


**A EMERGÊNCIA DA PROBLEMÁTICA AMBIENTAL NO ESTADO DO ACRE E A  
RELAÇÃO DO CAMPESINATO ACREANO COM A NATUREZA<sup>1</sup>****THE EMERGENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN THE STATE OF ACRE AND  
THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE ACRE PEASANTRY WITH NATURE****LA APARICIÓN DE PROBLEMAS MEDIOAMBIENTALES EN EL ESTADO DE ACRE Y  
LA RELACIÓN ENTRE EL CAMPESINADO ACREANO Y LA NATURALEZA**

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2025.026-004>

**Mauro Cesar Rocha da Silva<sup>2</sup>**

**ABSTRACT**

In the 1970s, social conflicts broke out in the countryside due to the emergence of new interests that shifted the positioning of agents in the social fabric towards development. The Rubber Tappers Movement emerged from these conflicts, bringing environmental issues to the forefront, which gave visibility to concerns about preserving rubber and chestnut forests. Nature began to appear as a strategic resource to be considered in the formulation of development policies. Resolving the conflicting interests of agents was the great challenge to be overcome. This article seeks to demonstrate how the scope of a political project germinated in the quicksand of Acrean society, which, based on natural resources, managed to respond to conflicts and to use nature as a supporting principle to establish Acre's development. The aim is to find out what sentiment the future Forest Government drew on to complete its political project.

**Keywords:** Acrean Peasantry. Nature. Forest Government.

**RESUMO**

Na década de 1970, os conflitos sociais eclodem no campo devido à emergência de novos interesses que deslocam o posicionamento dos agentes no tecido social, em torno da direção do desenvolvimento. Do interior destes conflitos nasce o Movimento dos Seringueiros, trazendo o tema ambiental, que deu visibilidade à preocupação da preservação das florestas de seringueiras e castanheiras. A natureza passa a apresentar-se como recurso estratégico, a ser considerada na formulação das políticas de desenvolvimento. O equacionamento dos interesses colidentes dos agentes constituía-se no grande desafio a ser superado. Este artigo procura demonstrar como na areia movediça da sociedade acreana germinou o escopo de um projeto político, que em se fundamentando sobre a base dos recursos naturais, logrou responder tanto aos conflitos quando instrumentalizou a natureza como princípio de suporte para assentar o

<sup>1</sup> Este artigo é parte da tese de doutorado intitulada Razões da Sustentabilidade do Governo da Floresta (2011).

<sup>2</sup> Graduated in Social Sciences, with a specialization in Political Science, from the Federal University of Acre - UFAC (1998). Master's and PhD in Social Sciences, in Development, Agriculture and Society from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro – CPDA-UFRJ (2012). Post-doctorate in Political Sociology from the Universidad de la Havana, Cuba (2015). He is Coordinator of the Research Group Human Cosmology: political systems, the factors of the person and the evolutionary development of the human condition at the Center for Philosophy and Human Sciences of the Federal University of Acre – CFCH-UFAC.



desenvolvimento do Acre. Trata-se de saber qual o sentimento que o futuro Governo da Floresta pinçou para completar o seu projeto político.

**Palavras-chave:** Campesinado Acreano. Natureza. Governo da Floresta.

## **RESUMEN**

En la década de 1970 estallaron conflictos sociales en el campo debido a la aparición de nuevos intereses que desplazaron el posicionamiento de los agentes del tejido social hacia el desarrollo. De estos conflictos surgió el Movimiento de los Caucheros, que puso en primer plano las cuestiones medioambientales, lo que dio visibilidad a la preocupación por preservar los bosques de caucho y castaños. La naturaleza empezó a aparecer como un recurso estratégico a tener en cuenta en la formulación de las políticas de desarrollo. Resolver los intereses contrapuestos de los agentes era el gran reto a superar. Este artículo pretende demostrar cómo germinó en las arenas movedizas de la sociedad acreana el alcance de un proyecto político que, apoyándose en los recursos naturales, consiguió dar respuesta a los conflictos y utilizar la naturaleza como principio sustentador para asentar el desarrollo de Acre. El objetivo es averiguar en qué sentimiento se basó el futuro Gobierno Forestal para llevar a cabo su proyecto político.

**Palabras clave:** Campesinado de Acre. Naturaleza. Gobierno forestal.



## INTRODUCTION

In the trajectory of the rise of the Government of the Forest (1999-2006), two movements had the preceding parts: we highlight two important historical events in Acre – the Acre Revolution and the Autonomist Movement – which are linked to the political project of the Government of the Forest and support it as a subsidy for historical reinforcement. At this moment, we had the intention only of situating and recovering them in order to refer to them within the context in which they originated, in order to, on the one hand, try to show, through the fabric that covered them, their purposes, motivations and constitutive ideas, and, on the other hand, to diagnose the open possibilities, the aspects or characteristics that were resentful, or negative, the social issues that had not yet been resolved, the things that were unresolved, not faced or activated by the political power and that, therefore, were loose, without effective resonance, in the process of historical development in Acre, which the Jorge Viana government sought to link with the objective of achieving social stability, economic dynamics and political legitimacy for its government. The absence of ties of social belonging, regional dissidence, political dependence, as well as a fragile local economy were some of these elements that were interpreted to strengthen new objectives. In essence, these elements gave a new look to the interpretation of regional historical facts, reinforcing the importance of the processes of resistance carried out by those who carried out the Acre Revolution and the Autonomist Movement. The Social Movement of Rubber Tappers and Indigenous People would bring the last element to support the project of the Government of the Forest that would be sustained under the principle of sustainable development, having nature like it between economic development, social dynamics and legitimacy of governmental political power.

But in order to connect the threads of history and recover its meaning, adding it to others already officially consolidated, with a view to the formation of a renewed political consciousness, which would be favorable to it, it would be necessary to have an element that would infuse in the minds a feeling of common identification that would be constitutive of it, that would define in the hearts and souls of the people of Acre their own social being, that would affect their existence, penetrating the core of the social imaginary of the population that would override the antagonisms and dissidence of interests. This component, for this reason, would have to come as an antidote to heal the most recent and most acute social trauma that had seriously strangled local society, dividing it in half, derived from social conflicts in the countryside and the struggle for the preservation of forests, sustained by rural unionism.



Almost by irony of fate, from the point of conflict that mutilated local sociability, the amalgamating link of the government's political project would emerge – the feeling for Nature, translated by the dependence on natural resources, the forests – through which it would seek to establish the content of "link with the place", (Acre is the relationship with nature), materialized in the political project of sustainable development, as the empirical basis of the identity of the Acre being.

The objective of this article is to bring to light this sense or meaning, which the environmental issue gained in Acre, with the emergence of socio-environmental conflicts, during the 1970s and 1980s, seeking to give the depth of the confrontation between rubber tappers and the new farmers, migrated to the region, in order to identify the ambiguous point of confrontation, from which sprang the orientation of development that produced the mentality of the environmental vision that would be appropriated by the Government of the Forest, at the end of the 1990s, as a symbol of the identity of Acre. Our interest, moreover, is to locate the visions of nature, or rather, the two main visions that defined the actions of appropriation of natural resources and guided the development policies in the region, taking the empirical evidence, which marked the social existence in the rubber plantations of Acre, the practices and actions of the rubber tappers and rubber tappers related to it, as well as they were translated in terms of socialization and/or differentiation of mentalities between the countryside and the cities.

In the first moment, however, we will continue the balance concerning the trajectory of economic relations (market dynamics) and political relations (action of local governments), showing primarily how they arrived in the 1970s and what were the issues that were at stake at that time, related to economic policy and development. In the second part of the section, we will explore the social perceptions about nature that were in dispute, about the development strategies that emerged with the socio-environmental conflicts of the 1970s, in the upper Acre valley. It is also interesting, in the end, to observe how the hegemonic view of nature dissipated through Acre society in general, in such a way that the environment began to be evoked by political power, as a significant link, characteristic of the man from Acre, who would be able to equate social differentiations and link the different agents in dissidence, around a common bond – the identification with nature and its resources – configuring a base where it could the local identity of Acre is established, because it is precisely in the context of the connection between political economy, that is, the formation of the Acre internal market and governmental centralization of a development project, that the question of Acre's identity is effectively raised. The sociological idea of seeking the meaning or mentality of agents or social groups within the world that surrounds



them, relative to the orientation of the political and economic development of Acre, requires considering that action among men is endowed with meaning (WEBER, 2000) and that, therefore, historical events and events contain a social reason, because they carry meanings (ROMERO, 2004), because human action derives from the real existence of men of flesh and blood who enter into relations with each other and with nature (MARX and ENGELS, 1987). Luís Alberto Romero (2004) warned us that "it is not a metaphysical sense, but a human, profane one. In his words (...) human action advances in history towards certain goals, certain ends, which arose from the very process of society as a tense combination of man's choice, of his values" (ibid, p. 38). It was based on this type of argumentation that Pierre Bourdieu (1996) enunciated reason as an attribute of social science, apart from the theory of action. In this author's own words

... Sociology postulates that there is a reason for agents to do what they do (in the sense in which we speak of the reason of a series), a reason that must be discovered in order to transform a series of apparently incoherent, arbitrary behaviors into a coherent series, into something that can be understood from a single principle or a coherent set of principles. In this sense, sociology postulates that social agents do not perform gratuitous acts. The word gratuitous refers, in part, to the idea of the unmotivated, of the arbitrary: a gratuitous act is an act of which we cannot make sense, a loco, absurd act, it matters little, in the face of which social science has nothing to say, of which it can only omit itself (BOURDIEU, p. 138-139).

Facts or events become historically relevant to social study when they are pregnant with meanings and consequences of men's action, when their causes and effects can be explicitly identified in the course of events (CASSIRER, 2005). The case of socio-environmental conflicts in Acre, in this sense, deserves specific attention due to the effects it generated in Acre's politics and economy. The crisis that was announced from the 1920s onwards, with the low competitiveness of the rubber industry and its deepening in the 1970s, was a crisis of an eminently economic nature. However, its economic reason directly affected the governmental political action of Acre, negatively impacting the government's ability to obtain tax dividends, arising from the mercantile collection of rubber, which deteriorated its public budget. This economic crisis, therefore, which deepened in the 1970s, was a reflection of the gradual retraction of the Acre rubber export market, in the face of Asian competition, unleashed since the beginning of the second decade of the twentieth century and also the result of a series of political repressions that accompanied the formation of local society, so that the 1970s correspond to a relevant historical moment, in which economic causes converged, associated with those of a political nature.

The economic and political confrontations that took place produced consequences in the social ferment between the different social segments in dispute for the maintenance of their interests, triggered explicit changes in government policy, two decades later, around



the paths of development. The social forces that emerged victorious, bearers of a governmental political project, in the 1998 elections, presented themselves as tributaries of the results of these socio-environmental conflicts, which occurred in the 1970s/1980s, whose developments linked to their causal factors, specifically linked to the valorization of nature, manifested by the preservation of Acre's forests, we will try to address in the course of this section.

The dimension of "nature"<sup>3</sup> as a biological, physical or environmental attribute constitutes the essential variable that is present in the significant cause of these conflicts. The term Nature, in its etymological sense, is of Latin origin, comes from *natura*, and means birth. It derives from the root *natus*, equal to being born. From this literal designation, it began to refer to two common meanings: socio-environmental to which we refer. In general, it confers the very status of human nature, since it corresponds to the distinctive feature-component that reveals the exclusive determinate character of men, their social consciousness, in such a way that conceptions of nature explain the perceptions that men formulate in association with the natural world that surrounds them, a world that is presented apart and that is external to it. The postulate of this relationship, therefore, defines human existence itself and signals the historical awareness of men about themselves and their environment. This relationship with the environment, according to Marx and Engels (1987, p. 27) actually configures the first demonstrable assumption of all human history, insofar as it postulates the "existence of living individuals", who, when they are in conditions of historical existence, seek to orient themselves towards the satisfaction of their material needs for survival by producing the means for their subsistence and maintenance. The beginning of the making of history, however, begins with this primary motivation, the contact with nature guided by the primordial search for satisfaction of the fundamental needs of existence that is manifested by the search for food, shelter and protection.

Since men are in social conditions of existence, producing the material means of life and establishing associative relations among themselves, through coexistence in family groups and material exchanges, they develop, from these same relations of production and

---

<sup>3</sup> The term Nature, in its etymological sense, is of Latin origin, comes from *natura*, and means birth. It derives from the root *natus*, equal to being born. From this literal designation, it began to refer to two common meanings: on the one hand, it began to name the essential properties of an object or being, classifying its more specific character that made it distinct from other objects or beings; on the other hand, it alluded to those non-artificial environments with certain physical or biological attributes (GUDYNAS, 2003). In this sense, Nature would be nothing more than the mere revelation of attributes (physical, biological, social, religious) for the sensible apprehension of things or beings present in the world. Mircea Eliade (2001) considers that for religious man, for example, the view of Nature is never "exclusively natural, it is always loaded with a religious value (...) impregnated with sacredness" (p.99). The environment is not simply an epiphenomenon of nature, but is seen as part of the manifestation of the divine in the empirical structure of the world.



association, social consciousness, a specific product of human relations that also expresses the ambiguities on which the relationship between men develops. In this sense, Marx and Engels (1987) conceptualize the notion of social consciousness as being a product of the relationship with the external environment,

mere awareness of the nearest sensible environment and awareness of the limited connection with other people and things situated outside the individual who becomes conscious; it is at the same time consciousness of nature that, at first, appears to men as a completely alien, omnipotent, impregnable power with which men relate (...) [but] this determined relationship with nature is conditioned by the form of society (MARX and ENGELS, 1987, p. 43-44).

These conceptual statements, therefore, ensure that the meaning or the various senses, elevated to the condition of social consciousness, have been emanated from the relationship of men with nature, so that the appropriation of natural resources, aimed at the development strategies of a certain social formation, in fact, results from the attribution of the meanings that the action of men and the meanings that they confer in the course of this relationship, because, in the last resort, men maintain a necessary and organic connection with nature. Michael Löwy (2004, p. 91) comments that in Marxist writings there is a constant occurrence of the presence of the "vision of the human being as a natural being, inseparable from his environment. Nature figures as the non-organic body of man, and (...) to say that man's psychic and intellectual life is indissolubly linked to nature, means nothing else but that nature is indissolubly linked with itself, since man is a part of nature." In this sense, the delineation of the mentality of the more general economic policy, which guided the first explorers, sedimented colonization, and, finally, gave shape to the economic policy of the development of Acre, can be approached from this angle of investigation. For this reason, our analysis proposes to consider that "at the heart of men's material relations with nature appear the symbolic bases that guide social action (DIEGUES, 1998). This dimension of symbolic meaning, rooted in the social practices on which it is based, manifests itself in a very expressive way in the conception of Carlos Brandão (1999), when the author sought to synthesize the objective of his work "The affection of the land" seeking to characterize the way of life of peasant populations in southern Brazil. He justified his reasons as follows:

We wanted to understand from empirical research the ways in which well-defined types of people, through their peculiar cultures, created, reproduced, felt and thought their own ways of relating to nature and, in a more concrete and everyday sense, to their immediate, visible environment, traversable in one way or another. workable, appropriable, capable of being, provisionally or definitively socialized, incorporated into the empirical and symbolic experience of their human subjects, in their societies, through specific forms of work, which, at the same time, guarantee



them individual survival, the reproduction of the social group and the relatively peculiar qualification of their culture (BRANDÃO, 1999, p. 12).

## THE PRACTICES AND MENTALITIES OF THE BOSSES AND RUBBER TAPPERS IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PLANNING OF THE RUBBER PLANTATION

The political-economic order aimed at the exploitation of the rubber economy, with its different agents, was structured on a rigid material basis. The rubber plantation, as a space for the administration of the political and economic affairs of the extractive commercial activity, produced its own social relations that sedimented a differentiated way of life, work and social organization. In this section we intend to describe this material structure and show the content of its most elementary features of functioning, as well as its codes and regulations, with the purpose of explaining that the environmental feeling that the rubber tappers gradually developed expanded within a social and natural order that suffocated them so much, however, the confrontation of this adverse situation, allowed a continuous process of awareness about the barriers of enclosure that surrounded them.

Much has been written about the way of life in the rubber plantation, beyond its material and spatial structure, as we have tried to portray in the above-mentioned part. All the works on the rubber economy have approached this theme from some angle, which touches on the daily life of the rubber tappers and the way in which the rubber plantation system was socially and economically organized, such as their subordinate condition to the boss, the physical mistreatment suffered by them, the harshness of the work of extracting latex, the submissive life of women, their indebtedness and imprisonment by the economic relations established in the context of the rubber economy, among other aspects<sup>4</sup>.

We do not intend to delve into these issues, which have already been well interpreted by previous analyses, but rather to seek from them the mentalities underlying these practices and their material structure, the intrinsic ideological components and the respective attitudes that guided the actions of the two main agents (rubber tappers and bosses) within the rubber plantation, with the aim of considering how such components of sociability interfered in the way these agents faced the things and moved in the social space of the rubber plantation. It is a matter of understanding them, in order to use them to specify, to what extent, these mental elements resonate or have resonated in the visions about the development of the state of Acre.

To take on the problem of the mentalities that direct the practices of social actions requires delving into the academic field that deals with the feelings of men, their way of

---

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Tocantins, 2011; Benchimol, 1977, 1992; Silva, 1982; Pedro Martinello, 1988; Esteves, 1998; O'Dwyer, 1998.





thinking about life, of acting in the world, the awareness of the human things they have developed, of the place where they have lived, the work they have done, the vision of the environment that surrounded them, and the direction they chose to take. The literary area, in this sense, proves to be a fertile field for the investigation of how men build an awareness of themselves and the meanings shared collectively, derived from this indissoluble connection, with natural resources.

The literary production on Acre, despite its incipient collection, is rich in portraying the way of life, the organization of work, the social relations between rubber tappers and bosses, the forms of treatment, the mentalities that directed their behavior, as well as the ideas and symbolic values that characterized life inside the rubber plantations. highlighting man's relationship with nature and his vision of the natural landscape that surrounded his life.

The work *O Seringal*, by Miguel Jeronimo Ferrante (2003), which we mentioned earlier, shows how in the Seringal Santa Rita, owned by Colonel Fábio de Alencar, located near Rio Branco, in Alto Acre, the social and economic relationship that is implanted there is marked by a structuring inequality that shapes life and work in the forest, where subordination seems to be the strongest trait, sometimes expressed by the subjugation of man in the face of the indomitable savagery of nature, sometimes by the subjugation instituted by the domination of man himself. Thus, the environment of the rubber plantation is riddled with a natural isolation that presents itself as a place conducive to the practices of injustice. The protagonist Toinho, hero of the novel, witnesses all this under the guardianship of Colonel Fábio Alencar, who adopts him as a godson, after the death of his parents.

