

## **Growth, permanence and possibilities: analysing cities in Amazon region**

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Think about urban planning in the periphery (from the periphery) of the capital, it is no simple task. In addition to the high informality rates, the low priority given to the urban design by the plans and the appropriation of urbanization models created to other contexts, the periphery seems doomed to repeat the mistakes of the big urban centers, with no room for innovation or to map a different trajectory. Turns out, this turn of the century, we live in a unique time in the history of cities, there was never so much accumulated knowledge about cities and its access was never so easy. From North to South of the planet is possible to share experiences and clearly realize that there is not just one way to "progress".

This article focuses on cities in the Amazon region - the last part of Brazil encompassed by the urban-industrial rationality shaped by northern countries - and where many cities are still in the process of restructuring and consolidation, and may create another history than a preset future of social and environmental degradation. The Amazon region occupies a large part of Brazil, but there are few studies focusing on its urbanization process and its peculiarities. Despite the driving force that urban centers could have on environmental preservation, cities and their inhabitants are not part of the claims and environmental debates centered in the biome and its role in other regions.

Thinking city and nature in coordination is essential in this context. Until recently, prevailed in the region the river communities' way of living, which for centuries knew how to reconcile city and nature. It was only in the 1960s (when the rest of the world woke up to the importance of nature and cultural and environmental diversity) that the National Development Plan (PND, in Portuguese) incorporated the Amazon as a part

of the country. During this period, when a military government controlled Brazil, there was the growth of the “*desenvolvimentismo*”, an economic and political approach on the public policies that was committed to the industrial production development and infrastructure provision, which didn’t take the importance of people and nature as essential. The transposition of the capitalist paradigm to an environment where prevailed traditional practices promoted an incomplete urbanization that encouraged the progressive transfer of the population to urban centers, without qualifying these spaces, leading to a context where informality and precariousness are rules within the urban structuring processes in the region.

The progress manipulated and biased speech served as a support to the strengthening of private property and the neglect of environmental issues. From these processes emerges in the small and medium cities of the Amazon metropolitan areas practices features, such as urban fabrics fragmentation and privatization, which obliterate the cities’ environmental scale and create segregated spaces, disregard the importance of the city public dimension. Currently, despite the recognition of the consequences generated by this pattern of development, persists in the region practices of natural landscape suppression and reproduction of progress based on the adoption of exogenous practices, which ends up characterizing the Amazon as an environmentally vulnerable region. The characterization of the area as space of capital accumulation favors degradation processes and current studies have already demonstrated the driving trends to a preset social exclusion, environmental degradation and lack of natural resources future.

Despite the importance of the Amazon region to the maintenance of life on the globe, studies on the intertwining of urban and ecological dimension of small Amazonian cities still seem to have not had its place in the agenda of urban studies. The misunderstanding of the social and environmental dynamics that underlie these territories denies the diversity and possibility of traditional knowledge maintenance in order to preserve the forest and build socially fairer spaces. However, these cities are still in the process of expansion and therefore analyze their specific contexts can bring out new ways to better articulate the binomial city-nature.

This article aims to show how these different processes spatialize in urban Amazon cities in different moments by comparing two cities of Southeast Para as a comparative analysis illustrating the problem presented in two different points of history: Marabá, an average town with just over one hundred years, directly inserted within national integration policies of developmental government; and Canaã dos Carajás, a small town with only 21 years is shaping as heir to preterit practices of urban development. For that were made spatial and temporal analysis, cartographic and documentary, which revealed the formal production of space dominates the reproduction of models notably unviable and inappropriate for the Amazon reality causing serious social and environmental consequences, despite the potential to trace other paths remain the same strategies lagged the last century. Identifying patterns and trajectories article aims to contribute to the ongoing discussion about the expansion of small and medium-sized cities in similar environments.