



# Globalization and environmentalism: polyphonic ethnicities in the Amazon

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The article examines the issue of globalization, along with its contradictions and the ways in which it guides and shapes specific situations within the present-day reality in the Amazon, while simultaneously engendering a uniformization of economic production and the valorization of cultural differences. The discussion explores the nuances of implementing a massified, standardized productive base that paradoxically fosters the valuing of cultural differences and favors alliances between, on the one hand, ethno-political leaders from indigenous Amazon groups and, on the other, environmentalists and other transworld actors who wield strong decision-making power. The article analyzes the indigenous movement's network of alliances and highlights the polyphony of the different political agents that come to clash with each other within this post-modern geopolitical setting.

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Globalization is one of the most vibrant issues currently on debate, throwing up discussions on the construction of a new paradigm for the social sciences that strives to break away from inductive approaches and prioritizes the analysis of totalities. What it is hoped is that one can understand how the process of globalization reconfigures the specific realities under its influence.

Authors like Ianni (1992; 1996a; 1996b), Latouche (1996) and Ortiz (1992; 1994) have analyzed the different ways that global society organizes its particular realities, redimensioning them in an interactive process in which local singularities start to express social structures and relationships much like those found in the global society, notwithstanding their cultural, social and political distinctions (Leonardi, 1995).

A qualitative and quantitative change starts to be felt as of a given moment in the development of productive forces. This then stretches the capacity of nation-states, which have thus far guided the course of human society, to manage world affairs. The circumstances thrown up by globalization have gained their own dynamics that go beyond the influence and/or reach of nation-states and are autonomous as far as their individual interests are concerned. The unequal exchange of labor and wealth is not ironed out with globalization, but is often exacerbated in such a way that cannot be resolved within the ambit of individual nations.

When capitalism reached a given limit, it started reformulating its technical production base in such a way that implied a new level of social organization and caused the emergence of new global patterns of influence which reduce the material and symbolic output of all people on earth to a capitalist market-oriented rationale (Ortiz, 1994).

The nation-state is not extinct, but it has been subordinated to the priorities of globalization, since in this scenario the degree of feasibility of any national project depends upon how compatible it is with the pressures of globalism. As Ianni (1996a) shows, nations are forced to share or adhere to decisions and guidelines issued from regional and world power centers.

Space-time relationships are changing and speeding up thanks to communication technologies, which have, among other things, made it easier to cross the borders of nation-states. They have not ceased to exist, but it has become commonplace for citizens to cross them physically or virtually in the course of their daily lives, and in so doing, they come up against realities other than their own and are easily able to relativize the situations in their own countries of origin (Becker, 1994).

The dwindling role of the nation-state begs the question of national sovereignty, an assumption inherent to this form of political order. With globalization there arises a need to establish

decision taking structures that transcend the interests of each individual nation-state so that the requirements and priorities of a global society can be met.

Westernization, which is taken here to be the process of civilization associated with the idea of modernization (Latouche, 1996), is spreading, and serves as a point of reference which the ruling society offers to subordinate groups. Ianni (1995) reminds us that the westernization of the world presumes the transformation of values and behavior patterns, which involve the prioritization or worship of the individual, and a veneration of private property, rationality and urbanism, all typical of the lifestyle and culture of western Europe and the USA.

However, culturally speaking, what one sees is not the gradual annihilation of individual cultural manifestations in favor of a single culture, but rather the coexistence of multiple cultural representations. As Ortiz (1994) sees it, the globalized economic structures are at once homogenizing, in that they assure standardized production practices capable of wiping out differences, and fragmented, since they neither abolish local disparities nor prevent the formation of separate groups that then take their place in the worldwide civic society.

The standardization of production helps maintain and expand the subordination of the social groups and classes excluded from decision-taking processes. Different socio-cultural realities join together in different ways with the patterns of the popular world culture and economy, creating unprecedented new shapes and forms. Westernization and modernization are usually associated with an individual way of thinking and behaving, yet the pattern of behavior that is assumed to be the ideal model is the way things are done in the capitalist west, where there is an underlying idea that progress, evolution and the improvement of the human race are synonyms for the adoption of western patterns of behavior.

In his analysis of pluralities, Ortiz (1994) argues that globalization brings about a standard technological base<sup>1</sup>, which homogenizes the production process of objects, but without there being any parallel standardization of social patterns; these are still plural and coexist with the homogeneous elements of global capitalism.