It is in the relationship of men and between them and nature that the mythical-poetic dimension of the novel is established, according to the author. In the work, the image of nature reflects the inconstancy of the rubber tapper, his uncertainties and dubiousness. In the introductory part, the author reveals the representation of the environment, which spills over as distressing, infertile, a dark environment indicative of an always tragic end, which watches and stalks those who are inserted there, imprisoned by a panorama that is always embroidered with desolation. The author comments:

There is a gray tone of desolation and anguish in the still landscape. The air is immobilized. Not a wing, the slightest breeze. Everything static, dying brutalized by the asphyxiating heat, under the dome of the sky. The undergrowth of the Santa Rita countryside shrinks under the flashes of the inclement rays and, little by little, withers, yellows, dying in slow agony. The parched grass clings painfully to the hardened crust of the soil. A fine, loose sand covers the zigzagging paths, wrinkled here and there by the tracks of the animals, modeled in the winter. Anthills are dull like tumors, red and porous. The dry beds of the igapós open whitish scars in the



toasted green. Felled trees crumble into humo. And in the patches of the fires dot blackened trunks, the violated roots jutting around, dark and wrinkled like fingers clenched on the calcined earth" (p. 21). ... [Toinho] remembers the days of wintering. The torrential rains falling non-stop, hours and hours, flooding the forest, soaking the beach. The proliferation of pium and carapanã. The hell of the igapós in the speed bumps of the floods. The devilishly green, exuberant, sap-studding forest, advancing dominantly, enraged over the tent (FERRANTE, 2003, p. 30).

In the novel, on the other hand, this same nature that isolates and agonizes man in the dense forest and fills him with fear and fear, shows the rubber tapper his benevolent and protective counter-face that inflates the spirits of the same people with a soothing peace and tranquility sufficient to radiate the possibility of a harmonious coexistence with the natural environment that surrounds the rubber plantation. Its inhospitable and relentlessly savage character, as if by a natural lament, gives way to the serenity and tenderness of its own landscape, revealing a breeze of remediable protection and reconciliation with men, allowing it, by means of its own environmental resources, a key to the reconciliation of man with his natural environment, through which he could constitute his life and cover the hardships of such hardened previous times,

... the calm freshness of the waters shaded by the lazy oiranas, hours and hours (...). The forest gives him a sense of security and well-being. He feels in it as in his natural environment, free and happy, protected and sheltered in his solitude, his soul enraptured in the enjoyment of that wild beauty. Life expands around him in all its primitive strength. (...) Delicate and sensitive rubber trees like a woman. A world of trees of all sizes, of all ages, slender and robust, smooth and rough, with bark as white as snow or dark as bronze, side by side, united, embraced, confused among the crazy sarabanda of vines and lianas (FERRANTE, p. 51).

In *Terra Caída*, José Potyguara (1998), whose geographical reference places the rubber plantations located in the Juruá Valley, portrays in a mixed way the same natural environment, strange to the northeastern migrant, unaccustomed to that solitary and wild life of the forest, who finds in hard work his only distraction, a balance for coexistence in the untamed forest. But nature, which sustains an image of desolation and a "vestibule of hell", reappears, simultaneously, transfigured by a vision of a world full of mysteries (p. 14). However, it is not absurd to suggest – because the between the lines of the novel leave room for suppositions – that the understanding of these mysteries could emerge from the very relationship that this man was establishing with his environment. The contact with nature through the relations of production established there, little by little, would allow him the possibility of unveiling life in the forest and the key to understanding that world, its norms and mentalities, situating himself within it, in order to perceive how those regulations interfered in his social, political and economic enclosure.



But before this was possible, the encouragement to endure this unknown world full of mysteries, in addition to the intensive dedication to the work of rubber production, this rubber tapper will find in cachaça, a subsidiary element to equate the dimension of life and death, always on the loose in this sinister dubious environment. The boss, on the other hand, will have a strong ally in maintaining the economic and social imprisonment of the rubber tapper, through the excessive use of brandy, a drink that is little explored in the scientific field, as a maintainer of the dominant status of the rubber tapper.

Miguel Jeronimo Ferrante (2003) shares this observation considering that, in the scarcity of women, in the isolation and solitude of the rubber plantations, the rubber tapper's most faithful friend is cachaça. A good drink leads to the daydream of promises of easy enrichment and relieves the rubber tappers of the harshness of daily work. Cachaça is useful for both the boss and the rubber tapper. The boss wins through commercialization and also through domination, through addiction, which stimulates daily work and deprives thought of any critical sense (O'DWYER, 1998). In one passage of the novel, the author positions well the functionality of cachaça for the organization of the rubber plantation. He says,

... Cachaça is, in the rubber plantation, an article of first necessity. The 'cocal' coming from the port of Cocal, in Pará, is worth as much as beans, rice, jabá, salt, medicine. The rubber tapper drinks it throughout his existence. Deception and compensation for the deficient diet of the poor. Defense and warm clothing in the elements. It is a sure ally of the boss: it raises the forces weakened by needs and diseases, animates work, increasing production; and annihilates the will, brutalizing thought and enslaving ideas... It is soothing and a source of poor joy for the lonely pariah. The escape from miserable and narrow existence. Oblivion and the dream. It is also crime and death (FERRANTE, 2003, p. 54).

The environment of the rubber plantation, moreover, confines the rubber tapper man in a deep ditch of miseducation. The isolation of the forest distances these people of humble and poor origin from any contact with letters, and thus makes them appear on the scene of the rubber plantation as that brute and dull man, uneducated, with "crippled and sleepy language" deprived of the most basic means of human coexistence, prone to the weakest passions of the flesh, both to kill and to die.

O'Dwyer (1998), who followed the lawsuit filed in 1989 by the rubber tapper Francisco Praxedes Brandão, tenant of the Oriente rubber plantation, in Cruzeiro do Sul, against rubber tappers from the Upper Juruá, accused of not paying the rent of the rubber plantation, reports an episode illustrating the vision of the civil court employees, of the district in court, which practically extends to the present day. In the absence of their defense lawyer, rubber tappers Jaime Pereira da Silva and José Prudêncio Filho refused to sign the terms of the testimonies given to the jury, creating an impasse for the outcome of the



lawsuit. The behavior of the rubber tappers in that legal instance was understood as attesting to "the low mental level of the rubber tappers. Illiterate, unaware of legal procedures, they were given a new stigma: in addition to being uneducated, endowed with poorly developed minds (...) the rubber tappers are judged to have a low mental level, in contrast to the 'cultural capital' of the dominant segments of our society" (O'DWYER, p. 33).

In the rubber plantation, as can be seen, illiteracy exercised a favorable condition for the rubber boss, because illiteracy made it much easier for the rubber tapper to be deceived in the marketing relations, instituted by the *aviamento* system, this guaranteed greater centralization and control of the boss over the individual *perro*. It is not accidental that the bosses resist supporting the creation of schools for the children of rubber tappers. If such a phenomenon occurred, it was not due to the benevolent attitude of the boss, but to the political support that the school could bring to increase its prestige in the city, outside the space of the rubber plantation. José Potyguara adds that the school could still create a climate of patriotism and favor the obedience and easy adherence of subordinates to the daily work in the rubber plantation.

All this because the work of rubber production in the rubber plantation concealed from the uneducated individual the situation of subjugation he was experiencing, since, normally, the rubber harvested was never enough to pay the bill contracted in the shed, with the supply of work utensils, groceries and food. The sale of rubber at the price given by the boss was always lower than the hours of work and the disposal of goods was higher than those practiced in the commercial centers of the cities. Thus, in any case, the rubber tapper lost out and his debt tended to grow constantly. This whole process served to keep the rubber tapper imprisoned in the rubber plantation, in permanent subjugation: *"the rubber harvested, however, was never enough to pay the debt in the shed, to buy anything but lard, tobacco, beans, rice, kerosene, soap, sugar and salt. A few meters scratched. Some cartridges. In good harvests, a blanket of dried pirarucu, a few kilos of jabá or a can of beef"* (p. 29). In the rare cases of rubber tappers who managed to get a balance from their boss, they were granted time off on the days of festivals and holidays, maintained the boss's trust to buy in the shed even without money or without production, and could ask for advances in cases of illness and needs.

In this sense, one can see the great functionality that was to keep the rubber tapper uninformed. Miguel Jerônimo Ferrante (2003) comments that in the Santa Rita rubber plantation, with the exception of others, Dona Clara founded a school. But the "Colonel, at first, was opposed. According to him, it would be a waste of time and money" (p. 43). The study in the rubber plantation was seen as synonymous with rebellion, since the



enlightened rubber tapper would certainly not agree with the system of exploitation to which he was subjected.

Dona Clara, who was trying to convince her husband of the importance of founding a school, because in the rubber plantation, despite the scarcity of women, the number of children was significant, comments the following, in an excerpt from the novel: *"The Colonel ended up giving in. Not because I had convinced [of the importance of education]. He knew that such initiatives would not go ahead. And in his heart he rejoiced, he cheered for failure. He did not like to see rubber tappers dealing with books. Rubber tappers who can read, he used to say, end up rebelling"* (FERRANTE, p. 44).

Therefore, although the rubber plantation was made up of an apparently fragmented space, in which the rubber tappers remained isolated in the interior of the forest, in their distant settlements from each other, the rubber plantation, more than anything, configured a space that was politically and economically centralized. Everything converged to the rubber shopping center, the shed, where the boss lived and aggregates in its surroundings. If the rubber tapper had weakness left, it was because the boss did not lack power, if the rubber tapper had to be weak, it was so that the boss would be too strong. If nature, in the end, had the role of isolating, it was so that the rubber boss, generally known as Coronel, could centralize power in the shed.

In the two authors, José Potyguara and Miguel Jerônimo Ferrante, the Colonel is revealed as a rigid and hard man, his word was the law in the rubber plantation, and his code, the rifle. However, the Colonel had a certain integrity in his procedures and was generally considered a prudent man in his decisions, although his figure was much feared and his words were incontestable. But we can say that his integrity and prudence leaned towards a unilateral position. The examples that signal this observation can be referenced by the divergences that existed between bosses and rubber tappers, regarding procedures such as the payment of rent, agricultural production, hunting with dogs, commercialization with the *regatão*, and even rubber cutting practices. Although there was resistance from the rubber tappers in these matters, until practically the beginning of the 1940s, the last word was always that of the bosses, after this period, with the changes in economic relations unfavorable to the rubber economy, some of these regulations were modified in favor of the rubber tappers.

Miguel Ferrante (2003) states that the Colonel *"speaks of authority for the sake of speaking. The word has a magical meaning for those people. He knows, however, that he will not satisfy anyone. The authority in the rubber plantation is itself"* (p. 90). But his sense of justice is partial, for he chastises the small and supports the great, and has complicity in



the accounts of his interest. One of the prohibitions, for example, was not to allow the planting of subsistence agriculture, farming. All the land was to be destined for the exclusive use of the rubber tree, as well as all the work. Failure to comply with this rule resulted in penalties by the colonel. The reasons given for the ban are that it absorbs time of work that should be dedicated to the production of rubber. Another is that it leads to a decrease in the rubber tappers' spending on purchases in the shed, which would cause losses for the boss. In addition, the rubber tappers became more independent, from the point of view of food supplies, made by the rubber tappers (O'DWYER, 1998).

In this sense, the Colonel's representation is fearless and feared by all. He is the law, and his command is the bullet. But at the same time, he is a hardworking man, of great courage and greater ambition. At the beginning of the rubber rush in the Amazon/Acre, around 1880, the lands were conquered by force, taken from the natives who, after being captured, became subaltern workers. The Colonel enjoys political respect and credit in the commercial squares of Belém and Manaus. It has easy access to the authorities and banks. Because of his social prestige, some of them were *"appointed Justice of the Peace, a judicial position, which he exercises dictatorially for his benefit, increases his authority as a boss, through a cross-eyed justice that overflows into violence against defenseless rubber tappers"* (José POTYGUARA, 1998 p. 23).

José Potyguera records the recommendations of Colonel Tónico Monteiro before making the trip to the squares of Belém and captures his posture and mentality of justice:

The management of the rubber plantation is the responsibility of the bookkeeper. But you [Tomás capataz] know: despite being honest and dedicated, Conrado is a bit soft. Very kind, he is easily deceived. Therefore, you keep an eye on the staff! In my absence, the trickery is great. In the center not so much, because everything is really still, during the winter. But the devil is here on the shore. Hard with these goats who stay here, making firewood! Don't let my rubber be diverted to the tank tops. Every night it's good to take a walk around the lodging ravine. And, you know: any abuse whip without pity! And count on me (POTYGUARA, 1998 p. 69).

The boss concentrates both economic power in the rubber plantation and political prestige in front of the city's rulers. In the rubber plantation, the rubber tappers count as a wealth of votes. The politicians who have the trust and support of the boss have the votes of the rubber tappers assured on election days in their favor. Miguel Ferrante comments on how the participation of rubber tappers took place in the electoral period and showing the calculation of their votes, in favor of their political allies, reveals how economic power is linked to political power:

Dr. Ademar arrived at Santa Rita with a letter from Major Justino, head of the Party in Rio Branco. Letter of recommendation. The doctor is a candidate for deputy and hopes to obtain the valuable support of Colonel Fábio. He was encouraged by the



promise of Mayor Amílcar, a friend and compadre of the rubber tapper, who had promised him to work with him on his behalf: "[On the day of the vote], the voter is called. He enters the room, presents the title and signs the listão. When he has difficulty or does not know how to do it, one of those present helps him, guiding his perra hand. Or simply sign for it. He then receives the envelope, on which is the slate of the colonel's candidate (FERRANTE, 2003, p. 150).

The shotgun, in addition to representing the code of law in the rubber plantation, serves as a sign of events. It is detonated to indicate birth or death. It is used for hunting and for the safety of the rubber tapper. Normally, every rubber tapper has his shotgun. After the syringe knife, it is its second working and protection instrument:

The shotgun is the bell of the rubber plantation, detonating by birth and death. He throws himself in to announce the life of a new being or the disappearance of a life. In his tent or on the rubber road, the rubber tapper receives the warning for the detonations. If a woman is born, two shots. If it's a man, three. If someone dies five times, the gun is fired (FERRANTE, 2003, p. 32).

In the light of these data presented, the important thing to retain here is the idea that the group of rubber tappers, who migrated to the region of Acre, inserted themselves in a subordinate way in the commercial relations instituted in the rubber plantations, and that this domain, especially economic, to which they were exposed, imprinted on them a picture of prefigured perceptions that directed their way of thinking to meet the objectives of the commercial system of rubber production, especially under a condition of misfortune, for having realized that the promised Eldorado had turned into a great nightmare.

However, the scope of this submission did not obey only the strictly commercial principles, guided by the rubber economy, because other environmental and social components were subsidiary to them for their purposes. The natural environment to which they were subjected, for example, figured as the basic element for this domination, in which the density of the forest, its geographical dimension, and all its physical attributes served as a natural space for its enclosure in the forest. This isolation, at first, aroused a feeling of fear, of impotence, in the face of the unknown, of the unpredictability and uncertainty of surviving, and so anguish and sadness dominated his spirits and the magnitude of this unknown and indomitable natural monument frightened his nerves.

But in the second half of the medal, the rubber tapper man recovered his strength and courage, by carrying out the strenuous work of extracting latex. In the daily toil, of approximately eighteen hours a day, he gradually got to know the natural environment that surrounded him, becoming master the stages of the rubber production process (the opening of rubber roads, the cutting of the tree, the collection of latex, smoking, and rubber hair, commercialization), becoming familiar with the paths and trails that connected the settlements and the rubber plantations, preventing the dangers of beasts and snakes,



taking advantage of the resources of fauna and flora to appease their food and health needs. In short, the rubber tapper found himself and fell in love with this same nature, which at first frightened him and established bonds of belonging and survival, mainly productive with it. In a certain sense, a strong relationship with the environment built in improvisation has developed, to enable its survival and social reproduction.

However, the rubber tapper was socially weak, a brute and uneducated man. With practically no educational instruction, he was easy prey to the shady mechanisms of the marketing system, activated both at the time of buying groceries for basic needs, and when selling rubber production, next to the shed. His lack of social knowledge made him a fragile man, politically insecure, to reason with his boss. As a shy and dull type, his only command was unquestioning obedience to the colonel of the ravine.

His solitary life in the forest also helped to bring out another behavior with an instinctive profile, his insecurity and mental weakness, for the understanding of the social universe of the rubber plantation, associated with the desperate consumption of brandy, instilled in his spirits, the idea of a worthless man, reduced to drunkenness. In addition, the absence of a family, wife and children to whom he could dedicate himself, transformed him into a being of adventurous temperament, fearless, troubled, with the courage to face life and death, to kill and die. All this contributed to the boss's power being stronger and stronger, because he would be the one who should impose the laws and regulations to tame this unruly man without moral considerations. Thus, the rubber tapper found himself entangled in an economic domain, practically atrophied by a weakened social condition, and politically weak to move, at that moment, any action of resistance and organization.

Its only hope and possibility of getting out of this set of entrenchments, as contradictory as it may seem, lay in confronting and understanding the very work of rubber production, which could allow it to break with the ties of commercial domination, through the unveiling of its internal mechanisms of economic exploitation (for example, in the weight of rubber, in the price, in the taxes on land lease, in the purchase and sale of products) that would awaken a type of social conscience in the rubber plantation that would face the obstacles to which they were subjected.

In the face of the triple weakness of the rubber tapper, economic, political and social, right where there was a vacancy in his strength, the power of the boss resided. A strong and virile man, his word was the law in the rubber plantation, and the rifle was his code. The isolation of the rubber tapper inside the forest was counteracted by the domination of the shed where the boss lived, from where he centralized economic and political power. It was from there that all the regulations emanated and where the dynamics of the social life of the





rubber plantation converged. In the context of the rubber plantation, it was necessary for the colonel to command respect and directly challenge those rubber tappers who did not comply with the established rules. He had to show courage and fearlessness to set an example for the other rubber tappers, who wanted to cross the regulations. He had to make himself respected, to show the colonel's manhood, and for that, he had to be a man, that is, to present characteristics that were seen as part of masculinity: courage, fearlessness, determination. This sometimes implied the use of violence as a resource at that moment when the other means of domination were lacking, violence had to be used in order not to harm its authority (WOLFF, 1999, p. 208).

But the boss was a thoughtful man in his decisions, and in many issues he favored the rubber tappers, such as, for example, giving gifts of women to those rubber tappers who were good at the work of producing rubber, offering medical aid to those affected by diseases, allowing the rubber tapper to be paid with debt, and giving protection to the rubber tapper in case of judicial inflation (mainly due to deaths). All these procedures made the boss a man, but one that was feared, honored and respected, because the boss was interested in the trust of the rubber tappers.

Wolff (1999), studying the rubber plantations of the Upper Juruá, describes the motivations of the bosses, which converge with this analysis. According to the author

The boss was interested in the rubber tapper's loyalty, materialized in the exclusive exchange of rubber for goods in his shed, as well as the rubber tapper's permanence in the rubber plantation, which saved him the investment of bringing more northeastern migrants. Thus, he sought to establish ties of cronyism and paternalism with these rubber tappers, always providing him with credits for urgent purchases, sometimes helping in cases of illness, promoting parties on holy days. These relationships varied greatly from rubber plantation to rubber plantation... (ibid. p. 203).

