rights protection", en.people.cn. March 16, 2020. EM

**The U.S. keeps saying to promote human rights development in each country, but is actually taking the “America first” approach. In order to maintain its hegemony over the world, the U.S. wantonly trampled on human rights in other countries**, as well as the international order and international system with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter as its core. As a country that was so good at withdrawing from cooperation, breaching commitments, shirking international responsibilities and shaking the foundation for global cooperation, that was always imposing sanctions and resorting to forces, **the U.S. was the culprit plunging many places around the world into disturbances and chaos, and was responsible for humanitarian disasters that followed.** The country has long lost its international morality and credit. During a general debate over the report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at the 42nd session of the UN Human Rights Council **on Sept. 10 and 11 last year, the U.S. was criticized by the World Peace Council who said Washington’s intervention in Latin American countries violated the UN Charter and infringed upon their right to self-determination and state sovereignty**. The rapid spread of the COVID-19 epidemic presents a clearer image – at this critical moment, to value

**THIS TURNS UNDER THEIR FRAMEWORK — U.S. HEG CAUSES WORSE OUTCOMES FOR ALL**

## Extra

#### [Tadiar] Extra

**Tadiar:** Tadiar, Neferti X. [Neferti Xina M. Tadiar is Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Barnard College] “Life-Times of Disposability within Global Neoliberalism” 2013. JP

**My turn to temporality in processes of accumulation, dispossession, and survival is an attempt to think about this unevenness at a level beneath the threshold of visibility of subjects while acknowledging the real effects that the protocols of subjectivity under a regime of a financialized economy have on the conditions of life of precisely those nonsubjects who can only be apprehended in the recognizable social dresses of “bare life.”** I do not, however, turn to “actually lived” life but instead to experiments in the very modalities of attention through which such life is abstracted and monetized in and as image commodities and image capital under contemporary modes of value extraction (cinema as one means of speculation)—after all, what is financial capital if not past, present, and future life-times imaged and circulated as value (where the “content” and even form of such life-times is secondary)? Turning to these experiments we see the way that various temporalities are invoked on the one hand as “ethnographic” realist attention to the life-times of survival on the part of disposable populations and on the other hand as attempts to instantiate particular life-times as political means of re-mediating social relations. In both cases, these experiments provide other forms of intelligibility beyond the normative subjective ideals of citizens and the racialized, gendered, sexualized, and classed social formations that serve as those subjective ideals’ constitutive others. **To attend to the uneven times of the global project of neoliberalism is to interrupt the coherence and homogeneity of the epoch that is assumed to be our shared global present (whether that global present is explained through a diffusionist or conjunctural account of neoliberalism, or a historically synchronous account in which different sites are affected by a global logic) and an interruption of the time of the “always already” for the redundant populations who are the long-standing victims of colonialism and imperialism (the “originals” of “original or primitive accumulation”). It is to place zones of disposable life in the periphery in dynamic relation to old and emerging centers of global capitalism, without relegating these zones or their life-making practices to merely the latter’s dire effects. Attending to the uneven times of “neoliberalist” transformations through the life-times of disposability opens up the possibility of other genealogies for understanding those remaindered ways of living in the world that move and generate that world in ways we would otherwise be unable to take into political account.**

**Koren 1**: Koren, Marina. [Marina Koren is a staff writer at The Atlantic.] “WHY SPACEX WANTS A TINY TEXAS NEIGHBORHOOD SO BADLY” *The Atlantic,* February 11, 2020. <https://www.theatlantic.com/author/marina-koren/> EM

**BOCA CHICA, Texas—Mary McConnaughey was watching from her car when the rocket exploded on the beach.** The steel-crunching burst sent the top of the spacecraft flying, and a cloud of vapor billowed into the sky and drifted toward the water. **McConnaughey and her husband had planned to drive into town that day in late November, but when they pulled out onto the street, they noticed a roadblock, a clear sign that SpaceX technicians were preparing to test hardware.** She didn’t want to miss anything, so she turned toward the launchpad, parked her car at the end of a nearby street, and got her camera ready. **The dramatic test was a crucial step in one of Elon Musk’s most cherished and ambitious projects, the very reason, in fact, he founded SpaceX in 2002.** Weeks earlier, Musk had stood in front of the prototype—164 feet of gleaming stainless steel, so archetypically spaceship-like that it could have been a borrowed prop from a science-fiction movie—and beamed. He envisions that the completed transportation system, a spaceship-and-rocket combo named Starship, will carry passengers as far away as Mars. A few months before the explosion, hundreds of people came to the facility in South Texas, on the edge of the Gulf Coast, to see the spaceship, and thousands more watched online. “It’s really gonna be pretty epic to see that thing take off and come back,” Musk gushed at the event, as if he were seeing the finished Starship in front of him. McConnaughey was there, and even posed for a picture with Musk. At the end of the night, she made the short trip home to her house on a small road lined with stout palm trees. McConnaughey lives in Boca Chica Village, a tiny neighborhood located in startling proximity to SpaceX’s facilities. Many of the village’s residents have lived there for years, long before SpaceX arrived, some before the company even existed. **Friction between next-door neighbors is quite different when one of them is a rocket company. Instead of an ugly fence, there might be an ugly fence with massive tanks of cryogenic liquid behind it. When residents find papers stuck in their front door, the notes don’t ask them to keep the noise down or clean up after their dogs; they warn them that their windows**[**could shatter**](https://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/local/residents-receive-alert-on-spacex-testing/article_cbd855d2-c6d1-11e9-b384-9bc9f72dc917.html)**.** Boca Chica’s residents have learned to live with a rocket company, or at least tolerate it, over more than five years. **But SpaceX’s work is about to become even more disruptive. (The explosion certainly made that clear.) So the company has offered to buy their homes.** Some have taken the offer. Others, such as McConnaughey, have rejected it, even as Musk prepares to launch a giant rocketship just a short hop from their houses. **SpaceX is already hard at work on the next Starship prototype, and Musk says the company might launch it into orbit as soon as this year.** “We love Texas,” James Gleeson, a SpaceX spokesperson, said in a statement, “and believe we are entering a new and exciting era in space exploration.” Few people in this part of South Texas could have predicted the recent trajectory of their life when SpaceX moved in. They have become space fanatics and legal experts, Musk supporters and thorns in his side, trying to make sense of their place in a strange story that could someday end millions of miles away from Earth. All because they got new neighbors. **“They’re here to stay,” McConnaughey told me, “and they want us to leave.”**