The universal distribution of consumer goods of a similar nature the world over is one of the most visible expressions of the process of globalization. This common facet of global living engenders a new reality, a "post-modern awareness" of the loss of roots, with the production of signs, objects and cultural references that are familiar worldwide (Ortiz, 1994, p. 111). The influence of deterritorialization is felt in different realms of life, affecting "concepts of space, time, loyalty to groups, values and theories,"

<sup>1</sup> The author uses the word 'pattern' for the idea of "structuring standards of social behavior", while 'standard' refers specifically to the process of producing objects.

(Leonardi, 1995, p. 197) breaking down the boundaries of physical frontiers and time, siphoning off the economic and political might of large cities and decentralizing the world's decision taking spaces. Traditional rules of socialization (kinship, solidarity) are broken down, and the market starts to be the realm in which individuals are integrated, whose behavior is guided not by their state as socially bound subjects, but as consumers (Ortiz, 1994).

Worldwide communication networks are making it possible for new world decision taking centers to appear, which coexist with the old cities of the ruling nations. The development of technology is eroding the importance of the seat of decision making; power is starting to be exercised by global economic representatives, which are gradually breaking away from their roots in their original nations and operating as networks, with geographically dispersed nodes of power and production that are simultaneously interlinked by lines of communication and set into action according to the tastes and desires of commercial activities and potential profit (Ianni, 1992; 1995).

One of the possibilities that a permanent, globalized communications system affords is the exercise of political power by socially deterritorialized groups, different from those that previously constituted national societies. The social groupings set up under the dynamics of the nation-state still exist, but they can shift into 'interest groups' coordinated by worldwide interactive networks (Ortiz, n.d.). The sources of interaction between people are now based on common globalized interests, such as consumer preferences or shared social aspirations, and they take many shapes, such as online groups. Jean Chesneaux says that this deterritorialized state is "a general category of modernity, a state of dissociation from the natural, social, historical and cultural environment," (1996, p. 20). Deterritorialized individuals set up closed networks of interaction that are organized according to the culture industry and economic interests, even forming protest groups to take the place of a social space that has been stripped of all stability and continuity.

Another key feature is the strengthening of transnational entities and bodies like the World Bank, the IMF, the PAHO, Unesco, and large corporations, whose power is now greater than that of any one nation-state. They are vectors of globalization and represent the interests of different groups in the global society, despite their claims to represent the whole of humanity.

### **Environmentalism in globalization <sup>2</sup>**

In modern times, a specific relationship has been set up with the natural environment unlike any other throughout human

<sup>2</sup> The term *environmentalism* is used here to characterize a set of ideas and practices which form a multisectoral, global movement structured around stances that are critical of industrialism and demands for environmental protection. This label encompasses many schools of thought and fields of interest, the nature of which will become clearer throughout the text.

history. Cynicism and rationalism are behind the development of a positivist rationale concerning the natural world, where the aim is to manipulate natural resources technically so as to obtain raw materials for continued industrial output. The growing level of consumption on the part of a small portion of the world's population allied with the growth of poverty in underdeveloped nations has so impacted living conditions on our planet that it has led people to question the validity of the anthropocentric paradigm that underlies the utilitarian relationship between modern society and the environment.

The characteristics of globalization provide different lines of analysis for specific situations encountered in the Amazon. These should not be taken as autonomous processes for their idiosyncrasies, but as different expressions of globalization, which are capable of reshaping the manifestations of particular realities.

In analyzing the current situation in the Amazon, Silva's (1997) core assumption is that global processes are manifested differently depending on the local circumstances, and she problematizes how the particular nature of Amazon peoples may be expressed under globalization. The author is interested in the dynamics of interaction between the singular and the universal. The idea is not to reduce one to the other, but rather to show evidence of how local processes are changed by the incorporation of general elements from globalization and how these totalities take on specific features when expressed in regions with such unique traits as the Amazon.

Historically speaking, it has always been assumed that the Amazon people are part of the Brazilian state. The diminished role of the nation-state has allowed players representing deterritorialized interest groups to come on the scene, whose interests vie in power and influence with those of national development policies. The Amazon has become a stage for clashes between a declining national order and expanding global interests. There is a growing wave of criticism of the unrestricted freedom with which nation-states adopt policies that endanger natural resources of global interest.