But the prestige of the boss was not limited to the scope of the rubber plantation. In the city, the authorities gave them great regard and the bosses were seen with appreciation, their political support and the wealth of votes they kept under their guard increased their prestige before politicians. In many cases they were named Justices of the Peace and came to have the legal authority to legitimize their proceedings. But let us not deceive ourselves, the power of the boss always leaned towards ensuring his objectives and the good that came from his attitudes could immediately vary if it went against his interests. Thus, if the rubber tapper was politically weak because economic power was adverse to him, the boss, on the contrary, was powerful because of the mercantile relations, in the context of the rubber economy being favorable to them politically and socially. In the storms that the rubber economy would go through in the future, and in the narrowing of the



relationship between the rubber tapper and nature, then, the decline of the boss's power of command would begin, with the repositioning of the different social agents in the economic and political scenario, a moment that, as has been said, will correspond to the socio-environmental conflicts of confrontation between rubber tappers and cattle ranchers, intensified from the 1970s onwards.

## **THE ROOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL INTERTWINING WITH THE PRODUCTIVE PRACTICES OF RUBBER TAPPERS**

We are in the 1970s, therefore. The scenario, as we have shown, can be summarized by the bankruptcy of the exploitation rubber economy; indebtedness of the rubber tappers; rubber tappers without effective possession of the land; strengthening agriculture and productive diversification; the tax incentives of the local government, seeking an alternative for development, open a race for the depreciated lands of the Acre Amazon; the military's project for the agriculture and livestock of the Amazon; arrival of businessmen and farmers from the center-south of the country who acquired the old rubber plantations. The result of all this together unleashed social conflicts between farmers and rubber tappers who squatters, which, as a consequence, spread to local society as a whole, dividing it between those who supported the rubber tappers and those on the side of the farmers and landowners. The social conflict was, therefore, established in such a dimension that it permeated the entire state structure. We are not interested in exploring all the dimensions of these conflicts, which we classify as socio-environmental conflicts, because they have already been widely studied in the academic literature (ALEGRETI, 1979; OLIVEIRA, 1982; DUARTE, 1987; PAULA, 1991; BASÍLIO, 1992; COSTA SOBRINHO, 1992; MARTINS, 1998; ESTEVES, 1999; FERNANDES, 1999; SILVA, 2001; SANT'ANA, 2004; PAULA & SIMIONE DA SILVA, 2006). From its consequences, the rural exodus derived; various urban problems, such as unemployment, growth of peripheral neighborhoods; murders of rubber tappers; government actions for land expropriation; institutionalization of the organization of political representation of rubber tappers; among other aspects. The essential issue that interests us about these conflicts consists in their specific connection, which they establish with the development proposal for Acre, which was problematized at that time, with the main challenge of reconciling the different productive activities (cattle raising, timber, mainly) without compromising the maintenance of forest resources. With the purchase of the rubber plantations in Acre by farmers in the southern center of the country, with the aim of implementing cattle ranching in these areas – in a context of insecurity of the rubber tappers' land ownership – it happened that, after



their expulsion and the consequent felling of the forests of the old rubber plantation areas, logging and cattle ranching were established. The point of origin of the socio-environmental conflict between rubber tappers and the new entrepreneurs is located there, right at the heart of the reorganization of the use of the territory, since the development proposal that such activities postulated, referring to the use of Acre's forests, had an intelligible ambiguity around interests. The farmers who had acquired the rubber plantations for the implementation of cattle ranching and logging defended the felling of the forests, to place the cattle considered the environment (the forests) as an obstacle to development, while the rubber tapper-squatters advocated that the maintenance of the forests represented the basis for sustaining development, through the use of natural resources and their diversity of products. We have, therefore, the point of origin of the socio-environmental conflict, which signals the divergence of interests on the meaning of development in a very determined way, because where the rubber tappers affirmed, the farmers denied it. The farmers wanted the forests on the ground, the rubber tappers defended their maintenance.

This opposition of interests over the use of Acre's forests was portrayed in the collection on the trajectory of Chico Mendes, entitled *Chico Mendes Por Ele Mesmo* (2004), in which the controversy over development is expressed by the dissident views between landowners/ranchers and rubber tappers, as shown in the excerpts reported below,

For the landowners/farmers

The big landowners say that preserving the Amazon is delaying progress, it is harming the country's economy, that rubber represents almost nothing for our economy and that progress is in cattle raising (CHICO MENDES POR ELE MESMO, 2004, p. 83).

For the rubber tappers,

We, rubber tappers, also have a proposal to produce. Rubber tappers and Indians have always produced their subsistence culture, but they have never threatened the Amazon rainforest. Those who threaten the forest are the large landowners to put the ox or, often, to strengthen a policy of land speculation (p. 83). (...) The Amazon forest represented the only means of sustenance for the rubber tappers and Indians who lived in it (CHICO MENDES POR ELE MESMO, 2004, p. 11).

*Cadernos do CEDI* (1990) contains an interview given by Osmarino Amâncio, a union leader, pioneer in the resistance against deforestation in the Acre forests and companion of Chico Mendes, from the municipality of Brasiléia. It helps us to understand this differentiation by focusing on customary practices and the sedimentation of the culture of rubber extraction work:

... The rubber tappers are on the land, for them it only makes sense if the forest exists. The forest needs the Indians and the rubber tappers, and the Indians and the rubber tappers also need the forest to survive. To get the rubber tapper and the Indian out of the forest is like taking a fish out of the water: it's over, it's not adapted to the sun, it's adapted to a tradition of work that it has been doing for many years, which is extractivism (*Cadernos do CEDI* 20, 1990).



The link between the work of the rubber tappers and its relationship with the use of Acre's forests expressed through components of a cultural nature, which highlighted the configuration of a certain way of life and habits, which the extractive activities allowed, such as the convenience of carrying out the extraction of rubber, protected by a leafy and exuberant forest cover, guaranteeing a mild temperature, it generated a kind of productive-social habitus that differentiated them from other segments of workers, even disabling them from competing in other productive trades. The particularity of the work of the rubber tapper-extractor of forest products was reversed in the different way he viewed the natural value of natural resources defined by the connection with his productive practices, which is why they defended development based on the use of forest extractivism, without compromising its organic structure. Schmink and Cordeiro (2008, p. 52) pointed out that rubber tappers played a prominent role during this phase of expansion of the Amazon frontier, confronting deforestation and the idea of technological backwardness "sought to invert the modernist discourse, valuing their knowledge about the forest and the alternative of development, based on the use of the standing forest, to guarantee their livelihood".

This dominant specificity of the rubber tappers and their cultural trace were mentioned by the former director of the Agrarian Development and Colonization Company of the State of Acre – Colonacre, Raimundo Viana, at the time of the implementation of the Redenção Settlement Project, in the 1980s, today belonging to the municipality of Epitaciolândia, when he referred to the profile of rural workers who should be established in the settlement. In the report below, Raimundo Viana, from a different angle of observation, characterizes the social type of the rubber tappers, confronting them with the productive purposes of the Redemption Project,

Our intention was to absorb our rubber tapper in reality. That was the initial conception. But then we began to see this cultural difficulty that limited their adaptation to agricultural practices, in addition to not having tradition, the knowledge of these activities, as latex extractors were used to working in the shade, protected by the treetops. In agriculture they needed to be exposed all day to the scorching sun, many could not stand it. That is why we established that a range of 20, at most 30% of the beneficiaries of Redenção would be from families from the center-south of the country, to be strategically placed within the Project. So that in each module with 16 lots we would have 5 of these farmers who would transfer their experiences and at the same time receive information from the rubber tappers of the Amazon. But in fact, that's what we thought about as a project. But when things started to happen in practice, we didn't strictly follow this percentage. There were a little more settlers from the center south. (PAULA, 2002, CPDA\UFAC REPORT, p. 13-14).

These links, which socio-environmental conflicts surfaced, allowing the establishment of associations with productive practices and the way of life of the rubber



tappers in Acre, also influenced the way they approached the land problem. In this sense, the conception of land was linked to the environmental dimension, this was verified when Chico Mendes suggested that one of the threats to the forest consisted of the farmers seeking to "strengthen a policy of land speculation", in addition to the threat of cattle ranching. This foundation of the land, as a sacred good and as a gift from God, was retransmitted by the influence of the Catholic pastoral, which acted in defense of these workers by disseminating, at the local level, a conception that emphasized the relationship between man and nature, but the land only had meaning with the forest above, so the land issue in Acre was covered by the environment and the form of traditional use of it by extractivists/rubber tappers.

Germán Palácio C. (2006, p. 11), seeking contributions to characterize the field of political ecology, had identified, in this regard, that one of the aspects of this discipline was marked by the historical-social experience of the intertwining of the problem of land with the environment, including a foundry of land valorization, due to the emergence of environmental diversity. The aforementioned author alleges, for example, that the struggle for land was, for a long time, the fundamental element of nature to be studied by those interested in economic and social concerns. Today, the earth is seeing a growing focus of attention, recently discovered with the irruption of biodiversity, as a fundamentally valuable aspect of nature. And the struggle for land is giving way, in some aspects, due to its strategic character, the struggle for biodiversity.

In the "Our Father of the Rubber Tapper" and "Ave Maria do Seringueiro"<sup>5</sup> (SILVA, 2001) there is even an excess of appreciation of the rubber tree, to the point that this tree is deified and a reason to pray for the redemption of the sustenance of life in the rubber plantation. What is important to underline is the supremacy of the forest, in the face of the land issue, at least in rhetorical terms, because in some way it was the forest that gave the perspective for the creation of the Extractive Reserves, with delimitation and demarcation of the territory, based on the recognition of rubber plantations. This confirms the elementary indissolubility that the existence of the forest presupposes a physical base that supports it. This emphasis on the environmental component, contained in the formulation of the Extractive Reserves, was described in the publication Guidelines for a Program of Extractive Reserves in the Amazon (CNS, 1992, p. 5), as being part of the "new criteria for

---

<sup>5</sup> The Our Father of the Rubber Tapper: Rubber tree that you are in the jungle, multiply be your days. Let your milk come to us, let our rubber be made, both in the press and in the box. For the sustenance of our families, give us today and every day. Forgive our ingratitude as we forgive the wickedness of the master. And help to free us from the clutches of the regatta. Amen!; The Rubber Tapper's Ave Maria: Wooden bird, it is disgraceful that I have to cut you. Blessed are you your milk for my children to sustain. For the barons to party. Holy wood, mother of milk, pray for our victory to get the Extractive Reserves at this time. Amen!



land grabbing, centered on the sustainable use of natural resources". In this proposal defended by the entity representing the rubber tappers, in addition to the structural link between the form of land use and natural resources, a distinction is also established regarding the development model for the region that is contrary to the occupation model that occurred from the 1960s onwards "... based on large property and the predatory exploitation of wood" (CNS, 1992, p. 19).

Therefore, the consequences of this pastoral practice<sup>6</sup> especially influenced the creation of extractive reserves, when they reestablished the defense of natural resources, associating the land issue and rescued the experience and customs of the rubber tappers, placing them as "guardians of the forest", for traditionally using the resources of fauna and flora, without putting them at risk and extinction, as a consolidated generalization admits, often triggered by union leaders, that "we live our whole lives without deforesting" (SILVA, 2001) even though it is mentioned that the rubber tappers who preserve are the same ones who deforest the forest.

This relationship between man and nature also had an eminently economic dimension, because preserving the forest meant maintaining the basis of economic and family reproduction of the rubber tapper, who, by cutting the rubber for the production of rubber, collecting nuts and extracting other forest products, were able to make a living. Furthermore, the Amazonian potential of Acre has always been extremely favorable to the development of extractivism, due to the diversity of forest and fauna species (ZEE, 2000). However, cattle raising, agricultural production and/or raising of small animals, over time, became productive practices among rubber tappers, although on a small scale for subsistence purposes, increased diet and commercialization of the surplus produced (SILVA, 2001).

What constitutes the foundation of the socio-environmental conflict between farmers and rubber tappers refers to the dispute over the direction of the development project for Acre, which is manifested through the definition of which economic activity will be predominant. This ambiguity of interests about the way in which Acre's forests were used

---

<sup>6</sup> As a specific pastoral care cannot be exempt from infringing on certain powerful people and affecting dominant social interests (Martins, 1994), it is that, as a result of the involvement of the Catholic Church in the areas of land conflicts, some priests have been threatened with death, and have even been imprisoned for defending the rights of workers expelled from their former areas and/or settlements. The meetings with the rural workers were sometimes held in secret, because of the police repression that was rampant in the municipality. The newspaper A Gazeta do Acre reported that a rubber tapper named Guilherme Lopes, then secretary of the Xapuri City Hall, uttered the following words: "The only way to solve the land problems that are arising here is to kill the president of the rural workers' unions, the delegate of CONTAG, and the priests who live instigating the rubber tappers (Gazeta do Acre, Rio Branco/AC, June 21, 1980. Year III, No. 573. Headline on the 1st page: Secretary suggests death as a solution for land)". This statement by the secretary was also reported by Radio 6 de Agosto in the municipality of Xapuri, with reach in other municipalities in the state. Cf. also Chico Mendes por Ele Mesmo (2004).



can be observed in the criticism that the farmers and other defenders of cattle ranching made against the rubber tappers, alleging that they had no development project for the local society and only wanted to block the state's progress. It was on the basis of this criticism that the rubber tappers began to think of concrete propositions for sustainable development that could be concretely feasible, in accordance with the parameters of environmental sustainability, which they advocated so much. This led the rubber tappers and their advisors to formulate the proposal for the Extractive Reserves, basing it on a development model for Acre. In the testimony of Chico Mendes, this embryonic moment of formulation of a concrete proposal to solve the dilemma of the equivalence between development and sustainability, gradually began to take shape in the course of the established historical confrontations. Chico Mendes lets it be explicit in his speech:

You see: until 1984, we held draws, but we weren't very sure what we wanted. We knew that deforestation was the end of us and of all living beings in the jungle. But it ended there. People said: 'you want to stop deforestation and turn the Amazon into an untouchable sanctuary!'. That was the impasse. The answer came through the extractive reserves. We are going to use the jungle in a rational way, without destroying it (...) we have in the forest the abacaba, the patoá, the assai, the buriti, the peach palm, the babassu, the tucumã, the copaiba, the bee honey (...) and all of this can be exported, marketed (CHICO MENDES POR ELE MESMO, 2004, p. 108).

In the certainty that the model of "modernization" in force in the Amazon necessarily implied the extermination of rubber tappers – given that their means of social reproduction, the forest, was being destroyed at an accelerated rate – the RESEX came to be perceived as its fundamental counterpoint. This aroused sympathy and support from other sectors of civil society, especially NGOs and environmental movements, which protested against the devastation of the Amazon. It was its ecological face, expressed in concerns about the conservation of forests, that opened national and international borders for the dissemination of the struggle of those rubber tappers. This ability to project the struggle of resistance for land and in defense of the forest, associating them with the ecological movement, was one of the singular traits of the leadership of Chico Mendes, at the head of rural unionism, who internally strengthened the rubber tappers' movement in his place of operation (SILVA, 2001). As a result, the National Council of Rubber Tappers (CNS) was created in 1985 to pursue exactly this objective, that is, to create a proposal for sustainable development that would also articulate the solution to the land impasse. The political strategy consisted of establishing an arc of alliances with social movements, national and international NGOs, universities, funding agencies, trade unions, political parties, religious institutions, which would make it possible to strengthen the struggle in defense of the "peoples of the forest".



In the words of Raimundo Barros, union leader and comrade of Chico Mendes, the Extractive Reserves represented "... way to avoid the continuity of the coming of the man from the forest to the outskirts of the city and also to ensure that our forest is preserved, because the only person who preserves the forest is the rubber tapper (...). The implementation of this proposal in Acre can be understood as a development alternative, insofar as it would promote an appreciation of the forest, based on the understanding that using it in a sustainable way <sup>7</sup>can mean greater wealth and social well-being than destroying it" (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 294).

Certainly, these two differentiated matrices of interests about the direction of development and the use of the natural component resulted from very different perceptions of the economic agents and reflected the more general view of the role and/or place of the Amazon in the country's economic policy. The concept of sustainable development guiding the proposal of the Resex was released by the National Council of Rubber Tappers – CNS, containing the following statement:

Sustainable development refers to the process of historical evolution, in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional changes must progress in the search for a dynamic balance, reinforcing the present and future potential of the environment, supporting the economic and social activities of agroextractivist populations, in order to better meet their aspirations and needs, respecting the evolution of their cultural profiles. The ecological component considers the conservation of biodiversity and biological productivity. In the economic component, the basic demands of the population and the improvement of living conditions must be satisfied, guaranteeing access to basic goods of social reproduction in healthy economic conditions. In social terms, the system should allow greater access to services such as health, education, water quality, in addition to contemplating social diversity, associativism with various objectives and especially with collective participation and area management (CNS, 1992, p. 10).

The angular essence of this definition, emanating from the productive practices of the Acre peasantry in that historical period, contrasted emblematically with the core of the historically dominant development processes, especially with the one implemented from the 1960s onwards in the Amazon, which had left a trail of environmental devastation and provoked intense social conflicts in that northernmost part of the country. It is essential to insist on the exhibition of the differential trait of the conception of nature, which derives from

---

<sup>7</sup> However, Márcio Cavalcante found that in recent years this "... a space that was constituted, fundamentally, as a negation of a model based on cattle ranching, as a model of refuge for the affirmation of the rubber tree identity, linked to traditional activities such as extractivism" began to suffer an inversion of its purposes in a clear trend of cattle ranching. According to him, the residents of the Chico Mendes Reserve have given more and more emphasis to the activity of cattle raising, because the "... the need to survive in the forest and the search for profitable activities that solve this need make these subjects contradict the discourse of Sustainable Development, which elects the conservation unit in question (RESEX) as a showcase of sustainability, and opt for a trend based on the abandonment of traditional activities such as latex extraction (...) in which commercial agriculture and cattle ranching stand out" (CAVALCANTE, 2005, p. 295).





the perception of the Acre peasantry from its concrete relationship, of intrinsic existence, with its mode of work expressed during socio-environmental conflicts, in order to really make evident the originality of its vision on the way natural resources are used. thus determining how it establishes a greater balance in the development of its productive practices with the environment that surrounds it.

However, suffice it to say that, in general, the defense of nature in Acre, led by the rubber tappers, corresponded to that defense of a vital world, which was being affected by the practices of human activities, of certain social groups that sustained them, through their acts. "Resistance to this destruction of the capacity for self-supervision – or in other words, the existential autonomy of individuals and groups or communities – is at the origin of the specific components of the ecological movement" (GORZ apud LÖWY, 2004, p. 35) which also found motivation among the rubber tappers of the Acre forests. According to André Gorz (apud LÖWY, p. 35) the deep motivation is always to defend the vital world, against the reign of the smart, against quantification and monetary evolution (...) against dependence on the capacity for autonomy and self-determination of individuals". Taking the experience of the babassu trees of Maranhão and the mobilization of the babassu coconut breakers, Alfredo Wagner Berno de Almeida emphasizes with the same emphasis as the previous authors, that the ecological crisis that is usually spoken of "... It is experienced by peasants and Indians as a threat to the loss of forests, water resources, and planting and gathering areas. They experience the rupture in the stability of the combination of resources and elementary activities as an arbitrariness practiced against them, which threatens their physical and social reproduction" (ALMEIDA, 1995, p. 41).