#### [McCoy et al] Space appropriation creates false promises and strips people from their land and freedom.

**McCoy et al**: McCoy, Terrence. [University of Iowa, BA, political science and journalism; Columbia University, MA, international politics and journalism], Traiano, Heloísa. [Writer at the Washington Post] “A story of slavery — and space” Washington Post, 2021. EM//JP

This was the history of das Neves’s family. **The day the military arrived with their moving trucks, she was 18. Her parents had wept for days. They were leaving land that, she said, “had been passed down from generation to generation.” But they boarded the trucks and left the land where they’d found freedom, because they thought they had no choice, because it was a chance at plumbing. “The models they showed us had an indoor bathroom,” Neves said. When they reached their new home — one in a cluster of military-style block buildings plopped in the middle of the forest — she realized how foolish they’d been. The family’s barren square structure had no plumbing. The land was too sandy to farm.** [A wealthy doctor and a favela merchant were hospitalized with covid-19. From there, their stories diverged.] **Servulo de Jesus Moraes Borges, 58, was one of 30 soldiers enlisted by the military to convince the families to move. Borges, too, believed the promises. Raised in the quilombos, he’d believed a better life was coming for his people. He has regretted that faith ever since. “True deception,” he said. “It was not meant to help anyone’s life, because everything that was promised wasn’t fulfilled.” More than 300 families lost easy access to the sea. They lost their plantations. Many went hungry. A people once forgotten were forgotten again. “The government took what it could and left us here,” das Neves said. The rockets started shooting off. The land rights never came.** And those left behind in their quilombos swore that what happened to the others would never happen to them. Pinheiro walked toward the river, thinking of what would happen if the government took her land. She could picture herself: Another person in the favelas of São Luís, where other displaced families have ended up, fearing violence and spending every dime on food they’d once fished or grown. **“They don’t want our house,” she said. “They want our liberty. The liberty to keep our windows open at night, in peace.” She doesn’t trust the government.** Not after what happened with the other families. So she has committed her adult life to resistance.

#### [McCoy et al] And this is happening primarily in POC communities – Quilombos, black villages, have been forced to leave their land to “maximize the greatest good”.

**McCoy et al**: McCoy, Terrence. [University of Iowa, BA, political science and journalism; Columbia University, MA, international politics and journalism], Traiano, Heloísa. [Writer at the Washington Post] “A story of slavery — and space” *Washington Post,* 2021. JP

In her home at the edge of the village, close enough to the launch base that she can see the rockets climb above her roof, Maria José Lima Pinheiro began to tell her story. It was about family. But it was also about space exploration, slavery, the world’s most powerful country and, ultimately, the looming destruction of her community. They’ve lived here for hundreds of years, the descendants of enslaved Africans, fishing and farming a verdant paradise where land meets sea along Brazil’s north coast. **For most of that history, the outside world had left them alone. Then came the Space Age. By a coincidence of fate, the historically Black villages, called quilombos, sit on what the global aerospace industry considers some of the most valuable real estate on the planet. Less than 200 miles from the equator — the global sweet spot — Alcântara is one of the easiest places on Earth to launch satellites into geostationary orbit.** She was still a child, Pinheiro said, when the government started removing her people to build the Alcântara Launch Center. Now, three decades later, she fears it’s coming back for the rest of them. **The United States in 2019 signed a technology privacy agreement with Brazil that allows the United States to use the nearby Brazilian launch center for commercial and other missions. But the deal, which then-president Donald Trump promised would save “tremendous amounts of money,” could also mean the displacement of nearly 2,100 of Brazil’s poorest people.** The Brazilian government last year announced a plan to expand the base by more than 30,000 acres to make room for the additional business. **The quilombos would be cleared, officials said in a decree, and their people removed.**

Late last year, congressional members including Rep. Deb Haaland and Sen. Bernie Sanders wrote to the Armed Services Committees to request that the 2021 Defense Authorization Bill prohibit the US from cooperating with projects that would lead to the relocation of Indigenous or quilombola communities in Brazil. “This agreement between Trump and Bolsonaro administrations threatens to displace hundreds of Afro Brazilian quilombo families from their land, further disparaging an already marginalized community,” said Georgia Rep. Hank Johnson on the House floor in September 2019. Meanwhile, the Bolsonaro administration recently went to the Alcântara area in what critics are calling a public relations move to make it appear as though they are supporting quilombo communities while plans to expand the space base get underway. On Feb. 11, Bolsonaro and several cabinet members delivered land titles to 125 families in the area who were relocated back in the 1980s. “This is the government that has most cared about human rights in Brazil … and we'll be back with more land titles,” said Damares Alves, Bolsonaro’s firebrand minister of women and family and a former evangelical preacher. But these land titles “are of dubious legal standing,” said Sean T. Mitchell, a Rutgers University anthropology professor who wrote a book about the launch site and its conflict with the local community. So Brazilians continue to organize. “We are on high alert because we know that the government will do everything it can to remove the communities,” Serejo said. “And even the issuing of these land titles at this moment is part of a strategy to pressure the communities.”