Issues such as indigenism<sup>3</sup> and environmentalism express the dynamics of these conflicts in the Amazon and put the region in the firing line of the tensions between localisms and universalisms. While just a few decades ago, the contradictory development policies of the Brazilian state were the main point of reference for the Amazon question, today, national groups find it hard to perceive the change of context that is putting at stake the legitimacy of the Brazilian state to manage the region. Brazil's ruling classes tend to view any attempt at transnational control of the Amazon as an imperialist attack from the north, an effort to hamper the economic process of the underdeveloped countries in the south. Leis (1991)

<sup>3</sup> Garnelo, Macedo and Brandão (2003) argue that the concept of the indigenous movement or indigenous politics in Brazil describes the actions taken by the State since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century concerning the ethnic groups that inhabit Brazilian territory.



suggests that this context is infinitely more complex and multifaceted than a simple polarization between north and south, and points out that the Brazilian state is culpable of a twofold contradiction when it welcomes in transnational economic exploitation of the region, yet refuses to accept international control of its environmental policy.

As knowledge about biotechnology is amassed and the Amazon becomes a key element in the supply of raw materials for this sector, these most broad and powerful interests find themselves increasingly at loggerheads with the interests thus far orchestrated by national groups. Business groups operating in activities that add no economic value to the resources extracted from the rainforest are on the decline, supplanted by others that are finding new, advanced ways to natural resources with the support of biotechnology. A field of contradictory interests has thus sprung up between them. Yet some authors, like Pinto (1994), show that despite all the discussion about biodiversity, the region's main export materials are still for mining, metallurgy and steel, i.e. the region continues to play its historical role as producer of cheap raw materials, which are only given added value on the international market after technology is added to them by large corporations.

The technological revolution that is underway is at cross purposes with those sectors of the economy that are lagging behind, for which the existence of tropical rainforests and indigenous lands are a stumbling block towards economic progress. There is a contradictory movement between two or more aspects of capitalist development, which has thrown up controversies that are much bandied by the media about supposed threats to Brazilian sovereignty by foreign groups keen to find ways to profit from the Amazon and to establish worldwide forums to discuss the issue.

Despite a seeming polarization between developmentalists and environmentalists, the conflicting elements are not two homogeneous blocks. There are numerous players involved, such as national and regional businesses, multinational companies with economic interests in the region, and others with a national influence, such as the armed forces, which seek to regain a certain influence in the region's geopolitics. The government's initiatives are still inconsistent: they provide support for environmental protection measures, and yet they also grant extraction enterprises different incentives and tax breaks. Under the impact of the power of deterritorialized groups, national sovereignty finds itself squeezed between increasingly hegemonic transglobal interests, the offensive of national development-based groups, and the armed forces, which share an ideology of persecution in view of the internationalization of the Amazon.

The block that takes a stance against the devastation of the forest contains ill-defined elements in the Brazilian government in charge of dealing with the pressure of global environmentalist public opinion and/or agencies that have an eye to intervening in Brazilian internal politics in the Amazon, like the World Bank. It also includes groups involved in the growing market for natural products and biotechnology, different representatives from the eco-environmental movement and the socially excluded from the Amazon itself, like the native indians and traditional rubber tappers (*seringueiros*). These latter groups run into conflict with the conservationism<sup>4</sup> adopted by government bodies like Ibama, the Brazilian environmental agency, which is often efficient at expelling traditional populations from conservation areas, but incapable of stopping the predatory activities of economic groups, even when these are illicit.

<sup>4</sup> The environmental conservation movement that is still influenced by US environmental policy supports the removal of human groups from forest reserves, which sets up an opposition between environmental conservation and citizens' rights and exacerbates the exclusion of traditional peoples whose means of subsistence are removed.

The environmental movement also expresses the multidimensionality typical of modernity. Authors such as Leis (1991) and Becker (1994) have identified severe criticisms of industrialism and the sovereignty of nation-states as being common elements in most of its variant forms. These groups propose a reduction in world production and consumption of industrialized goods and a reigning in of the autonomy enjoyed by raw material producing nations to exploit and destroy at will the natural resources contained in their territory. The issue at stake is the right of the Brazilian government to manage the natural resources in the Amazon, which puts it in quite a different position from the early 20th century, when it was unthinkable to question a nation-state's right to make use of its territory as it wished.