If we look retrospectively at historical development, it will be noted that the opposition of perceptions about the way natural resources are used can be determined, allowing the discrimination of the types of perceptions that guided the appropriation of nature in development strategies. Eduardo Gudynas (2003), in this regard, argued that in the last 500 years, the dominant view of the Amazon, which has predominated since the European explorers, has taken on several meanings. The first of them was that the Amazon represented a very dangerous place, a wild, feared place, and that, therefore, it needed to be dominated, controlled. In the eighteenth century, the new dominant orientation disseminated the idea that the Amazon was synonymous with inexhaustible natural resources, abundant faunal and floristic springs, mineral resources, which needed to be exploited, withdrawn. In the following two centuries, nineteenth and twentieth, the conception of abundance of resources gave way to the notion of progress, from then on the Amazon began to be attributed the place of backwardness, an obstacle to economic



development, since the reason for progress did not consider the notion of nature but reduced it to modernity, valuing only use, by itself, of instrumental, technologically advanced means.

In this sense, the Brazilian experience has developed a weak perspective on the Amazon and its role in the development of the nation. In national governments, such as the military, for example, in which the spread of occupation of Amazonian lands by agriculture and cattle raising, the generic view that the Amazon forest corresponded to an obstacle to be overcome by the precursors of technical progress, in which the natural component was subordinated to its economic dimension, predominated among landowners and ranchers. Moreover, any natural matter could be reduced to a price, to an economic value. This perception of the Amazon and nature in the logic of dominant development lasted until the 1970s and 1980s, in the country, in this particular case, in the minds of farmers, cattle ranchers, as well as the governmental political authorities of the time, national or local, when, then, the rubber tappers of Xapuri amplified the voices of the world of threat, of forest devastation, to the planet, due to the large deforestation in the Amazon and announced, without so much ecological understanding, that nature does count in development strategies, because nature is a form of natural, cultural and political capital.

In the realm of social knowledge related to this association of human action on the environment, they did not bring anything that had not already been pronounced by naturalism, for example, of Engels against the predatory activities of men, in the course of their evolution, since 1876, when he made a severe criticism concerning environmental depletion, derived from deforestation.

We should not boast too much about our human victories over nature. For each of these victories, nature takes revenge on us. It is true that each victory gives us, in the first instance, the expected results, but in the second and third instance it has different, unexpected effects that very often cancel out the first. The people who, in Mesopotamia, Greece, Asia Minor, and elsewhere, destroyed the forests to obtain arable land, never imagined that, by eliminating together with the forests the gathering centers and the reserves of moisture, they laid the foundations for the present desolate state of these countries. When the Italians of the Alps cut down the pine forests of the southern slope, so beloved on the northern slope, they had no idea that by doing so they were cutting the roots of the dairy industry in their region; they foresaw even less that, by their practice, they deprived their mountainous people of water for the greater part of the year (...). The facts remind us at all times that we do not reign over nature in the same way that a colonizer reigns over a foreign people, against someone who is outside nature, but that we belong to them with our flesh, our blood, our brain, that we are in their bosom and that all our dominion over it lies in the advantage we have over the whole of other creatures by knowing its laws and because we can use it judiciously. (LÖWY, 2004, p. 91-92).

Enrique Leff (2000) explains that this supplanting of traditional practices of appropriation of resources more adjusted to ecological structures occurred with the



advance of widespread techniques, simultaneously, with the expansion of the capitalist system of production, which saw in the abundance of natural resources an important source, through which the conquerors could obtain considerable profits for their metropolises, through the trade in tropical products. The introduction of modern techniques, coming from the old world, served as a vehicle to supplant and even eliminate the traditional practices, productively practiced by the indigenous populations.

According to him, before the conquest of these peoples, their social and productive organization had been adjusted with harmony to the ecological structures of their environment. The deep knowledge that these men acquired, of their resources and the development of agricultural techniques, adapted to the topological and edaphological conditions of their territory, allowed them to achieve an important cultural development. However, the rise of mercantile capitalism decisively influenced the destruction and transformation of the civilizations of the tropics, thus initiating the plundering of the resources of these areas of the planet. (LEFF, 2000, p. 23-24).

In the Brazilian case, José Augusto de Pádua (2002) observed, in his research, that the plot that predominated in the country concerning the relationship between development and nature and its natural resources, suffered from a profound paradox. According to the aforementioned author, the national issue related to the use of the environment is quite old, dating back to the colonial period when, at that time, there began to be an intertwining of visions about nature, which turned to the national determination of political and social power. The natural world had reached a relevant status for the performance of the collective ordering of the nation, when the interrelationship between natural organisms and the developments for human organizations was perceived. The 1760 writings of Linnaeus and H Wilke, collected by the author, concluded this relationship of connectivity of social and natural beings:

[...] From what we know, it is possible to judge how important each of the dispositions of nature is, so that if a single species of earthworm were missing, stagnant water would alter the soil and moisture would cause everything to rot. If a single important function were missing in the animal world, we might fear the greatest disaster in the universe (PADUA, p. 14).

This relationship of connectivity was also emphasized by the thought of the British naturalist, Charles Darwin (1809-1882). In his theory of the evolution of species, society or the social dimension appears as the result of successive adaptations and biological advances of living species, through a process of natural selection of the fittest, in which those individuals who best interacted with their environment and best adapted would



survive. Tim Ingold (1992), in his text *Culture and Perception of the Environment*, investigating the connection between human evolution, ecology and culture, also demonstrated that human beings and other organisms are entangled in webs of environmental relations and that the relationship between humans and their environments is mediated by the culture through which humans adapt to their environment.

According to Pádua (2002), although the intersection of human sociability with the biological structures of natural life has been considered essential for human stability by the national authorities, the Brazilian concern with nature and its resources was not based on the need to preserve it due to its intrinsic value or even aesthetic or cultural value, as an immanent character of this "new man". In the case of Brazil, Pádua reminds us (ibid, p. 26) what prevailed was not a "... special interest for the sensitive value of nature and yes for its political and instrumental value for national progress [...]". The environmental thinking that was formed about natural resources was guided by the possibility of enrichment, which nature could provide, despite the concern of avoiding the "waste of resources". The "destruction" derived from the adoption of extremely predatory methods of exploitation was not accepted. The political regime of a slave nature, in fact, was the one that contributed to the Brazilian experience not being allowed to be formed as a modern civilization. The colonial rancidity of the slave regime conferred on the legacy of backwardness an asymmetrical form of modernization, which exhausted the natural resources themselves, which garnished them economically, through the development of luxury and corruption, the inhibition of technological development, which promoted the destruction of the "natural base" of all wealth (PADUA, 2002).

The dominance of value, strictly economic, carried out by the orientations of the Brazilian economic policy, can be revealed by the incentive of monoculture practices introduced in the country, driven exclusively to satisfy the international demands of foreign markets. Their enterprise resulted in the worsening of environmental degradation processes and led to the deterioration of the subsistence bases of many rural workers, producing food shortages, coercing them to migratory population displacements. José de Castro exemplified these deleterious effects, highlighting the experience that followed through the monoculture of sugarcane in the Brazilian Northeast, which transformed extensive fertile areas into degraded soils, in addition to the disappearance of abundant forests that it caused (LEFF, 2000).

However, this environmental thinking, which was formed on a developmentalist basis, innovated, compared to the other four visions that shaped the dominant cultural perspective, until the end of the eighteenth century. In the first vision, for example, he cared



little about the destruction of nature, its tropical condition was considered inferior to the temperate zone. In the second perspective, the greatness of nature was recognized, but its vastness and nobility prevented the full development of society. In the third view, environmental destruction was seen as a price to pay for development and economic progress. The fourth thought, despite praising the exuberance of the natural environment in rhetorical terms, at the same time ignored the disappearance of the natural environment, since the "culture that cradled the ideology of the eternal 'splendid cradle' did not get to concern itself with its state of conservation". The destruction of nature, in a certain sense, was an acceptable justification for achieving the progress of civilization (op.cit., p. 24). In the fifth perspective that is presented, political and economic development is correlated with the centrality of the appropriation of nature, as the main resource for the advancement of the country. The laudatory and ornamental tone, although moderately intermediated these ideas, did not prevent a small group of intellectuals from taking a critical and contestatory stand against the waste of nature. The damage produced by aggressions to the environment was seen as responsible for the weakness of the States, because in the case of Brazil, this potential resided, especially, in its natural environment.

In this sense, José Bonifácio proposed a political project for the construction of Brazilian national identity, from the nineteenth century onwards, based on a logic with a double movement: firstly, to integrate the population that was dispersed and fragmented, giving it a "unity of meaning" of identification with the Brazilian natural environment; secondly, to implement a robust environmental policy of protection and rational use of natural resources, breaking with the colonial system, based on the latifundium of the land, monoculture and environmental destruction (PADUA, p. 147). In summary, Bonifácio's vision considered nature as an ideological matrix, useful for shaping the social imaginary, around a governmental project of national development.

Eduardo Gudynas (2003) reminds us that Nature has always been an important component in development strategies for the Amazon. But the way in which it has been appropriated, based on the different visions that have guided the appropriation of its natural resources – from the notion of inexhaustible sources of wealth, of a fragile, wild and frightening region to that view of nature as a delay or obstacle to development, an obstacle to be overcome – has not been able to answer, in a satisfactory way, for its environmental sustainability because all the perceptions formulated were subordinated to its strictly profitable value.

However, in the twentieth century, climate change and incalculable environmental damage, worsening all over the planet, brought to the center of the debate the formulation



of "sustainable development", elevating nature to the condition of a natural, cultural and political attribute. The important thing about this formulation of sustainable development refers to the rescue of the centrality of nature as an indispensable resource in the economic policy strategies of state governments, but not only as a source of raw material, economically viable for the dynamics of markets, but as a patrimonial basis for maintaining the balance of the planet.

However, at the level of social reality, the instrumental view of nature influenced the separation between the countryside and the city, where the countryside is always subordinate to the city and is usually considered backward in relation to urban centers. In this sense, Marx and Engels (1987) observe that the countryside is primarily related to agricultural work, and secondly, it is associated with backwardness, in a situation in which the rural environment is continuously perceived as something to be overcome, a state of affairs to be overcome. The evaluative idea inherited from feudalism that the work of the land is a factor of human exile, associated with the backwardness of technology and productive practices, of the idleness of the soil, leads the authors to attribute to the peasant society, the 'peasant life', as a pole always to be dominated by the 'city', in an evolutionary line that privileges the conception that the rural has its final arrival in urban life. These components (the agricultural, the backwardness, the subordination) will be inserted, partially, in the center of the explanatory ambiguity of the countryside, in opposition to the city, which is seen as modern, civilized.

Leis (1999, p. 57), considering the approach of the more moderate modern contractualist John Locke (1632-1704) offered a sample of the practical consequences of this view of distention of the relationship between nature and society, which will be expressed in terms of the differentiation of the countryside in relation to the city, when he said that John Locke supported the view that associated "the civil and rational inhabitants with the life of the cities, with those most ignorant who lived in the woods and forests."

In a very explicit way, the influence of perception on nature is observed, which is prescribed as a background to the orientation of subordination and subjugation of the city, in relation to the life of the countryside. In the same line of reasoning, Keith Thomas found that, in the seventeenth century, for example, there was a total contempt for forests and devaluation of animals and the natural environment, already rooted in derogatory qualifiers, as is the case of the designation of the expression "virgin forest", which was synonymous with: "terrible, gloomy, savage, deserted, harsh, melancholic, uninhabited and devastated by irons". The author concludes by saying that "the forests were, therefore, home to



animals and not to men (...) and every man who lived in them would be rude and barbaric" (LEIS, 1999, p. 57).

As we have seen, the different dominant perceptions of development, which have prevailed throughout the national economic history, particularly in the Amazon, have always been quite refractory to considering the natural diversity of resources, as cultural heritage, in the face of the pressure of economic progress from governments. Neither from the vision of the first European explorers, nor from the perspectives of the Brazilian political or economic authorities, would it be possible to find a vestige that resonated in favor of the sustainability of natural resources to reconcile development, with those natural-based productive practices, traditionally compatible with the environmental and social reproduction of their resident populations.

So, based on this double conditioning of rural workers in which, on the one hand, they present themselves as supporting actors in the processes of hegemonic economic development, and on the other hand, they are in the rural space, which is constantly subordinated to the urban, placing them in the condition of being socially and economically backward, this led us to question how it was possible for the rubber tappers of Acre to formulate an original development project, seeking to reconcile the best way of using natural resources that would not compromise the perpetuity of the environment for future generations, and more, inverting the view of nature as a delay and obstacle to transforming it, in the most advanced measure of development.

It should be noted that in the 1970s, the process of intensification of the modernization of agriculture in the Brazilian 'rural environment' – leading to overproduction, expansion of rural unemployment, and environmental degradation – which threatened to lead to the extinction of the countryside itself, on the one hand, produced a reconfiguration of the view on the countryside, and consequently, on the peasantry, with the development of transport and communication infrastructure. and the implementation of social security programs, this favored, on the contrary, the reduction of migratory flows and the rural environment became the target of attraction of other categories of workers.

Certain theories of evolutionary dosage collapsed in their widespread assumptions that the more traditional communities (folk, peasants, for example) moved toward integration into the larger society, the more they tended to disintegrate and become extinct. It is noted that practically the opposite occurred, that is, the modernizing transformations in the countryside reinforced the permanence of the peasantry and its existence, even in a condition of subordination to the society as a whole. The relative autonomy of the



countryside in relation to the city began to occur only within the peasantry, as a differential mark of the way of life and work (REDFIELD, 1989).

We have said, and we try to demonstrate this by locating the ambiguity of interests, present in the socio-environmental conflicts of Acre, that the discordant perception of the rubber tappers, of the creation of the Extractive Reserves, revealed a differentiated form of use of forest resources, diametrically opposed to the dominant visions of development, undertaken by the processes of occupation of the Amazon region. But if the process of regional integration of Acre was preceded and driven by the international articulation of the trade of commodification of rubber, which even determined the use of natural resources, we wonder how the rubber tappers of Acre were able to establish a greater bond of balance in their practices, in such a way that it can justify their distinct valuation of nature if they were the executing parts of the mercantilist trade of rubber production. In what sense, then, paraphrasing Arturo Escobar (2005) can we say that it is possible to place the necessary connection that exists between systems of meanings of nature and the concrete practices that are carried out in it?

## **EXPLORATORY MAPPING OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE ACRE PEASANTRY – THE RUBBER TAPPERS – WITH NATURE**

One of the great challenges posed to the modern and industrialized world has been the dilemma of equating the conservation of the environment through the rational use of natural resources, adjusting it to the development processes, in order to ensure the sustainability of resources, socialize the financial benefits generated from it, as well as promote the improvement of the material quality of life of peoples. especially those that inhabit and extract tropical ecosystems, such as those in the Amazon. It was with this concern that the United Nations Commission on the Environment, in its report Common Future, forged the idea of sustainable development, as that process, through which development becomes capable of producing the use of resources, to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the potential, to meet the growing needs of future generations (GUDYNAS, 2003).

However, it is not possible to understand this continuous process of valorization of natural resources, in due account, except by considering the contradictions and confrontations established by the historical dialectic between the various social forces, in the context of economic dissidence around the appropriation and distribution of nature, which occurred from the structuring of a certain type of market conception, namely, the capitalist production market, since the case of the Acre peasantry, a tributary of this process





of social production of nature and its various uses in dispute, contributed, within the confrontation, with the capitalist mentality, around the use of its forests. The defense of their forests, therefore, was not a result dissociated from their productive use, as the main means of social reproduction of this segment of workers, and can therefore be considered more due to the importance that natural resources began to exert for survival, from the 1970s onwards, awakening the collective consciousness of the need for the sustainability of their way of life, than by the possibility of an abstract link between these workers and nature.

Although, as we will see, the historical development of the productive forces demonstrates that the previous phases of economic exchanges had market orientations completely different from those that came into force with the structuring of the orientation of the homo oeconomicus of the market, a determined capitalist of production, introduced by the canons of David Ricardo, of motivation for economic profitability (GRAMSCI, 1987), the specific character of the evaluative meaning of natural resources by the rubber tappers from Acre cannot be determined, understandably, outside the growing awareness they have had about the need for resources for their historical survival, given the fact that their productive practices were operated and instrumentalized by the very demands of the exploitation of natural resources, during the advance of capitalism and its phase of commodification of tropical products from the Amazon region of greater economic interest, as was the case with the rubber extractive industry.

However, even aware that the workers of Acre, the rubber tappers, originated, already embedded among the mercantile relations of capitalistic orientation of production, they had the ability to reconcile, simultaneously, in the same way of life of work, predominantly focused on the export of rubber, subsistence practices for the social maintenance of their existence, which, little by little, They were developed by the most subterranean layer of the dominant mercantilism, in such a way that this facet of their existence allowed them to become aware of their needs and of the contradictions of exploitation in which they were involved, which could lead to the exhaustion of material means for their social survival. This double existence, it seems, represented the determining aspect that made possible, historically, their slow establishment of links with the environment that surrounded them and, therefore, allows us to consider them as a particular type of workers, characteristic in similarity with the productive logics, in generic terms, of workers classified as peasants, even though we have to keep the due dissimilarities of geography, time and place.



It is for this reason that before we seek to establish the specific link between rubber tappers and the resources of nature that came to light during the socio-environmental conflicts of the 1970s/1980s in Acre, we will seek to reveal the historical heritage of interaction with the natural environment to which peasants, in general, appear as bearers, in order to identify the remote roots of organic intersection, with the natural biological structures that sustained productive practices more compatible with the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the peoples, because the values of uses prevailed over those strictly usurious motivations. The main objective of promoting this design is to demonstrate, firstly, that there were several economic rationalities in the orientation of the agents' action, around their interests (individual or collective), and secondly, that the determinations strictly focused on economic bargaining were not present in all mercantile transactions of all times. but it refers to a certain historical period, in which the self-regulated market is installed, and even though it is predominant in the current contemporary moment, social forms of resistance within the relations of production exert protests and contestations that activate political mechanisms, effective for the protection of society.

From this perspective, Guzmán (apud Carvalho, 2005, p. 195) considered that, in the peasantry, the forms of life were the result of an interpretation of the man-nature relationship that establishes the articulation of elements for the multiple use of resources, that is, the peasant's way of producing, consisting of a way of appropriating traditional nature, with its history, his knowledge and culture, and it is from this that he builds an original model of development, based on an environmental rationality that subsumes the dynamics, merely economic, that characterize the predominant forms of action, guided by the capitalist logic of production.

In any case, it should be said that the peasantry in general, as well as the Acre in particular, was characterized by a particular type of relationship established with the land and nature that differentiated it from the wider society to which it was linked. In this sense, it is worth our effort to try to conceptualize the peasantry, although we are also aware that it represents one of the most difficult social segments to explain, due to the myriad of internal differentiations that it presents. However, there is plenty of evidence that the peasantry is heir to a more balanced type of relationship with the use of natural resources, because its economic logic differs from the capitalist model based on bargaining and pure and simple profit, because if it did not take into account the environmental and social damage that the consequences of usury are capable of causing to the environment where they live, they could compromise their survival and social reproduction.



Fernandes (2006, p. 12) pointed out in this regard that, "unlike salaried workers or capitalist entrepreneurs, who produce and reproduce themselves, based solely on the capital-labor relationship, everywhere, the peasantry creates and recreates itself through the family relationship and temporary wage-earning". The peasantry's way of life has, above all, its concern with the land, with working conditions, with the conquest, reconquest and preservation of the land, its main element of production. Also related to the land, he is concerned with the problem of production and appropriation of the product of labor. Working on the land and the production of food for self-consumption become central to the relations that identify the different types of peasantry that exist anywhere in the world (IANNI, 1985).

