

Nature and development in the Amazon: dialogues between economics, planning and historical ecology

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This paper discusses the possibilities of territorial and economic planning in the Amazon, based on the modification of assumptions regarding the forest / society posed by archaeological research, anthropological and historical ecology of the region.

The Amazon has been frequent targets of plans and private and government projects (Schmink, Wood 1992). Most of these plans remained a truncated dialogue with the environmental characteristics of the region. The recurring picture is attempted dissemination conditions of urban-industrial production and consumption in conflict with the rain forest and the ecological complex corresponds to it - soil, rivers, climate, biodiversity.

At the heart of this contradiction is the opposition between the forest as pure nature and human presence as disturbing factor. In this conception the Amerindian populations were almost always taken as guests and beneficiaries of nature. Few in number, technologically primitive, her virtue would live "in harmony with the forest", that is, not to change the natural conditions, either for impoverishment is to improve the diversity, density, dispersion, etc ..

In this view there would be no indigenous peoples created civilizations, and do not provide elements for discussion of human presence in the Amazon, except in a possible return to non-intervention in nature. In any size they would have done what we call development - material, cultural, artistic or other. So any development would be creation of an external introduction, which speaks to the environmental conditions, but not with the local social history. Plans and projects for the Amazon in these terms tend for disruptive character - alter the nature and could not benefit indigenous.

It turns out that such views of the rainforest, indigenous and relations between them are now questioned by archaeological, anthropological and historical ecology in the Amazon:

"Historical ecology provides a radical alternative perspective for understanding human- environment interaction over the long term and the complex human histories of Amazonian environments. Historical ecology Focuses on landscape of the medium created by human agents through Their interaction with the environment. Although landscapes can be the result of unintentional activities, historical ecologists focus on the intentional actions of people and the logic of indigenous knowledge, Particularly the understanding of resource creation and management." (Erickson 2014)

In this key the Amazon rain forest is recognized as a partial result of human ingenuity. The richness of the environments before understood as wild and untouched, turns out to be co-evolution of conditions precedent to the man and the knowledge and human capacity to intervene, which in turn expands in the everyday process of creating the material and cultural life conditions (Posey 1989 Denevan 1992 Balée 1989). Finally, the Amerindian populations are now recognized as producers of urban life, rich and large-scale (Heckenberger 2006). Thus, contrary to the pristine forest myth and primitive populations, the Amazon is revealed as the cradle of civilizations producing life of a complex material. His work includes a sophisticated capacity management of animal and plant species, intentional creation of island forests, orchards and large cultivation areas, large-scale production of fertile soil, water resource management, creation of transport infrastructure and regional interconnection, production of large ceremonial spaces and multiple uses, among other notable achievements (Erikson 2014).

We propose to discuss here as recognition of relations society and nature - true expression of a unique pattern of development - created by Native American and traditional populations in the Amazon may be the starting point for project rooting and plans for the region in the following directions :

- I. The retrieval and organized reproduction of Amerindian and traditional knowledge as the basis for the organization and the production of space in the Amazon

- II. Economic, social and urban possibilities of understanding of nature as a social artifact of economic significance for a development pattern with social and environmental justice in the Amazon.
- III. Overcoming the exclusivity of industrial economic path in in the relationship between with the forest and management of renewable natural resources.
- IV. Understanding the possibilities of economic creation rooted in everyday life and urban life, defined as economic production systems based on intentional reproduction of environmental conditions.

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