A group dubbed by Ferreira (1996) as the 'neo-romantics', which originally sprung from the counterculture, makes radical criticisms of industrialization and the instrumental rationality of the west, stressing the need for a new ethic capable of providing a cornerstone for the relationship between human beings and wildlife. For groups like this, the current hegemony of the market and the unfettered thirst for profit are to blame for the money-bound relationship between man and his environment and the consequent ravaging of the environment. They propose the signing of a 'natural contract' to ethically rule over all contact between humankind and the environment.

In Ferreira's (1996) view, such a contract has no chance of success partly because of the difficulty of altering the very building blocks of capitalist production, which stand on an instrumental rationality that has supported the development of the technology that now rules supreme. Technological inversion has been capitalism's response for satisfying the basic needs of human groups, which is sought through mastery of the environment. This assumption has provided the ethical basis for the objectivization of nature –

represented according to western reason as a mere (perennial) source of resources designed to meet consumption needs –, which has been accompanied by the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. The exacerbation of social inequality and poverty in huge areas of the globe and the introduction of industrial production based on the principle of planned obsolescence is accelerating the pace of exploitation of the planet's resources and threatening the right to survival of all living beings, without bringing about the purported reduction in social deprivation (Lago & Pádua, 1985).

The emergence of a putative global community committed to preserving the environment is the expression of a multifaceted mosaic of social players of great diversity whose rationale can be reconstructed by recognizing that they share similar problems, despite their political and geographic differences. These groups are gradually building up a sense of global citizenship that transcends local realities and specificities and, despite its internal differences, produces a minimum consensus on the fight against national developmental practices and the support for regional groups that practice a 'subsistence environmentalism'. These deterritorialized alliances have provided these latter groups access to globalized space, as demonstrated by the rubber tappers movement and indigenous organizations<sup>5</sup> in Brazil.

The Amazon populations are still not very receptive to environmental discourse, remaining faithful to the predatory development practices that have provided the basis for public policy in the region. For the regional hegemonic groups, the ecology movement is tarred with the same brush as the 'exotic ideologies' that tormented the minds of military dictators. Only some of the people excluded from social benefits, such as indians and mixed race smallholders expropriated from their traditional lands by the spread of agrarian capitalism have learnt to use environmental discourse to some extent and set up alliances capable of broadening the influence of their struggle for ethnic and social rights.

The opinions that regional political players tend to express in the media and public pronouncements are marked by a false dichotomy that sets ecological conservation against the survival of citizens. Ferreira (1996) analyzes the limited power of environmental claims within such a social and political scenario as the Brazilian one, in which development is still bandied as the answer, even when it has failed to improve the living conditions of large numbers of impoverished groups, despite the heavy investments made during the military dictatorship. Although the errors and damage caused by successive development projects for the Amazon have been pointed out by specialists like Morán (1990), Hamelin (1991), Fearnside (1991), Miranda (1991), Nitsch (1994), Martine (1991) and Falesi (1991), these analyses have not brought

<sup>5</sup> Garnele & Sampaio (2005) define indigenous organizations as entities that fight for civil rights while also seeking assurances for rights specific to their ethnic difference. They adopt administrative and managerial strategies that are much like non-indigenous institutions, but the actual forms of legitimacy and exercise of political rights are strongly influenced by family relationships, as is typical in the traditional cultures they are from. They are normally run by young, well-educated people who mostly operate within interethnic relationships in an attempt to assure the enforcement of public policies of interest to the groups they represent. These modern forms of expressing power interact with the traditional models of indigenous political leadership, and as they simultaneously attempt to meet the internal demands of their peoples and those of the non-indigenous world, they develop a creative way of coordinating tradition and political modernity.



about any significant change to public policy. As Ferreira (1996) see it, the continuance of provenly ineffective strategies shows that the right to citizenship and social welfare is not a guiding principle for the formulation of public policy in Brazil. We would also add the contribution made by Morán (1990), who has identified the influence of a bureaucratic patrimonialism whose solid roots have likewise assured the perpetuation of such unsuitable policies.

Globalized environmentalism, which exerts such a great influence over the fate of the Amazon, has a weak voice locally. It is only expressed in alliances with groups of outcasts from official society, and bypasses the lines of regional decision taking, exacerbating the permanent strain between the local powers-that-be and the national government.