According to Carvalho (2005, p. 170) peasants are made up of "those families who, having access to the land and the natural resources it supports, solve their reproductive problems based on rural production (...), developed in such a way that there is no difference between the universe of those who decide on the allocation of work and those who survive with the result of this allocation". In this way, the peasant's reproduction strategies<sup>8</sup> are based on the valorization of the resources available internally, in the family establishment, and are intended to ensure the survival of the family in the present and in the future, using the available means that they have learned to manage over time.

It is noted, therefore, that the peasantry has a multiplicity of forms of appropriation of nature and knowledge, in order to control natural resources in favor of their own benefit. Such knowledge was transmitted to the children and this justifies the decisions regarding the allocation of resources, especially family work, as well as the appropriate way to differentiate the family's consumption over time. This leads us to think that the peasantry has its own culture, linked to a tradition, shaped by rules of kinship, inheritance and local and community forms of life.

---

<sup>8</sup> Hébette, a great connoisseur of Amazonian workers (2004, p. 2 apud CARVALHO, 2005 p. 172) also characterizes peasants as: "producers free of direct personal dependence (...); their survival as free men imposes on them bonds of solidarity, the breaking or weakening of which threatens their way of life; these most primary ties are those of kinship and neighborliness, which lead them to seek in community; The search for their permanence and reproduction in the same land (...), translated as attachment to the land, is the mark of the success of their way of life and the source of their care for their environment: migration for them is a fatality, expulsion, an unacceptable degradation [emphasis in the original]. Fernandes (2006, p. 12) defines it as follows: "the organization of work and family and/or community production; the various forms of land use for food production; the organization of cooperatives for the different types of work and dimensions of development; small-scale production and creation of appropriate technologies in relation to the natural space; polyculture, intensive participation in local markets and self-consumption production; the production of production processes, determined by the agroindustry and the expressive participation in production for export. By the very structure of the peasant and indigenous family and/or community organization, peasant production and breeding obey the natural time of the human limit".



It is from this that he developed a "rationality" that is his own, although full of diversity. This rationality aims to guarantee the continuity of the family's social reproduction and possession of nature's resources. It is not directly driven by simple profit, but by the search for the improvement of the living and working conditions of the productive unit, and for the guarantee of land inheritance for the children of future generations. It is for this reason that the rubber tappers' resistance struggle against deforestation and the defense of Acre's forests is not simply related to environmental preservation. Chico Mendes comments that he did not enter "this battle, with the environmentalists, because he was concerned about the 'little plants and butterflies', as he used to say, but because the aggression against the forest was also killing many human lives. His great project was to find local solutions that would result in a more dignified life for the people of the region" (CHICO MENDES POR ELE MESMO, 2004, p. 17).

Finding these favorable conditions for the social reproduction of peasants and their families is certainly the dilemma that entangles the peasant economy. This is because we cannot forget that peasant agriculture is, in general, small, and deprived of many resources, having many restrictions to enhance its productive forces. In this sense, to a large extent, its internal and external relations are determinant. In general, the peasant always presents himself as an oppressed pole of any society, at any time and place his relationship has always been marked by subordination (MOURA, 1986) and depending on how he inserts himself in the surrounding production relationship, his way of perceiving the use of natural resources can change, to a greater or lesser degree, as a function of the tacit agreements that the dominant production relationship presupposes, or because of the level of subservience with which they are articulated to it. However, even subordinate, according to the author, the peasantry has demonstrated a great capacity for recreation and adaptation, for transforming itself in different historical contexts, without losing, however, its specific characteristics, such as the fact that it "controls the land in capitalism without being the owner of capital" (ibidem, p. 8).

But we cannot understand its functioning if we do not understand its relationship with the market, because, to a greater or lesser extent, these peasants relate to the market, in order to carry out their production. Unlike enterprises that accumulate, in order to maximize profit, the peasant production unit accumulates, to make its production more efficient. It is more a function of the family parameter that their decisions are made and thus establish the extent and intensity of the use of the work capacity they make available. These motivations of the peasant to have access to stable and profitable activities (COSTA, 1993, p. 7) are not irreconcilable with the economic strategies of improving the material standard of living,



because their concerns are doubly articulated and complementary, on the one hand, they postulate integration into the markets, on the other, the guarantee of self-consumption of the family production unit.

Carvalho (2005) also demonstrated that the criteria of peasant rationality also aim to reduce total costs; minimize climate and market risks; to guarantee self-consumption and the employment of the family's workforce; invest in the improvement and expansion of working and production conditions in order to increase the total income of the family, as long as it does not increase the hardship of family work. The family provides the necessary work, mainly for subsistence production, to satisfy its basic needs and the contributions imposed by economic and political powers, which is why the use of third-party labor stems from the need to reduce the self-exploitation of the domestic work group (CARVALHO, 2005).

In the peasant mode of production, with a predominantly non-capitalist economic logic, the process of decision-making for the use of resources requires that the family production unit be understood as an open system, which maintains relations with the physical, socio-economic and cultural environment, and which subtracts from this set, including the unit of production, the elements that determine the operation of the system. In this context, the environment is part of the set of factors, variables, or elements external to the system, which influences or strongly determines, with greater or lesser intensity, the decisions and actions of farmers in the way they use land and productive resources. Such an understanding is relevant for us to understand that the way peasant families relate to nature defines their social and family reproduction, as well as that of the peasant system itself, in a general sense.

Thus, one should not neglect, as has been said, the economic results of peasant rationality, since material calculations are seen as essential to strengthen the strategies of its development. It is not just about increasing productivity at any cost, because this could cause, in the long term, a decrease in income, increasing dependence on external factors and environmental damage that could translate into economic losses, in the short term, scarcity or depletion of natural resources. Thus, peasant rationality defends the social protection of the family unit, of natural resources in association with economic performance and effectiveness and productivity, instead of the pure and simple search for profit at any price.

In the case of Acre, as this capitalist logic threatened its survival with deforestation, the resistance struggle was triggered, taking the form of social conflicts. It is important to point out that the relationship of social dependence established by the rubber tappers with



nature, reflected by their commitment to the defense of the preservation of the forests, was not derived from a spontaneous feeling of immanent character to the peasant man of that region, but was the result of a long process of broadening awareness regarding the importance of natural resources. that matured, temporarily, during a certain conjuncture, of intimidation of forests and the threat of extirpation of the bonds of interdependence of natural resources, for the maintenance of their way of life. The defense of its vital world, as Gorz pointed out, was at the origin of this resistance. The effort to specify this historical determination, of the flowering of the consciousness of the rubber tappers, about the effective valorization of nature, for their material survival, does not correspond to mere preciousness on our part, because the human relationship is related to this indissolubility of interaction with nature, as the primary foundation of social existence, as Marx (1998) underlined. Furthermore, since ancient times, the economic logic that mediates the agents in this relationship can take on many meanings, often antagonistic and that cannot necessarily be in accordance with the perpetuity of nature, as the acquisitive motivation that the capitalist system has structured, has been equivalent to the most incontestable contemporary example.

Apart from this, as has been said, historical records have shown that the practices of the rubber tappers have not always been compatible with a perception of commitment to natural resources, and even today, there are those who say that the rubber tappers who seek to appropriate the wild resources of Acre, in a sustainable way, are the same ones who promote their natural depletion. Let us take for the purpose of illustration in this regard an example about fauna. In the particular case of rubber tappers, they used to hunt for the commercialization of animal skins, and in most cases, the skins of hunted wild animals, the noblest, were those of animals that were not normally used for consumption, such as wild cats, otters, jaguars, alligators, which means that many animals were killed just to remove the skin for commercialization, and the meat of the animal is discarded. Mr. João Batista da Silva, a former rubber tapper, from the Alto Juruá region, in the 1960s and 1970s, and currently a resident of Cruzeiro do Sul, commented on the importance of hunting for the family income of rubber tappers, at that time, including as a complement to the rubber economy, in decline. He reported how this work was done and commented on the hunting activity in the forest:

From Serra do Mõa to Mâncio Lima we spent two days of lowland and to climb almost three days of varejão. Then the main activity outside rubber was hunting. We did some things hunting, we made some money, we made good money. We sold cat skin, pig skin, deer skin, peccary skin. It was not prohibited, it was not forbidden for you to kill game at that time. When hunted: So, to hunt until it doesn't have much influence, because you have Saturday, Sunday, when you don't want to cut it. But in



the rubber itself, we work on the syringe, we can't hunt much. The time when I hunted the most was when I didn't cut rubber. There was a time when I only hunted, fished for cats, I made a lot of money for cats, otter hides. And I sold here in the city, I came to Cruzeiro. There was a buyer here in the city, it was Mr. Nico Laurin and also João Eudes. And there was Ricardo, Ildefonso Cordeiro's brother who also bought fur. (was 25-26 years old). As soon as I arrived in Mõa, I dedicated my activities more to hunting. We mixed things, we did the fishing, in the fish season. But the main activity to produce was meat, the tortoise, which is prohibited nowadays. At that time everything was liberated. You sold quietly in the market. He was liberated from everything, the flesh, the skin. We would come and spend a month in the forest just hunting, catching the skins, when you had 20 skins, 30 skins, you would come to the city and sell them, you would make good money. I bought goods and it was already rising. In addition to the skin, we brought chicken, duck, meat, salted game meat. So, this generated a very good income, outside of rubber. Which was not forbidden at that time. He hunted in the Serra do Mõa, in the Jaquirana area, near the border of Peru, armed with traps, the idea was not to molest the animal's skin so as not to ruin the leather. (Interview with Mr. João Batista da Silva, former rubber tapper from Alto Juruá. Cruzeiro do Sul, March, 2009).

This testimony – which can be multiplied for the entire territory of Acre – reveals that despite the supposed environmental attachment, the rubber tappers also exercised productive practices that could be considered as quite aggressive to the natural environment, or at the very least, that fostered great waste of their resources<sup>9</sup>. The experience of the Ford Industrial Company of Brazil – Fordlândia, in the region of Pará, in Santarém, between the years 1928-1932 also leads us to this same observation, of restraint of spirits, of an abstract feeling of practicality for nature, awakened by society as a whole. In Fordlândia and Belterra, for example, about 4,000,000 (million) rubber trees were planted, to compete with Asian plantations. It so happens that many thousand hectares of native forests were deforested to carry out these rubber tree plantations, and no environmental appeal was heard for the destruction of nature in that 1930s. In fact, many rubber tappers were recruited to work in these areas, including the rubber tappers of the rubber plantations of the Acre territory.

The practices in the rubber plantations, of aggression to nature, were also diagnostic during the first periods of rubber exploitation, in relation to the type of cutting that was done in the rubber trees, in the regions of Madeira, Purus and Juruá. The Report of Plácido de Castro of March 27, 1907, when he was mayor of Alto-Acre, characterizes the cutting of rubber trees, with the use of the hatchet, as "barbaric and vampira exploitation of the rubber tree (...), revolting and iniquitous exploitation, which in a short time reduces and transforms

---

<sup>9</sup> It is not, obviously, a matter of proposing a human relationship with the natural world that prefigures the untouchability of its most varied resources, since it is known that they are necessary and indispensable to human existence, but simply refers to the awareness that it is quite reasonable and, therefore, in the same way, quite impractical to consume everything overwhelmingly, at the same time, with so much obsession, without an equalization that maintains its organic flows and structures, as well as does not promote the rupture of the metabolism of human societies with natural resources.



rich rubber plantations into abandoned forests" (LIMA, 1970, p. 393). Araújo Lima (1943, p. 393) in his text *Exploitation of the Amazon* denounced the work of the rubber tappers as environmental depredation with the following argument:

It was the error of the unhealthy technique, with the use of the hatchet, a cutting and blunt instrument, which cut the 'martyr tree' producing a lacerating trauma, anatomically translated by a deep wound, in the cortical part of the stem of the rubber tree to the most central layers, with the impairment of the vessels of circulation of the sap. In order to obtain, at the time, a greater share of latex, the rubber tapper attacked the hevea with axes, compromising it and sacrificing its vitality. In this vandalistic work, although unconscious, which expresses well the ignorance, the lack of culture, the lack of rational orientation in the exploitation of the rubber plantations, these [the rubber tappers] were deprecated, exhausted, as an almost definitive and irremediable sacrifice of their milk productivity. It is thus irretortably documented that industry was not only extractive, but above all destructive.

Therefore, the feeling of the rubber tappers in relation to nature was put to the test and gained its ecological version only in the 1970s, with the specific threat of devastation of the Acre forests by the farmers, who acquired the lands of the old rubber plantations, in the context of the replacement of the rubber economy for the implementation of agriculture. Because, before that, this environmental valorization was not placed at the level of the consciousness of the rubber tappers, it figured as a natural fact of the abundance of the environment. At the international level, this appreciation of nature gained resonance because the model of industrial modernization in large urban centers had caused enormous environmental problems, such as pollution, climate change, forest devastation, contamination of rivers, soils, among other aspects, and environmental awareness had already mobilized many institutions favorable to the environment and a more sustainable development model. In the case of the rubber tappers of Acre, associated with the environmental issue, there was the land problem inseparable from the way of life of the rubber tappers. The excerpt from a speech by Chico Mendes locates the moment when the feeling of belonging to nature begins to flourish among the rubber tappers threatened with eviction, as the rubber tappers begin to realize that without the forest they would be at risk of their lives. This perception was reason enough to sustain actions of resistance and contestation, led by the rural unionism of Xapuri, against environmental devastation, at the same time, which linked the struggle for land with the preservation of Acre's forests; The theme of forest biodiversity covered the defense of the permanence of the rubber tappers in their areas, as they lived in conditions of insecure land tenure, in the areas where they lived in the rubber plantations:

As president of the Xapuri Rural Workers Union since 1981, his struggle had been for justice, free labor, and the right to land ownership. Now Chico Mendes was





beginning to understand that ecology – the extraordinary biological splendor of the Amazon – could help rubber tappers gain support and save their way of life. Recognizing that, with the ecological issue on their side, rubber tappers could have a voice in the debate about the Amazon. (...) [for] in Brazil, rubber tappers were the first workers who articulated rural unionism with ecology – and Chico Mendes had only come to know the word 'ecology' three years ago (CHICO MENDES POR ELE MESMO, 2004, p. 23; 46).

These aspects put the environmental issue on the agenda in the national and international debate and generated immediate effects, including occasionally mobilizing the main financial development agencies, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Chico Mendes' trip to the USA to denounce the damage in the Amazon, caused by enterprises, financed by this economic institution, shows how the articulation of the local and international plans produced very promising results for the environment of Acre, because the world scenario presented a very favorable awareness of taking into account the environment in development strategies, As suggested by the report below,

After United Nations representatives witnessed the deforestation of Acre, Chico Mendes traveled to Miami to attend the meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). There, he denounced that the Amazon rainforest was being destroyed because of projects financed by international banks. He went to Washington, talked to Republican Senator Robert Kasten Jr. and convinced him that the loans for the paving of BR-364, paving without environmental protection measures, only favored deforestation and the uneconomic activity of cattle ranching in the region. Within a month, the loans were suspended (CHICO MENDES POR ELE MESMO, 2004, p. 16).

The rubber tappers of Acre, their ways of life and work, with due reservations of time and space, are tributaries and heirs, in principle, of the general characteristics that marked the condition of that social segment that conceived itself as peasantry. In the case of the dominant economy of the rubber industry that prevailed in the Amazon for more than a century, although the rubber tappers were very involved in this social organization of the rubber plantation and the power of domination of the boss, therefore, fully integrated into the society as a whole and under its command, they managed, in the daily life of the forest, to develop bonds of reciprocity and a particular way of life that gradually blossomed. in the form, mainly, of the resistance struggle for their survival and the reproduction of the family production unit, when they were threatened. This threat awakened, on the other hand, the awareness of defense for the maintenance and preservation of forests, since the maintenance of their way of life and work depended on the association of these two attitudes.

It is noted, therefore, that it was within the contradictions of the productive forces, of capitalistic orientation, in which the rubber tappers were intertwined, that they were awakening the awareness of their material needs, indispensable to their survival, in such a



way that the determination of the perception of their needs articulated with the preservation of the forests, acted, powerfully, to generate the mobilization of their collective wills, directed, finalistically, to the concrete defense of the natural environment. According to Gramsci (1987, p. 122-123), the historical consciousness that springs from the contradictions of the productive forces is initially revealed as part of the realm of needs: "there is necessity when there is an efficient and active premise, the knowledge of which in men has become operative, by placing concrete ends on the collective consciousness and by constituting a complex of convictions and beliefs that act powerfully like popular beliefs. The premise must contain, already developed, the necessary and sufficient material conditions for the realization of the impulse of collective will; but it is evident that from this material, quantitatively calculable premise, a certain level of culture cannot be detached, that is, from intellectual acts, and from these a certain complex of passions and imperious feelings (...), which have the power to induce action 'at all costs'".

These two components, which made it possible to objectively place concrete ends on the collective consciousness of the rubber tappers of that historical period, were favored by the transformations that took place internationally, from the 1970s onwards, in the development processes, which decisively affected the relationship between the city and the countryside, inverting previously established views, such as the role of nature in development strategies. as well as the relationship between the city and the countryside. At a time when national borders intensified their international relations, the changes that occurred in the large industrial centers began to reach small cities and underdeveloped countries almost at the same speed as the ongoing transformations. The environmental appeal triggered by the rubber tappers found fertile ground in the international scenario, in the same way that this foreign empathy, of reciprocity, had a favorable impact on the local level, whose interaction redefined the place of the rubber tappers, from their position of subordination and positioned them in a condition of power dispute, to determine the course of development in Acre.

In this sense, Ricardo Abramovay (2000) draws attention to the transformations that altered the process of rural development and influenced the rural-urban relationship. According to the author, with the decline of agriculture and the fall in economic importance that it suffered, this did not result in the disappearance of rural work, but, on the contrary, led to an effervescence of the rural. Three characteristics for the author are decisive for thinking about the rural today, other than those attributes strictly associated with agriculture. The first of these, which should be emphasized for the purposes of this work, concerns the idea that (i) the rural involves a close relationship with nature. The second is that (ii) rural



areas can be defined as not densely populated, and finally, that (iii) the limits and potentials of the development of rural areas are given by their connections with the city, whether large cities or small agglomerations.

## **5 THE CONJUNCTURAL CONTEXTS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF NATURE IN GOVERNMENT POLICY STRATEGIES**

Many national and/or foreign authors highlighted the changes that placed the issue of nature on the agenda in the international political debate and related it to the new dynamics of the rural and the urban, which began to spread during the 1970s, such as Terry Marsden (1992); Elena Saraceno (1996); Keyser (1990); Maria Wanderley (2000); Carlos Rodrigues Brandão (1999).

Terry Marsden (1992), for example, identified that these changes that took place are related to the Fordist regime of accumulation of the work process and normalization of consumption. They affected the development of advanced economies, heralding a new phase of capitalist development that was emerging to redefine production and markets. Marsden describes in detail the retreat of the Fordist accumulation regime, marking the collapse of the Keynesian-Fordist model of the State, brought about by the decline of US power hegemony; the delegitimacy of the Bretton Woods system in the 1970s; increase in the price of oil; social barriers posed by the emergence of neoconservative groups, with an anti-state, social welfare policy, based on the Keynesian model of political and social platform; opening of markets, new forms of flexibilization of labor contracts, deregulation of national states and internationalization of capital; productive restructuring, with the change of people and firms. These symptoms of restructuring would have made obsolete the opposition of rural versus urban, or countryside versus city, and repositioned the debate around the analytical line, which proposes the local-global relationship and the local confronted with the national<sup>10</sup>.

Elena Saraceno (1996) commented in this regard that the division of the rural as a space of agricultural production and the urban as industrial production and services no longer serve to explain reality, because the rural has diversified. The concepts of region and territory have become important to understand local economic processes, which escape the

---

<sup>10</sup> In micro terms for comparative analysis of Acre, these changes in the countryside-city relationship, impacted by the economic development policy, will result in the consolidation of the Acre domestic market, with the consequent valorization of the primary sector, agriculture, livestock and diversified extractive products and an attempt at social integration of the countryside-city by exalting characteristics of the feeling of regional identity. This integration will seek to connect the state capital to the various municipalities through paved highways, including the intensification of political and economic ties with the two main regions Vale do Acre and Vale do Juruá, until then, quite isolated, internally, due to geographical conditions, difficult road traffic, as well as low political connection.



framework of space, the local scale becomes a relevant measure to resonate the interactions between the different social agents, imbricated in the set of actions in progress, at that level of the sphere. In this line of argument, R. E. Paul (1968) postulates the existence of a continuum between the rural and the urban and shows that there is a coexistence of traces of the rural present in the urban and urban traits present in the rural. In demographic and geographical terms, the author says that the rural-urban dichotomy does not make any sense.

In fact, as Keyser (1990) observed in the 1990s, what happened was the occurrence of a demographic inversion with the recovery of the rural population in French regions and the rebirth of the rural, associated with the environmental component, where the rural environment reappeared, marked by a way of life that was more integrated in relation to 'nature' and 'place'. The rural has come to be seen as a space that is defined by its relationship with the landscape, a way of life, with a strong environmental dosage.

The remodeling of the meaning of nature was also manifested in the approach of Wanderley (2000) as a characteristic that altered the equation of the city in relation to the countryside. The author considered that the rebirth of the rural takes place in a context of crisis in the modernization of agriculture, concomitant with a process of revaluation of the rural space, identified as going beyond agricultural activity, the rural comes to be perceived as a singular space and social actor that, through the relationship with the environment, finds a point of convergence, to dialogue with the city. She says:

.... The category 'rural' carries within itself the diversity of the very relations between rural and urban spaces – and between rural and urban populations – as they change, historically and socially, in time and space (...) thus the association of the rural environment with the environment establishes the dialogue with the cities, on a new level, due to the importance of nature, particularly for the inhabitants of urban centres. (WANDERLEY, 2000, p. 132-133).

Two considerations deserve to be highlighted about Maria Wanderley's approach. The first of them refers to the idea that this notion of the rural, as a singular space and collective actor, indicates that the rural goes through a double meaning, which refers to the way in which people from outside and those from inside perceive the rural space. Strictly speaking, there would not be a rural as a predefined place, but only as a place of representation and perception of a certain way of life, attributed by people who feel linked to their own representations of belonging, because they are linked to certain forms of social expressions of life and work. Such belonging would emerge in moments of social conflicts, about the representations of the world, which generally occur in disputes over the identification of place, such as, for example, the conflict involving the countryside versus the



city. The link with nature, secondly, would be another important element, which would gain prominence in the redefinition of this new rurality, since the excessive use of chemical inputs, of industrial origin, based on the productivist model of development, brought disastrous consequences for human life, as well as deforestation and waste of natural resources, in the Amazon regions. such as the modernization of the countryside.

In the case of Acre's forests, it is worth emphasizing the fact that the revaluation of its natural environment (financially or culturally), considered even as an obstacle to development, ultimately occurred independently of its properly biological, physical or social character. The rural areas of Acre, considered backward and their natural resources denounced as obstacles to progress, suddenly began to be recognized as bearers of natural wealth and biodiversity of inestimable value for sustainable development, without their biological, natural and social properties having been altered.

This inversion of the perception of environmentalism, which proliferated throughout Brazil, accompanied the deleterious socio-economic developments associated with the country's industrial modernization. Moreira (2003) argued in this regard that the urban-industrial bourgeoisie, which was victorious in Brazil, shifted political power from the countryside to the city, from the rural to the urban. In this movement, he formulated visions, always of a backward, inefficient, rustic, wild, traditional, inferior and uncivilized rural, in comparison with the modern, developed, superior and literate city. In the contemporary period, with the politicization of the environmental theme and the connection of the rural to the environmental nature, a narrative of the "new rural" has come to predominate, in which the rural worker now represents what is most modern, "this new rural would be, at the same time, urban and global, technified, industrialized, civilized (...) the farmer as the gardener of nature and as the guardian of the natural heritage and cultural traditions, now to be preserved (ibid, p. 122).

In summary, the rebirth of the rural is related, in general, to the crisis of the city with the exhaustion of the ongoing modernization model and the different economic activities associated with it that have altered the consciousness of nature. In this sense, three fundamental aspects redefine the scope of the tensions present in the discourse of the new rurality: (i) the first of them gives priority to the productive destination of the rural environment; (ii) the second trait links the rural environment to a better quality of life, collective space and a place of good housing that society as a whole can enjoy; (iii) the third considers the rural environment as an integral part of the environmental heritage to be preserved against all predatory uses (WANDERLEY, 2000, p. 100).



The link between the rural environment and the environmental component, as we have mentioned, in addition to referring to the traditional link between the peasantry and the land and the productive means related to it, has been reinvigorated due to the great environmental damage that the industrial development model has disseminated, for example, through agricultural projects and predatory agricultural practices. which resulted in the degradation of a large part of the natural resources, contamination of soils and water sources. The whole of this project generated, therefore, what became known as the ecological crisis. For Mathieu (1990, apud WANDRELEY, 2000, p. 100) "it is no longer just nature, the support of agricultural activity, but a multidimensional nature, where the elements water, air, earth... regain importance, as much as the notion of ecosystem (...), bringing to light a discourse of valuing nature, the rural environment associated with it and the peasant way of life. At the same time, there is talk of a 'reinvented field' and a 'neonature' and there is a movement that will be growing, from then on, of search for and return to the rural, especially among young people".

Ricardo Abramovay (2000), based on a study on the meaning of rurality in the context of contemporary capitalist countries (USA, France, countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – OECD), questioned the premise that the rural would be condemned to play a secondary role in capitalist societies, due to the decline of rural activities and due to the growing importance that non-agricultural activities had gained, in establishments considered rural. According to him, if the rural is not taken simply as a space of production, three new characteristics emerge as important in the reconfiguration of the new rural: (i) firstly, the rural involves a relationship of approximation with nature; (ii) the second refers to the relevance of areas that are not densely populated; (iii) the third is related to the potential for development of the rural, in its relationship with the urban centers.

With this problematization, we seek to highlight, in particular, the importance of associating the theme of nature with the peasantry, or in general terms, with the rural environment. It is important to emphasize, however, that the theme of nature enters the scene in the contemporary debate, from the second half of the twentieth century, but it has already been placed, as we have seen, since the nineteenth century, with the process of mechanization and modernization of agriculture, which generated a lot of change in the use of the soil. In that context, nature appeared as an idyllic space, a space for consumption, and in the Amazon regions, the idea of natural, "wild" spaces persisted. From this movement, the rural space began to announce a value beyond its association with



agricultural production, it detached itself from its productive value and began, at the same time, to acquire a cultural value, an attribute of universal heritage.

This cultural value, that is, this feeling of belonging to nature on which human life depends for its survival and material prosperity, in the case of Acre, was generated by the threat that the rubber tappers of Acre experienced with the process of destruction of the rubber and nut forests, which put at risk their family survival and the means available for their reproduction.

At the international level, the global threats, which industrial development has brought with it as a consequence of climate change, droughts and excessive rainfall, the extinction of exotic animals, the degradation of soils, the poisoning of rivers and the fury of hurricanes and seas, which have contributed to environmental valorization achieving global visibility. The global effects of this environmental degradation and the local resistance of the rubber tappers, in defense of the Acre forests, associated with it have enhanced the value of nature and elevated it to a strategy of human development.

However, these effects of the process of advance of the industrial revolution date back to the eighteenth century, with the growth of cities, the destructuring of the bases of the peasant economy, the displacement of labor, the increase in population, the destruction of forests and forests, diseases, smoke, dirt, and noise. All this, at the same time, caused an antagonistic effect to the ideal of the city's progress. Alan Macfarlane (1987) mentions that the English representatives of the industrial revolution themselves began to question and criticize modern values and the disfigurement that roads, canals, industrial constructions had caused, boosted a positive look at the playful character of life in the countryside, previously depreciated. Natural life has lost its intolerable and wild aspect, and has become attractive in the eyes of the citizen of the city.

Such a movement, Macfarlane (1987) warns, cannot be seen as contrary to modern development, but it is complementary and convenient to it, because the most positive relationship with respect to nature could not be awakened without the advancement of science, as an instrument that provides for the expansion of control and guarantee of man's survival in the wild natural environment. Harmonious coexistence and telluric sense increased as the danger and hostility of the rural world were domesticated. In short, it is the Western ideal of control over nature. The development of gardening in England at the end of the eighteenth century is illustrative of the contrast between the most urbanized country in the world having become the main country defender of the natural environment.

In general, it is within this scenario, of the predominance of the capitalist order of subordination of natural resources to the designs of the market, that, in a contradictory way,



social values are disseminated, from the nineteenth century onwards, of pro-environmentalist tendencies that would be responsible for the emergence of an evaluative vision of the natural environment, along the lines of what we know in the recent period. Leis (1999) evaluated the expansion of this movement of valuing nature in five consecutive phases. At first, an environmentalist aesthetic phase predominated, although the attitude towards nature was not simply reduced to a contemplative view of the natural environment, since in the years 1824 and 1967 the first animal protection organizations were founded, respectively (Society for the Protection of Animals and The East Riding Association for the Protection of the Sea Birds), that stood in opposition to the killing of birds (p. 61). During this period, the Yellowstone National Park, in 1872, and Yosemite, in 1890, were created in the USA.

The second phase has a more 'political' connotation. The environmental debate entered the American political agenda during the term of President Theodore Roosevelt, in the years 1908-1909, from the North American Conservationist Congress, held in Washington, D.C. in February 1909, which placed the issue of the environment as a problem of international dimension. That same year, in Paris, the International Congress for the Protection of Nature was held, resulting in the foundation of an International Consultative Commission for the Protection of Nature in 1913. With the occurrence of the two great world wars, environmentalist impulses would enter a long period of stagnation (LEIS, 1999).

In the aftermath of the wars, the environmental debate reached the scientific realm. The process of creating the UN, the International Union for the Protection of Nature – IUPN, the FAO, the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the United Nations – UNESCO, from the end of the 40s onwards, in addition to the holding of other world congresses, reflected the concern of scientists with environmental problems, related to development, poverty, to hunger, pollution and technology. In the 60s onwards, the sign of modernization begins to lose social legitimacy. Environmental movements, non-governmental organizations born in Europe and the USA are beginning to question the damage caused to nature. The emergence of NGOs, such as IUCN, WWF, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, spreading, with branches in several countries around the world and promoting discussions and protests on an international scale, give signs of the dimension that the environmental debate has taken.

In the fifth stage, environmentalism became institutionalized, from the second half of the twentieth century onwards. In the 1970s onwards, green parties emerged, guided by the principles of the defense of ecology, social justice, participatory democracy and nonviolent





action. The first political parties were to be formed in Europe: in New Zealand, in 1972; in England, in 1973; in France, 1974; Belgium, 1978; Switzerland, 1979. In Brazil and the USA, predominantly, they will emerge from the 80s. With the ecological crisis pointing to the scarcity of natural resources and the limits of economic development, a change in the political system is gradually taking place, in which the environmental problem is moved to the center of State power, under the demanding gaze of civil society, and sustained by the domination of the rationality of the market. synthesized in the common slogan: "environmentally sustainable, politically fair and socially viable" (LEIS, 1999).

As we have seen, the case of the Acre forests, which occurred in Acre, from 1970 onwards, is a consequence of this general movement of internationalization of the capitalist system of production that, in a contradictory way, triggered social protection movements with the redefinition of the relationship between the social and economic forces of the countryside and the city. The socio-environmental conflicts established between those who defended forests as a basis for regional development and those who considered forests as a backwardness and obstacle to development, offered an empirical example, typical of how the social perception of nature, here understood in the form of natural resources, defined and oriented the way (the rhythm, the scale, and intensity) of how economic policy was fostered for the use and appropriation of the natural environment, in favor of sustainable development, during the administration of the Government of the Forest.

## **DEVELOPMENT AS A SOCIAL PROCESS, THE RESULT OF THE COEXISTENCE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ECONOMY AND POLITICS**

We understand development as a broad social process, which aims to overcome the problems of the growing needs of society, with a view to the expansion of substantive freedoms, creation of capacities for people's participation with the elimination of deficiencies that limit social choices and opportunities, so that the expansion of substantive freedoms, related as they are to moral assumptions, that go beyond the variable of simple economic growth (per capita income; GDP), as the exclusive carat for measuring development, as it presupposes improvements in the whole of social life with the prosperity of public policies for human well-being (SEN, 1999; SEN, 2000).

For this reason, therefore, we consider that the notion of development, as a process, cannot be understood as a "casual, indeterminate, unforeseen historical movement, occurring, disorderly, without internal legality, but on the contrary, we have to interpret it as a process" in the sense that it "... it is a succession of aspects, something that admits, no doubt, empirical description in terms of chronological juxtaposition, but it is a succession



that, in essence, implies origin, according to connection", and more, "... we can only interpret it as a process if we discover the unity that is mirrored in it, dynamic unity, that is, concatenation of facts, according to a unifying idea, multiplicity of situations, inwardly related" (Guerreiro RAMOS, 1965, p. 20-21).

In these terms, we are highlighting the experience of Acre, which, from the end of the 1990s, began to spread the word that it was implementing a process of sustainable development, at the local level, under the sign of florestania and the identity of the Acre being. With this purpose, the aforementioned government established the main aspects that, according to our analysis, characterize the essence of development when (i) it defined the sphere of the local as a space of development, (ii) it structured development under the scope of a political project of government as the focus of the population's identity, (iii) and finally, it conceived the essence of what would give unity to the visualized development, sustainability.

We have, then, that all the dissidence of the analyses that we have highlighted, or even more, all the controversy about the experience of the Government of the highlighted Forest, its success or its failure, is based on the speculation of qualifying whether its development is sustainable and/or unsustainable, despite the fact that it has gained international and national notoriety and local political legitimacy, due to the concrete action of his administration. It turns out that to know whether the development of Acre is sustainable or not, this will depend on what we are considering as development and as sustainability. In this sense, before dealing directly with the dimensions and indicators that cover sustainable development, we will make a synopsis about the origins of the notion of development and how it arrived at its current version of sustainable development.

The historical principle of the development process has its reference in the nineteenth century<sup>11</sup>, when in the economic sphere, the consolidation of the capitalist system of production took place, under the technological and rationalized dynamics of scientific knowledge, which promoted the increase in the capacity of machines, to increase the production of goods. In the political context, this moment coincided with the process of formation of modern national states, which brought to light the principle of nationality, as a

---

<sup>11</sup> Elias analyzes that the long civilizing process of the West has its origins at the end of the Middle Ages, twelfth-thirteenth centuries, when in these periods the foundations of modern society began to germinate. A new social class – the bourgeois – begins to emerge and create the possibilities of confrontation with the dominant seigniorial forces of the ancien régime. With the formation of the first (absolutist) states, two major social processes took place among men – exchange relations and political regimes – on a varied scale and intensity, which were simultaneously driven by slow and successive revolutions, which drew their path at the exact moment when political and economic disputes erupted in their determined social contexts (ELIAS, 1993).



socio-political instrument, to safeguard order, security and promote the economic development of the society that was being formed.

But this movement took place slowly. According to Braudel (1995, apud FIORI, 2004, p. 20) the consolidation of the bourgeoisie of commerce, at a long distance – through the control of land and administrative offices – is born from the modeling established with the king, governments and princes, in a tendency to centralize political power.

Simultaneous to this impetus, due to the expansion of trade to long geographical borders, on a global scale, currencies are concentrated as a unit within the limits of their national territories. The moment of the encounter of political power with the market coincides with a trend of monopoly and concentration of power, which drives a centralizing political will: "fiscal, administrative, military or mercantilistic" (BRAUDEL, 1985, apud, FIORI, 2004, p. 20).

In this sense, the meeting that produces the national states and creates the national economy, corresponds to this political space, which was being transformed by the power of the State, due to the needs and innovations of material life, when the political power decided to nationalize economic activities, within the territorial, economically coherent, unified space, whose activities began to develop together in the same direction, creating external tax borders, eliminating their internal barriers and giving rise, through their public debt, to a national credit system (FIORI, 2004, p. 20).

The process of development results, therefore, from the convergence of all these conditions, when, at this time, the exchange economy develops, which connects the isolated markets of the world, dragging some precious commodities – gold, silver, spices, wood, agricultural products, sugar, coffee, for example – and which gradually demarcates the borders and defines the internal limits of the economy (BRAUDEL, 1985). The increase in automation and its reflection on the social division of labor, as well as the development of industry and urban growth in cities, under the banner of political regimes considered democratic, precisely demarcate the point of origin at which this social dynamic is engendered.

In the case of Brazil, the moment of modern genesis of the State and its process of economic development takes place in the 1930s, when the process of industrialization of the country begins to be implemented. In this period, from the political point of view, in the Brazilian case, a superior social structure is practically not originated, alien to that old colonial order, on the contrary, the maintenance of the privileges of the dominant oligarchies, which appropriate the state sphere, to found a sociability, fixed on the appropriation of the "public" thing – the collective – by the private sphere. All this was a



reflection of the way in which the European economy was integrating itself into the colonial agro-export markets, characterized by the realization of a mercantile development, internationally integrated on the basis of circulation of goods and labor power, connecting the colony and its trading posts with the metropolis, in a relationship of social and economic dependence and subordination. Hierarchical.

According to Moraes (2006), the world that the West has built, since the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, brought the idea of introducing reforms to those countries considered backward or traditional, to such an extent that they could reach the level of modern or developed nations, through the firm path in a straight line of the evolutionary ideal that the pioneers of modernization had pioneered, previously, through development.