<sup>6</sup> In this text, the expression 'ethnopolitical movement' is used to describe the policy put in practice by indigenous organizations.

### **Globalization, environmentalism and the ethnopolitical movement <sup>6</sup>**

An analysis of the web of alliances that exist in the ethnopolitical movement in the Amazon shows just how eclectic it is, involving many of the key players in the worldwide environmental movement. On the one hand, it includes Christian NGOs, preaching a global brotherhood with their 'indian brothers', neo-romantics who are nostalgic about a 'natural' life and identify indigenous peoples as part of the idyllic forest backdrop, and even political ecologists, who have supported social movements such as that of the rubber tappers from Acre state. Then, there are entities with very clear political and economic interests in the context of globalization, like the Pan American Health Organization, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty and the World Bank, the main financier behind the marking out of indigeous reservations, which it treats as biodiversity reserves that should be preserved so they can later be harnessed in biotechnology projects (Silva, 1997). Between these two extremes stand an infinity of other players, represented by drug and cosmetics companies and universities that develop studies into natural products and/or the indigenous issue, without forgetting the ubiquitous NGOs, providing support for both causes, which intermediate (and often monopollize) the local groups' access to the global stage.

This state of affairs expresses the contradictions of globalization in the local arena or, as Silva (1997) puts it, the ways globalization is materialized in everyday life. This is not just through the range of technology available, but also through the experiences and actions of individuals who express the many faces of the region's globalization.

Despite its particular specificities, any analysis of the indigenous issue should be viewed closely with the environmental issue, whose

intervention expands its range and which is being managed by the indigenous leaders themselves as a channel of self-affirmation within a scenario of both general and particular struggles (Albert, 1995).

<sup>7</sup> Ortiz (1994) distinguishes globalization as a *process*, which more directly concerns output and the reproduction of practices by concrete members of society in their daily life, from globalization as a *totality*, which he defines as an “extranational set of specific social phenomena common to various societies,” (p. 31). The territorial basis for this worldwide culture is planet Earth herself, which yet shelters heterogeneity and plurality.

Ortiz (n.d.) sees globalization<sup>7</sup> as being expressed by people’s everyday behavior and the feeling of familiarity with the symbols of modernity. In the case of native indians, this process can be seen on many levels: how indigenous leaders behave in urban decision and power centers; how they experience their increasing familiarity with global symbols; and how they learn to position themselves before and join in with these globalized cultural references. Indian villagers, for their part, exist on a different level that is further removed from this familiarity, and they make up their ‘globalized education’ in their daily contact with the agents of globalization, including their own relatives and members of Brazilian society. They transit between the village reality, which is only partially influenced by the power lines of globalization, and the role of world citizen, which they have only recently been granted.

One of the corollaries of modernity is the new meaning given to regionalisms and ethnic groupings, which are re-emerging in globalization with different meanings from their original ones (Ianni, 1995). The indigenous issue, which was previously dealt with only from the perspective of intra-national-society relations and polarized along the lines of extinction vs. assimilation, can be thought of in new terms from the viewpoint of globalization.

The development of globalization and the potential opened up by the environmental movement and biotechnology shed new light on the indigenous issue. Ethnic groups are raised to the status of interlocutors, albeit subordinate, on issues of global interest, such as their knowledge about the natural world. As they gain the support of powerful supranational representatives like the World Bank and global environmental public opinion, their chances of negotiating and potentially facing up to the ruling groups in Brazilian society start to take a new shape. Local issues are made universal and spill out beyond the regional web of power.

Many Amazonian indigenous groups are organizing themselves with a view to assuring their right to differentiated treatment and the preservation of their traditional lands, and in this process the indigenous movement is no stranger to the transformations of globalization. Their forms of organization are often reinterpretations of organizational structures from national societies, but they are used by their leaders as contrasting means for affirming an ethnic identity (Ricardo, 1995). They also mobilize “cultural values and patterns, ways of thinking, social techniques or even utopias produced ‘abroad’, sought by the natives or brought by the *conquistadores*,” (Ianni, 1996a, p. 35).

Ortiz (1994) develops the idea of a 'significant centerpoint' of each culture to explore the characteristics that a social group may have in contact with the global culture and society. The author says that there existed a 'shared system' in each culture which established what was appropriated and what was rejected in any contact with colonizers. As modernity has developed, the idea of cultural centrality has become obsolete, because "in the functional world of world-modernity, elements lose the fixedness of territories and customs ... There is no more centerpoint; the mobility of borders dilutes the opposition between natives and foreigners," (Ortiz, 1994, p. 87). This set of interactions implies deterritorialization, since the cultural elements in place on both sides do not necessarily refer to specific nation-states.