In the post-war years, the United States assumed a political-ideological interpretation of the process of development and modernization of society. American thinkers created the formulation of the idea of underdevelopment, at the same time that they established the devices to overcome this condition, through the process of modernization. In this situation, the U.S. placed itself as a reference standard and as a mirror for which backward and traditional countries should seek to visualize. The internal guidelines for this idealization can be found in Moraes:

The idea of modernization is mainly American, having been developed by American social scientists in the period after World War II and reaching the apex of its popularity in the mid-1960s. Two characteristics of this period stand out: a predominant attitude of complacency towards American society and the expansion of the political, military and economic interests of the United States throughout the world. American society tended to be seen as fundamentally consensual, combining unparalleled economic prosperity and political stability within a democratic framework. The social problems that might exist, moreover, were treated not as endemic, but as aberrations that could be solved by normal political processes within the existing institutions. After two decades of unrest, the tranquility of prosperity and stability in the postwar period seemed like a significant achievement. The future of modern society now seemed assured; Only that of the 'developing areas' seemed problematic. This atmosphere of complacency and self-satisfaction could only encourage among social scientists the idea that 'modernity' was indeed a blessing, and that the institutions and values of American society, at least as they existed in their most idealized manifestations, constituted an appropriate model for emulation by other, less fortunate societies (TIPPS, 1973, p. 208-9, apud MORAES, 2006, p. 102).

From this North American prescription we can draw some operational implications. In the mirage of these backward and underdeveloped countries, the formulators of the USA sought to endorse their self-image in three main pillars: (i) firstly, they placed themselves as the supreme of the modern, the point where everyone should reach, with the end of the history of society; (ii) second, they assumed, in a convenient way, the inequality between



nations, the "positive" existence<sup>12</sup> of a developed and underdeveloped world; (iii) finally, the formulators prefigure that the overcoming of backwardness would occur through the uneven and combined development of capitalism (MORAES, 2006).

All this was only possible, it should be stressed, because it flourished in a context that was very favorable to the Americans. In the post-war period, the United States emerged as the new *hegemon*, in a scenario in which Europe was politically and economically destroyed (ARRIGHI & SILVER, 2001). With the beginning of European reconstruction, it was imbued with a certain euphoria, resulting from the development of the productive forces and economic growth, which marked the Golden Age of capitalism, in its 25 glorious years (1945-1970). In this scenario, the emergence of socialist regimes in international political decisions, as well as the nations of recent decolonization of the Third World, had a significant influence on this scenario (MORAES, 2006).

Barely after the glorious years of capitalism, and even during its uneven development, it was found that, if, on the one hand, there was growth in European countries, on the other hand, the development process left in its path, a trail of poverty, stagnation, marginalization, and a true social exclusion to such an extent that the current economic development model, It was too obvious to have been ignored. In its stage of "ascension" and prestige, the idea of development predominantly meant economic growth and progress, and even so, as pointed out above, poverty and the standard of living remained at increasing levels, especially in countries such as Latin America (ROMANO & ANTUNES, 2002).

It is noted, for example, that although the Western world has gone through almost two hundred years of development and witnessed very significant cycles of economic growth, technological development and improvement of the material and human standard of living, in the 90s, the increase, on a planetary scale, of the abyss of poverty and social exclusion persisted more drastically. More than two-thirds of the world's population has seen their lives gradually drown in a common ditch of deprivation of "substantive freedoms" (Amartia Sen, 2000). Concomitantly, there was an expansion of the

---

<sup>12</sup>All the prescriptions of the North American formulators found support in the social sciences. Talcott Parsons in his theories of social action supported the idea of the development and modernization of the structures of society. According to Moraes (2006), "in the Parsonian formulation of this teleological view, modern society, when compared to the traditional one, has the advantage of knowing how to adapt to changing situations. Survives challenges. Don't get carried away, take it. It does not allow itself to be destroyed – it destroys and rebuilds itself. The 'universal solvent' of modernization disaggregates and reintegrates, generating specialized institutions (schools, hospitals, nursing homes, day care centers, for example) that handle functions, previously embedded in a single institution (the extended family). The modern pole has two capital virtues: a) the capacity to transform the backward world, which, as Latham says, is understood as something deficient (not yet modern), both from a cultural and material point of view; b) point to a challenge – desirable and probable – almost a gravity inclination – since the 'modern being' means a greater capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, a greater capacity to respond to external challenges" (MORAES, 2006, p. 140-1).



concentration of income and wealth on the part of the hegemonic nuclei and, with this, consequently, the more extreme promotion of inequalities between countries and/or regions. Unemployment grew sharply, and labor relations were gradually made more flexible and precarious, at the same time that informal work expanded<sup>13</sup> and the number of the population of those disaffiliated from social society grew, as classified by Robert Castel (1998). In his work *The Metamorphosis of the Social Question*, the author takes the dimension of the "social" as the empirical basis of analysis and seeks to study the core of modern sociability – work – based on the recent transformations that have shaken the centrality of this element of cohesion in society, which was established with the destructuring of the Ancien Régime, in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. of informality, the precariousness and flexibilization of labor relations, the deterritorialization of the 'disaffiliated' (immigrants, foreigners, in search of work) and, mainly, the loss of the capacity to work, shaping the social fabric as an integrating power of individuals, problematizes the dimension of the contemporary social impasse. At this time, the profit economy persisted, adjusted by the intervention of politics, in the molds of a competitive social order that prefigured the discarding of huge waves of individuals to the condition of "disaffiliated" social beings, denying them their constitutive principle, the ethos of work, and engendering zones of entirely unpredictable vulnerabilities in the search to satisfy their most primary acts. It is not arbitrary that terrorism and global insecurity are the most visible signs of the current period.

The degradation of natural aquatic and terrestrial resources, deforestation and loss of soil fertility, water pollution, land acidity and destruction of forests and the accumulation of gases (SPANGERBERG, 1998) were some of the collateral effects of the modernity of development that threatened, in an extraordinary way, the natural environment and contributed, together, to intensify, in the contemporary period, the increase in the deprivation of substantive freedoms with the persistence of social inequalities, hunger, social calamities, and various scarcity (SEN, 2000).

For these reasons, in the 1990s, neoliberal doctrines<sup>14</sup> centered on the defense of the "free market" were shaken by numerous criticisms, since they had not been able to

---

<sup>13</sup> Just for comparative purposes, in Brazil, in 1992 the unemployment rate was around 6.5 percentage points, which represented 4.4 million unemployed. In 2002, this percentage rose to 9.2%, equivalent to 7.9 million. There was therefore a 79.2% increase in the total level of unemployment from 1992 to 2002. (Folha de São Paulo, Saturday, October 11, 2003. p A5). In March 2007, 146 thousand new jobs with a formal contract were created in the country (survey of the General Register of Employed and Unemployed Persons, Caged), despite this, however, data from the Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies (Dieese) showed that in the same month the unemployment rate was around 16.6% in the country.

<sup>14</sup> In general terms, the neoliberal vision, which emerged in the 80s, with the exhaustion of the economic development model, is based on the following assumptions: a) reduction of the State, due to its inefficiency in promoting development; b) "expansion of Civil Society" as a control mechanism; and c) free "market" as a



successfully sustain the entry of Third World countries into "progress" – because they also brought enormous environmental problems – leading the idea of development to ruin and collapse. Even so, neoliberal policies continued to be hegemonic, running rampant and the fact that they were also often associated with the desideratum of global theoretical models, made the local and/or regional space acquire increasing relevance, as a locus, to think about the implementation of development strategies, due to two main reasons. The local, firstly, would be a mechanism to strengthen the weak governability of the State, with the process of "decentralization", and, secondly, due to the growing pressure from civil society – communities – in order to exert greater interference in the management of the State through the social mechanisms of citizen participation (ROMANO & ANTUNES, 2002), as had occurred in Northern Italy, which had managed to develop, according to Robert Putnam (1996), a better material standard of living, compared to the southern region of the Italian country, due to the effectiveness of its civic community.

One of the traits of modern globalization has been the production of significant marginalization of the place, as a space for the rooting of the local. According to Escobar (2005, p. 134) "... the place – as an experience of a specific locality, with a high degree of rootedness, with a connection to daily life, even if its identity is constructed and never fixed – continues to be important for most people (...) there is a sense of belonging that is more important than we want to admit", which makes us consider the idea of returning to the place, as something relevant. The author exemplifies that social movements with an ecological and cultural appeal to specific places and territories were one of the main protagonists, which confronted the growing understanding that any alternative way out for sustainable development must take into account the models of nature, based on the place, as well as its localized practices, which accompany them. The union movement of rubber tappers in Acre, which we are mentioning here, is a good example to support this observation of the author. However, the same author points out, it is not a matter of essentializing the local space, nor of neglecting the globalizing aspects, but of basing social processes, based on the practices and knowledge where they materialize. Moacir Palmeira (1999), studying an experience of Brazilian "public policies", draws attention to the complexity of local power, saying that it is always in connection with national politics.

---

stimulus to natural development (Sachs, 2000). In Brazil, "the structural reforms of the Brazilian State proclaimed, among its objectives, the resumption of growth – via the redirection of the development pattern – with an emphasis on the modernization of the economic structure in order to make it more internationally competitive, thus ensuring the country conditions to face the new challenges of the 'market' in the context of globalization – otherwise the country was doomed to exclude the 'benefits' of globalization and condemned to the delay" (Paula, 2003: 183).



According to the author, this dynamic cannot be understood outside of this association of the place with its wider space.

With the neoliberal fallacy contradicted in its prognoses, the need to build another development model was imposed, capable of correcting and readjusting the mistakes and errors of the previous phase of pro-market development. From there, a new ethos for development emerged, shaped by the version called sustainable development (Sachs, 2000), whose main challenge would be to equate economic development with the preservation of environmental resources and social justice, so as to solve the growing dissatisfaction of broad sectors of the Latin American population, due to the deterioration of the deepened living conditions, from the 1990s.

Eli Diniz (2009) comments that this inflection point of liberalism, without reins, inverted contemporary approaches, recovering the importance of the role of the State as a regulator, inducer and coordinator of development: "the nature and quality of state interventionism thus reassumes a prominent role in the discussion on the paths of development, in the context of globalized capitalism, recognizing the pertinence of different modalities of state action. In addition, it should be added (...) the importance of the state coordination function to achieve increased growth and competitiveness of national economies (...). Instead of thinking, as at the height of neoliberal thought, in terms of polarities, as the opposition between the statist-protectionist model versus the market economy; export model versus model, aimed at the domestic market; developmental matrix versus neodevelopmentalism, I believe that the proposal of the close relationship of complementarity between the market, the associative activity, the micro-economic agents and the central aspects of the current institutional framework, that is, productive regimes refer to the organization of production through markets and related institutions, is more fruitful" (DINIZ, 2009, p. 12).

In summary, Eli Diniz's argument emphasizes the centrality of the State in the coordination of economic agents, public and/or private, to direct development strategies, aimed at the "achievement of collective goals"; reversing that trajectory of "growth, associated with inequality in income distribution, a mark of the old developmental pattern". The author concludes by saying that it is no longer possible to "emphasize economic expansion, to the detriment of environmental resources. On the contrary, they represent inseparable aspects of a national project, which responds to the aspirations of the population as a whole" (DINIZ, 2009, p. 13).

At this moment, nature began to appear in development strategies as a presupposition of development itself, since, in the previous moments, it was considered as





an aspect of figuration. But if the theme of nature entered development strategies late, this does not mean that the debate on the environmental issue was not already on the agenda, at least, since the post-war period, when the subject gained a scientific tone, it is because the discussion about the environment has always been subordinated to the economic debate, in the social fabric.

In this process, the formulation of the concept of sustainable development was disseminated internationally, starting in 1988, by the World Commission on the Environment – CMMA, known as the Brandtland Commission, which produced a report, defining the principles of sustainable development, approved by representatives of more than 180 countries, present at the meeting. At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, these foundations of the notion of sustainability were once again ratified politically. The foundation of the conception of sustainable development according to the Commission assures that: Sustainable development is a process of transformation in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change harmonize and reinforce present and future potential in order to meet future needs and aspirations ... it is the one that meets the needs of the present without compromising the possibility of future generations meeting their own needs (IBGE, 2002, p. 11).

The Hague Report on Sustainable Development, from concept to action, organized by the Ministry of Development Cooperation of the Netherlands and UNDP in March 1992, considers "that there is a growing consensus throughout the world that sustainable development must meet the needs of current generations, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Jan PRONK and Mahbubul HAQ, 1992, p. 04). Teresa Flores BEDREGAL adds that "the principle of sustainability implies a process that can be maintained over time, because based on a comprehensive long-term vision, it contemplates a series of forecasts so that minimal damage is caused and/or both cultural and productive capital is restored, and social and cultural capital are maintained in good conditions". He warns that "this is not easy to achieve because it implies a highly qualified human capital, science, environmental technology and an effective political-legal order (BEDREGAL, undated, p. 32).

In the words of Joachim Spangenberg (1998), who explores a conception of sustainable development, in a more ecological approach, the author, paraphrasing the scientist P.M. Farnside, highlights the limits and depletion of natural resources which the development process would have the basic function of promoting their reorganization for use at sustainable levels. With this argument, he considers that "development refers to a change, which implies an improvement in the way people support themselves. Although the word is often misused as a synonym for 'growth', it does not necessarily imply an increase in the consumption of matter and energy in an economy. Indeed, if continued



growth in flow or stock is necessary, 'sustainable development' would be contradictory. As growth limits restrict the use of both renewable and non-renewable resources, strategies for sustainable development must, in the long run, focus on reorganizing resource use and sharing the benefits of that use" (SPANGENBERG, p. 20-21).

## CONCLUSION

The great period that the debate on the valorization of nature went through to have an effect on development strategies, in the way we understand it today, effectively since the post-war period, until finally conquering political legitimacy of national governments, of almost all countries in the world, occurred at the end of the twentieth century, indicated the enormous challenge of equalizing development with the action of state coordination of economic agents, aimed at achieving goals of social justice, economic performance and environmental sustainability. The recent development experience of the Government of the Forest, in Acre, has been important to assess the sustainable character of development in this westernmost region of the Amazon.

Productive activities were already under development and closely linked to the government's economic policy when, from the socio-environmental conflicts in the countryside, the Social Movement of Rubber Tappers emerged, with the organization of rural unions, giving visibility to the theme of nature. The articulation of the struggle for land with ecology and the internationalization of the resistance of the rubber tappers of Acre for the cause of tropical forests, alerted the world about the importance of environmental preservation and proclaimed the need for development processes to incorporate the dimension of environmental sustainability, as a principle of development. In the face of the sophisticated machines, increasingly complex in their gears, the hermetic theories about the planet, as well as the eloquent political speeches, laudatory or not, in a very tragic way, it was the rubber tappers who, in the interior of the Acre forests, took the most concrete measures for the preservation of nature, with the tie against the felling of Acre's forests, similar to other forms of resistance in Latin America. From his experience the last elements for the political project of the Forest Government were derived.



## REFERENCES

1. Abramovay, R. (2000). \*Functions and measures of rurality in contemporary development\* (No. 3). IPEA – Directorate of Social Studies, USP.
2. Almeida, A. W. B. (1995). \*Babassu coconut breakers: Identity and mobilization\*. III International Meeting of Babassu Coconut Breakers.
3. Anderson, P. (2004). The role of ideas in the construction of alternatives. In A. Boron (Ed.), \*New world hegemony: Alternatives for change and social movements\* (pp. 11–30). Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (CLACSO).
4. André, M. E. D. A. (1996). The role of research in teacher training. In A. M. de M. Rodrigues & M. da G. N. Mizukami (Eds.), \*Teacher education: Current trends\* (pp. 95–105). EdUFSCar.
5. Arendt, H. (2004). \*What is politics?\* (5th ed.). Bertrand Brasil.
6. Arrighi, G., & Silver, B. J. (2001). \*Chaos and governability in the modern world system\*. Contraponto; UFRJ Press.
7. Arroyo, J. C., & Machado, J. A. da C. (Eds.). (1998). \*Amazonia: Strategies for sustainable development. A contribution to the elaboration of development plans and Agenda 21\*. International Symposium on the Amazon – SAI, UFPA.
8. Arroyo, M. (2013). \*Ofício de mestre: Imagens e autoimagens\* (15th ed.). Vozes.
9. Bakhtin, M. (2006). \*Marxism and philosophy of language\* (12th ed.). Hucitec.
10. Barros, G. R. (1993). \*In the far west confines: The presence of Captain Regos Barros in the Upper Juruá (1912–1915)\* (Vol. 1). Army Library.
11. Basílio, S. T. C. (1992). \*Rubber tappers from Xapuri in the struggle for land and forest defense: The rubber tapper project, cooperativism and popular education\* [Unpublished master's thesis]. PUC São Paulo.
12. Bedregal, T. F. (n.d.). \*¿Qué es desarrollo sostenible?\* ICIB – Instituto de la Biodiversidad, Journal of Political Ecology of Bolivia, (1).
13. Benchimol, S. (1977). \*Amazonia: A little before and beyond after\*. Umberto Calderaro.
14. Benchimol, S. (1992). \*Romanceiro da Batalha da Borracha\*. Imprensa Oficial.
15. Bonavides, P. (2007). \*Political science\*. Malheiros Editores Ltda.
16. Bourdieu, P. (1987). \*Things said\*. Brasiliense.
17. Bourdieu, P. (1996). \*Practical reasons: On the theory of action\*. Papirus.



18. Brandão, C. R. (1999). \*The affection of the land: Imaginaries, sensibilities and motivations of relationships with nature and the environment between farmers and ranching breeders in the neighborhood of Pretos, on the slopes of the Mantiqueira mountain range, in Joanópolis\*. Unicamp Press.
19. Brandt, S. A. (1979). \*Brazilian agricultural market\*. Nobel.
20. Braudel, F. (1985). \*The dynamics of capitalism\*. Editorial Teorema.
21. Braudel, F. (1989). \*A history lesson by Fernand Braudel\* (L. Magalhães, Trans.). Jorge Zahar Editor. (Original work published 1986)
22. Brilhante, S. H. C., & Buci-Glucksman, C. (1980). \*Gramsci and the state\*. Paz e Terra.
23. Cadaxo Sobrinho, E. S. (1999). \*Economic and environmental analysis of the replacement of the Amazon rainforest by anthropogenic activities. Analysis applied to the feasibility study of the BR-364 highway in the Rio Branco section, border with Peru, Acre, Brazil\* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Fluminense Federal University.
24. Campbell, C. E. (1990). \*The role of the popular education project in the mobilization of a rural community: A case study with rubber tappers in Acre/Brazil\* (C. Roney, Trans.) [Unpublished master's dissertation]. UFF.
25. Caruso, R. C., Silva, S. de C. R. da, & Marcondes, R. (2023). Use of 3D printing in teaching-learning: A systematic review on the main problems found. \*Boletim de Conjuntura (BOCA), 16\*(47), 448–473. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10208017>
26. Carvalho, H. M. (2005). \*The peasantry in the XXI century: Possibilities and conditioning of the development of the peasantry in Brazil\*. Vozes.
27. Carvalho, M. N. (2019). \*Performance analysis of a silica gel regeneration cycle as a filament dehumidifier for 3D printing\* [Unpublished manuscript].
28. Cassirer, E. (2005). \*Essay on man: Introduction to a philosophy of human culture\* (T. R. Bueno, Trans.). Martins Fontes.
29. Cavalcante, M. R. V. (2005). The issue of cattle and wood in the Chico Mendes Extractive Reserve: Some reflections. In M. A. de Oliveira (Ed.), \*Socioparticipatory research in the western Amazon: Adventures and misadventures\* (pp. 31–50). EDUFAC.
30. CEDI. (n.d.). \*Unionism in the countryside. Interviews. Evaluation, perspectives and challenges\* (Cadernos do CEDI 20). CEDI.
31. CNS. (1992). \*III National Meeting of Rubber Tappers\*. CNS.



32. Costa, C. A. F. da. (1993). \*Social conflicts in the countryside and the integrated rural support centers – NARIS\* [Unpublished monograph]. DE/UFAC.
33. Costa, C. (1998). \*The conquest of the Western desert: Subsidies for the history of the territory of Acre\*. Cultural Foundation of the State of Acre. (Original work published 1973)
34. Costa Sobrinho, P. V. (1992). \*Capital and labor in the Western Amazon: Contribution to the social history and union struggles in Acre\*. Cortez; UFAC.
35. Cruls, G. (1939). Impressions of a visit to the Ford Industrial Company of Brazil. \*Revista Brasileira de Geografia, 1\*(4), 10–30.
36. Cruzeiro do Sul, City Hall of. (1981). \*77th Anniversary of Cruzeiro do Sul. 19th of the Political Emancipation of Acre. 1904–1981\*. City Hall of Cruzeiro do Sul.
37. Cruzeiro do Sul, City Hall of. (1990). \*Organic Law of the Municipality\*. City Hall of Cruzeiro do Sul.
38. Cruzeiro do Sul, City Hall of. (1994). \*Album: The city of Cruzeiro do Sul: Revisiting the Juruá\*. Federal University of Acre.
39. Cruzeiro do Sul, City Hall of. (2004). \*Cruzeiro do Sul: Um século 1904–2004\*. City Hall of Cruzeiro do Sul.
40. Cruzeiro do Sul, City Hall of. (2004). \*Commemorative edition of the centenary 1904–2004\* (Vol. II, Tomo I). City Hall of Cruzeiro do Sul.
41. Cruzeiro do Sul, Territory of Acre. (1957). \*Report presented to the President of the Republic Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira\*. Territory of Cruzeiro do Sul.
42. Cunha, E. (1986). \*A paradise lost: Essays, studies and pronouncements on the Amazon\* (Brazilian Documents Collection, Vol. 203). José Olympio Editora.
43. Dahrendorf, R. (1997). \*After 1989: Moral, revolution and civil society\*. Paz e Terra.
44. Diegues, A. C. (1998). \*The myth of untouched nature\* (2nd ed.). Hucitec.
45. Diniz, E. (2009, November 3–6). \*State, varieties of capitalism and development in emerging countries\* [Paper presentation]. International Seminar INCT-PPED-IE-UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
46. Domingos Neto, J. de A. (2004). \*Aos trancos e barrancos: Identity, culture and resistance seringueira na periferia de Rio Branco (1970–1980)\*. ADUFAC.
47. Duarte, É. G. (1987). \*Conflicts for land in Acre: The resistance of the rubber tappers of Xapuri\*. Casa da Amazônia.



48. Eliade, M. (2001). *\*The sacred and the profane: The essence of religions\**. Martins Fontes.
49. Elias, N. (1993). *\*The civilizing process II: Formation of the state and civilization\** (Vol. 2). Jorge Zahar Editores.
50. Escobar, A. (2005). The place of nature and the nature of the place: Globalization or post-development? In E. Lander (Ed.), *\*The coloniality of knowledge: Eurocentrism and social sciences\** (pp. 101–120). CLACSO.
51. Esteves, B. M. G. (1998). *\*State, ecology and the development of the agrarian question in the Amazon\** (RE-RH/02). CAPES/MARE/CNPq/FINEP-CPDA/UFRRJ.
52. Esteves, B. M. G. (1999). *\*From the "meek" to the "guardian of the forest": A study of the process of social transformation of the rubber plantation system, based on the Chico Mendes Extractive Reserve\** [Unpublished master's thesis]. CPDA/UFRRJ.
53. Farah, S., Anderson, D. G., & Langer, R. (2016). Physical and mechanical properties of PLA, and their functions in widespread applications: A comprehensive review. *\*Advanced Drug Delivery Reviews, 107\**, 367–392. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addr.2016.06.012>
54. Fatheuer, T., Arroyo, J. C., & Machado, J. A. da C. (Eds.). (1998). *\*Amazonia: Strategies for sustainable development. A contribution to the elaboration of development plans and Agenda 21\**. International Symposium on the Amazon – SAI, UFPA.
55. Fernandes, B. M. (2006). *\*Questão agrária na América Latina\**. In *\*Enciclopédia contemporânea de América Latina y el Caribe\**. <http://www2.prudente.unesp.br/dgeo/nera/Bernardo2006>
56. Fernandes, M. I. (1999). *\*The PT in Acre: The construction of a third way\** [Unpublished master's dissertation]. UFRN.
57. Ferrante, M. G. (2003). *\*The rubber plantation\** (2nd ed.). UFAC/FUNDAPE.
58. Fiori, J. L. (1999). States, currencies and development. In J. L. Fiori (Ed.), *\*States and currencies in the development of nations\** (pp. 49–85). Vozes.
59. Fiori, J. L. (2004). Formation, expansion and limits of global power. In J. L. Fiori (Ed.), *\*American power\** (pp. 11–64). Vozes.
60. Fiori, J. L. (2007). Looking at the Latin American left. In E. Diniz (Ed.), *\*Globalization, state and development: Dilemmas of Brazil in the new millennium\** (pp. 101–120). Editora FGV.
61. Freire, P. (2004). *\*Pedagogy of autonomy: Knowledge necessary for educational practice\** (29th ed.). Paz e Terra.



62. Freitas, H. B. I. (1996). \*Teacher training: A challenge\*. UCG.
63. Galvão, R. (1955). Aspects of the rubber economy in the Territory of Acre. \*Brazilian Journal of Geography, 17\*(2), 20–40.
64. Garrafiel, D. R. (2008). \*Public policies for sustainable development in the State of Acre (1999–2002)\* [Unpublished master's dissertation]. UFAC.
65. Gatti, A. B. (2009). Teacher training: Current conditions and problems. \*Brazilian Journal of Teacher Training, 1\*(1), 90–102.
66. Girardi, E. P. (2008). \*Atlas of the Brazilian agrarian question: An analysis of agrarian problems through the map\*. Federal University of Mato Grosso. <http://www.fct.unesp.br/nera/atlas>
67. Gonçalves, C. V. P. (1999). \*In the varadouros of the world: From rubber rubber territoriality to rubber tree territoriality; from the rubber plantations to the Extractive Reserve\* [Unpublished manuscript].
68. Gramsci, A. (1987). \*Dialectical conception of history\* (C. N. Coutinho, Trans., 7th ed.). Civilização Brasileira.
69. Gramsci, A. (1988). \*Machiavelli, politics and the modern state\* (L. M. Gazzaneo, Trans., 6th ed.). Civilização Brasileira.
70. Gudynas, E. (2003). \*Ecología, economía y ética del desarrollo sostenible\*. ICIB/CLAES – Latin American Center for Social Ecology, Plural Editores.
71. Hall, S. (2004). \*Cultural identity in post-modernity\*. PD&A.
72. Houaiss, A., & Villar, M. de S. (2001). \*Houaiss dictionary of the Portuguese language\*. Antônio Houaiss Institute of Lexicography and Database of the Portuguese Language S/C Ltda, Objetiva.
73. IBGE. (2002). \*Sustainable development indicators: Brazil 2002\* (Estudos e Pesquisas, No. 2). Geoscience Directorate, IBGE.
74. Ingold, T. (1992). Culture and perception of the environment. In E. Croll & D. Parkin (Eds.), \*Bush base: Forest camp. Culture, environment\* (pp. 39–56). Routledge.
75. Keyser, B. (1990). \*La renaissance rurale\*. Colin.
76. Krawczyk, N. (2009). \*High school in Brazil\*. Ação Educativa.
77. Leff, E. (2000). \*Ecology, capital and culture: Environmental rationality, participatory democracy and sustainable development\*. Editora da FURB.
78. Leis, H. (1999). \*Unsustainable modernity\*. Vozes.



79. Lesbaupin, I. (Ed.). (1999). \*The dismantling of the nation: Balance of the FHC Government\*. Vozes.
80. Lima, C. de A. (1970). \*Coronel de Barranco\*. Civilização Brasileira.
81. Löwy, M. (2004). Marx, Engels and ecology. \*Margem Esquerda: Marxist Essays, (3)\*, 15–30.
82. MacFarlane, A. (1987). \*The culture of capitalism\*. Zahar.
83. Mann, M. (2000). Nation states in Europe and other continents: Diversify, develop, not die. In G. Balakrishnan (Ed.), \*A map of the national question\* (pp. 101–120). Contraponto.
84. Marsden, T. (1992). Exploring a rural sociology for the Fordist transition. \*Sociologia Ruralis, 32\*(2/3), 209–230.
85. Martinello, P. (1988). \*The rubber battle in World War II and its consequences for the Amazon Valley\*. Cadernos da UFAC.
86. Martins, E. (1998). \*Chico Mendes: A people of the forest\*. Garamond.
87. Martins, J. de S. (Ed.). (1986). \*Critical introduction to rural sociology\*. Hucitec.
88. Martins, J. de S. (1994). \*The power of delay: Essays in the sociology of slow history\*. Hucitec.
89. Marx, K. (1998). \*Capital: Critique of political economy\* (Book I, R. Sant’Anna, Trans., 16th ed.). Civilização Brasileira.
90. Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1987). \*Selected works\* (6th ed.). Hucitec.
91. Mendes, C. (2004). \*By himself\*. Editora Martin Claret.
92. Mészáros, I. (2004). \*The power of ideology\*. Boitempo Editorial.
93. Moore Jr., B. (1987). \*Injustice: The bases of obedience and revolt\*. Brasiliense.
94. Moraes, R. C. C. (2006). \*State, development and globalization\*. Editora da UNESP.
95. Moreira, R. J. (2003). Culture, politics and rural world in contemporaneity. \*Studies Society and Agriculture, (20)\*, 10–25.
96. Moura, M. M. (1986). \*Peasants\*. Ática.
97. O’Dwyer, E. C. (1998). \*Rubber tappers of the Amazon: Social dramas and the anthropological view\*. EdUFF.





98. Oliveira, A. M. A. (Ed.). (2002). *\*Sustainable development: Ecology and management of natural resources in the Amazon\**. Cadernos UFAC.
99. Oliveira, L. A. P. (1982). *\*The sertanejo, the brabo and the squatter: The hundred years of wanderings of the Acre population\**. CEDEPLAC/UFMG.
100. Pádua, J. A. (2002). *\*A breath of destruction: Political thought and environmental criticism in slave-owning Brazil (1786–1888)\**. Jorge Zahar Editores.
101. Palacio Castañeda, G. (2006). Globalización en la Amazonía y globalización de la Amazonía: Una reflexión sobre la permeabilidad del espacio, el tiempo y el poder en las ciencias sociales. In O. Almarío García & Ruiz García (Eds.), *\*Escenarios de reflexión: Las ciencias sociales y humanas a debate\** (pp. 101–120). Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
102. Pahl, R. E. (1968). The rural-urban continuum. In *\*Readings in urban sociology\** (pp. 10–30). Pergamon Press.
103. Palmeira, M. (1999). *\*Local government\**. PPGAS/MN/UFRJ.
104. Paraná. Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Paraná. (2023). *\*Pedagogical project of the teaching degree in pedagogy\**. Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Paraná.
105. Paraná. Secretary of State for Education. (2022). *\*Curricular pedagogical proposal of the teacher training course for early childhood education and early years of elementary school, at the high school level, in the normal modality\**. Department of Professional Education, Superintendence of Education, State Department of Education.
106. Paula, E. A. (1991). *\*Rubber tappers and unions: A forest people in search of freedom\** [Unpublished master's thesis]. CPDA/UFRRJ.
107. Paula, E. A. (1999). The conquest of land in the forests of Acre. In L. S. Medeiros & S. P. Leite (Eds.), *\*The formation of rural settlements: Social processes and public policies\** (pp. 101–120). Ed. Universidade/UFRRGS/CPDA.
108. Paula, E. A. (2002). *\*Regional impacts of rural settlements: Economic, political and social dimensions\**. FINEP/CPDA/UFRRJ/UFAC.
109. Paula, E. A. (2005). *\*Unsustainable development in the Western Amazon: From the missionaries of progress to the merchants of nature\**. EDUFAC.
110. Paula, E. A. (2005a). *\*Social movements, diversity and single thought in the Amazon\**. EDUFAC.
111. Paula, E. A., & Simioni Silva, S. (Eds.). (2006). *\*Trajectory of peasant struggles in the Amazon-Acre\**. ADUFAC.



112. Pinto, Á. V. (1960). *\*Ideology and national development\** (2nd ed.). Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies, MEC. (Original work published 1959)
113. Polanyi, K. (2000). *\*The great transformation: The origins of our age\** (4th ed.). Campus. (Original work published 1944)
114. Potyguara, J. (1998). *\*Fallen earth\**. Elias Mansour Foundation.
115. Prado Jr., C. (1957). *\*Formação do Brasil contemporâneo: Colônia\** (5th ed.). Editora Brasiliense Limitada.
116. Pronk, J., & Haq, M. (1992). *\*El Informe de La Haya. Desarrollo sostenible – del concepto a la acción\**. Ministry of Cooperation for Development of Holland and UNDP.
117. Putnam, R. D. (1996). *\*Community and democracy: The experience of modern Italy\**. Editora Fundação Getúlio Vargas. (Original work published 1993)
118. Ramos, G. (1965). *\*Sociological reduction: Introduction to the study of sociological reason\** (2nd ed.). Edições Tempo Brasileiro Ltda.
119. Redfield, R. (1989). Peasantry: Part-societies and the social organization of tradition. In *\*The little community and peasant society and culture\** (pp. 10–30). Midway Reprint. (Original work published 1956)
120. Richter, M. (1998). *\*Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development of São Francisco de Paula – A preliminary action plan\**. EDIPURS.
121. Rojo, L. A. (1972). *\*Keynes y el pensamiento macroeconômico actual\**. Editorial Tecnos.
122. Romano, J., & Antunes, M. (2002). *\*Empowerment and rights in the fight against poverty\**. ActionAid.
123. Romero, J. L. (2004). *\*América Latina: As cidades e as ideias\** (B. Josef, Trans.). Editora da UFRJ.
124. Sachs, I. W., et al. (2000). *\*Dictionary of development: Guide to knowledge as power\**. Vozes.
125. Sant’ana Jr., A. S. (2004). *\*Florestania: The Acre saga and the peoples of the forest\**. EDUFAC.
126. Santos, B. de S. (2001). *\*By the hand of Alice: The social and the political in postmodernity\** (8th ed.). Cortez.
127. Santos, B. de S. (2002). The processes of globalization. In B. de S. Santos (Ed.), *\*Globalization: Fatality or utopia?\** (2nd ed., pp. 31–106). Edições Afrontamento.



128. Saraceno, E. (1996). \*The concept of ruralities: Problems of defining a European scale\*. CRES.
129. Saviani, D. (2003). \*Historical-critical pedagogy: First approximations\* (8th ed.). Associated Authors.
130. Schmink, M., & Cordeiro, M. L. (2008). \*Rio Branco: The city of florestania\*. EDUFPA.
131. Semeraro, G. (1999). \*Culture and education for democracy: Gramsci and civil society\*. Vozes.
132. Sen, A. K. (1999). \*Development as freedom\* (L. T. Motta, Trans.). Companhia das Letras.
133. Sen, A. K. (2000). \*On ethics and economics\* (L. T. Motta, Trans.). Companhia das Letras.
134. Silva, A. F. (1982). \*Roots of the recent occupation of the lands of Acre: Movement of capital, land speculation and land dispute\* [Unpublished master's dissertation]. CEDEPLAR-UFMG.
135. Silva, J. P. (1998). \*Preservation and subtlety: The development policy of the government of Acre (1987–1990)\* [Unpublished master's dissertation]. CPDA/UFRRJ.
136. Silva, J. P. (1998b). \*The reaction of the Government of Acre to the criticism of the local development style: Intentions and actions (1987–1990)\* [Unpublished manuscript]. CPDA/UFRRJ.
137. Silva, M. J. P. (2003). Agroforestry systems improve the income and standard of living of smallholders. \*Pesacre Newsletter – BIP, 7\*(1), 4–5.
138. Silva, M. R. (2018). The BNCC of high school: The rescue of a dusty discourse. \*Educação em Revista, 34\*, Article e180301. <https://www.scielo.br/j/er/a/3zZ6Q8mY6wXyq9F8qXyXq9p/?lang=pt>
139. Silva, M. C. R. (2001). \*Union in motion: Political representation and interests in the STR of Xapuri\* [Unpublished master's thesis]. CPDA/UFRRJ.
140. Silva, M. C. R. (2006). The STR of Xapuri and the political representation of the interests of the rubber tappers. In E. A. Paula & S. Simioni Silva (Eds.), \*Trajectories of the peasant struggle in the Amazon-Acre\* (pp. 101–120). EDUFAC.
141. Smith, N. (1984). \*Unequal development: Nature, capital and production of space\*. Bertrand Brasil.
142. Souza, C. A. A. de. (1995). \*History of Acre\*. Elias Mansour Foundation.
143. Spangenberg, J. H. (1998). Amazonia: Strategies for sustainable development. In T. Fatheuer, J. C. Arroyo, & J. A. da C. Machado (Eds.), \*Amazonia: Strategies for



- sustainable development. A contribution to the elaboration of development plans and Agenda 21\* (pp. 101–120). International Symposium on the Amazon – SAI, UFPA.
144. Tapia, J. R. B. (2007). Council for Economic and Social Development: The challenges of institutional construction. In E. Diniz (Ed.), *\*Globalization, state and development: Dilemmas of Brazil in the new millennium\** (pp. 121–140). Editora FGV.
  145. Tocantins, L. (1998). *\*State of Acre: Geography, history and society\**. Cultural Foundation of the State of Acre. (Original work published 1984)
  146. Tocantins, L. (2001). *\*Historical formation of Acre\** (4th ed., Vols. 1–2). Senado Federal, Conselho Editorial.
  147. Veiga, I. P. A. (1995). Political pedagogical project of the school: A collective construction. In I. P. A. Veiga (Ed.), *\*Political pedagogical project of the school: A possible construction\** (pp. 11–30). Papirus.
  148. Wanderley, M. de N. B. (2000). *\*The emergence of a new rurality in advanced modern societies\** [Unpublished manuscript].
  149. Weber, M. (2000). *\*Economy and society: Foundations of comprehensive sociology\** (R. Barbosa & K. E. Barbosa, Trans., 3rd ed., Vol. 1). University of Brasília Press.
  150. Whitehead, A. N. (1993). *\*The concept of nature\**. Martins Fontes.
  151. Wittbrodt, B., & Pearce, J. (2015). The effects of PLA color on material properties of 3-D printed components. *\*Additive Manufacturing, 8\**, 110–116. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addma.2015.09.006>
  152. Wolff, C. S. (1999). *\*Women of the forest: A history: Upper Juruá, Acre (1890–1945)\**. Hucitec.
  153. Žizek, S., & Daly, G. (2006). *\*Risking the impossible: Conversations with Žizek\**. Martins Fontes.
  154. ZEE – State Program for Economic Ecological Zoning of the State of Acre. (2000). *\*Economic ecological zoning: Socioeconomic aspects and territorial occupation\** (Final document, Vol. II). Government of the State of Acre, SECTMA.