Ortiz's analysis shows that the conventional idea of values and behaviors being imposed from one reality onto another must be relativized. He also warns of the danger of reducing a culture to its products; thus, if native indians wear sneakers or a watch or have a computer, this does not mean that their cultural expressions have been assimilated into these economic goods, since culture and economy are not equivalent dimensions of reality. There can be a sharing of non-economic goods in the world culture because the members of indigenous cultures are now part of a globalized culture that has expanded around the globe. This sharing must be considered as a mechanism inside a "mega-society that has expanded" (1994, p. 97). Native indians, or any others, are not external to the world culture. When something that was once external comes to be part of a global pattern, it becomes native; it gains legitimacy within a diversely polyphonic ethnic discourse.

Deterritorialized cultural relationships are organized as "culture networks with no connection to this or that place and at the same time common to them all," (Ortiz, n.d., p. 60). These physically decentralized networks comprised of individuals from everywhere and from nowhere in particular are reterritorialized in the form of fragments of society which cross many nations without having links to any specific physical territory, joining together in interest groups, such as the entities that support the indigenous cause.

Indigenous organizations can express these characteristics of modernity by organizing themselves into a coordinated network which belongs everywhere, represents all native indians, and has no preset geographic limits or boundaries, forming an interest group whose defining characteristic is ethnic difference. The manipulation of ethnic identity assumes a degree of self-objectivation, such as the adoption of the state of generic native indian, which makes it easier to overcome clan rivalries and disputes. Likewise, with a cosmological redefining of interethnic contact, it becomes possible to find a compromise solution between

the universal and the particular within a field of interethnic negotiation (Albert, 1995).

The broadened reach of some organizations, like Coordenação das Organizações Indígenas da Amazônia Brasileira (Coiab), Coordinación de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (Coica) and Conselho de Articulação dos Povos e Organizações Indígenas do Brasil (Capoib) are prime examples of this deterritorialized nature, contrary to the logic of traditional indigenous culture, which guides power relations on a strictly local level. Large organizations like Coiab and Coica are abstractions for common inhabitants of indian villages. The limited importance given these representatives can be evaluated in the common practice of “exiling to far away” – to entities of a supposedly national or transnational influence – those indigenous leaders who have fallen into disgrace before the local powers that be. The activities of leaders of large organizations are outward looking, but they must equally take account of local contradictions if they wish to avoid suffering a major decline in their power and influence.

The strategies these leaders have adopted to become world citizens have simultaneously involved the adoption of modern social and political practices and a new viewpoint on the disputes and patterns of behavior of the groups of kinship they belong to. Indigenous organizations work along the lines of a national society, but they also translate the clan power relations and contradictions between local groups of kinship.

These leaders have to manage the coexistence of modern standards of political organization – founded on the right to citizenship, the vote, and to equality between representatives – and the exercise of power based on family relations, which grants them the role of mediator with the national and world society, but does not give up control of their performance. This control is restricted by the village chiefs’ perceptions and understanding about the way organizations and even national society work. However, these usually have well-defined expectations as to the performance of their leaders in talks with the ‘world of the white man’, especially when the gaining and distribution of industrialized goods, channeled through the organization, is concerned. Those leaders whose behavior defies traditional expectations and agendas may find their role as representatives summarily vetoed, when they are denied any further right to represent their group of kin with the ethnopolitical entities.

Ethnopolitical leaders find themselves in dual contradictory roles, which they themselves have to conciliate: they must dilute their identity into the generic ‘indian struggling for rights’, making demands for rights as citizens, but they must also underline their ethnic difference within the national and global society. They bear

indelible marks of their tribal identity that are imperceptible to the non-indian, which show their belonging to a specific ethnic group with a mother tongue different from the official language; i.e. different forms of social behavior which, though marked by the world culture, cannot be reduced to it.

Even subsumed to the process of globalization, which it cannot evade, the indigenous movement is one step ahead of other subordinate Amazonian groups, especially the mixed race population, which has no organized strategies for negotiating with world powers and has resigned itself to the contradictions thrown up by globalization.

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