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Introduction

Tourism has become one of the largest expanding activities on the current economic scene: it accounts for about 10% of the gross international product and 4% of the gross national product (GNP), and influences about 52 economy segments. Based upon market strategies, exhorted by public policies and legitimated by social praxis, tourism activities have seduced social the imagination and contributed towards Brazilian socio-territorial reorganization.

Rest, leisure, free time and tourism have always been incorporated into the economic sphere and into territorial changes. Traveling and tourism development came *pari passu* along with the evolution of techniques (mainly in transportation) and of present economic models. Thus, one can envisage the association between mercantile exchanges and trips, Fordism and the commercialization of standardized packages, sustainable development and the "discovery" of nature tourism by the market, flexible accumulation and segmented tourism.

The ideology of labor within capitalist economy incorporated techniques, specialization and normativeness of social practices into free time. At the same time, within free-time territorialities, the market has been able to sell landscapes that are idealized by the media, fashion and by technical possibilities that allow a "wild" nature experience to be comfortable and safe in lodges in the Amazon Forest. For that matter, considering social sustainability within tourism activities leads us to the field of mythologies framed at the heart of the consumer goods society – a process that should be analyzed in the light of contemporary environmentalism construction.

Since the official acceptance of the term "sustainable development", sustainability has been technically regarded in an increasing elaboration of a series of methodologies to be applied to a wide range of fields that attempt to explain socio-environmental dynamics. This investment is mainly centered on the technical issues of the rational use of natural resources. Hence, it has avoided the complexity of social life, expressed by the appropriation of environment and by the organization of territories, something that remains beyond any rigorous and objective technical measurement, not to mention its lack of socio-cultural substance.

Society expresses itself by means of specific manifestations that are determined and relativized by historical time and by socio-spatial formations. Sociopolitical contradictions indicate different ways of appropriation, either appropriation of access or of environment valorization. Therefore, the valorization

of natural landscape and territorial organization are a means of mediation between society and nature. This mediation is not only technical but also cultural and political.

Within the concern of environmental sustainability, one can see the advancement between an initial moment during which a more conservative focus restricted the approach to an economic and bio-centered view of natural resources; and the contemporary period when, in opposition to that view, it incorporated the attributes of democracy, participation, decentralization, efficiency, equity, citizenship, autonomy and sense of belonging to the practices and discourses of sustainability, in that way pointing to the local sphere for its realization.

While state and market had been re-elaborating development and growth strategies under the orientation of new sustainability logic, tourism organization also fit itself into this new conception. The apprehension about "growth limits", which had already been raised in Stockholm, during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in 1972, played a decisive role in the strategic change in tourism planning: degradation of attractive was seen as being a lethal weapon against the survival of sites as well as economic activity itself.

At the same time as the environmental agenda invested in new techniques, methodologies and indicators under a broader qualitative scope, the tourism sector also began to incorporate planning methodologies directed to sustainable tourism. Following the same stages, at first it was committed to the economic sustainability of the activity. Next, it incorporated a commitment to environmental sustainability and, recently, it has committed itself to the sustainability of local populations¹. Approaches for participation, involvement and well being of local populations were added to strictly quantitative models of flows, frequency and load capacity.

Despite the operational fragility of concepts and methodologies employed in the analysis of social and environmental indicators, we can state that the incorporation of these attributes demonstrates integration possibilities among economic, political, environmental and social approaches. However, more progressive conceptions did not avoid social contradictions of economic development which, after incorporating environmental and social attributes – previously understood as external – transformed *local sustainability* into an object of various market and public policy interventions, in order to transform the place into an economically attractive commodity (Sanchez and Moura, 1999). During this process, as they incorporated the discourse of social and environmental sustainability, countless touristic requalification/refunctionalization projects have enhanced site attractiveness through the construction of selective territorialities². The cultural and environmental wealth of many cities and regions is captured by market undertaking (Harvey, 1992, Featherstone, 1995), which, by means of revitalization, sells an idealistic fragment of the territory to the ones who were able to pay a higher price for it.

Taking these considerations into account, we are able to state that technical measurements (economic and/or environmental) are important tools for tourism's economic sustainability, mainly on a local scale. Various experiments have demonstrated efficiency in the conservation of natural resources and ecosystems,

especially in the execution of management plans in Conservation Units and in initiatives of ecologically correct hotel management. Meanwhile, social measurements cannot be restricted to "future generations" concerns – an abstract and substanceless society –, but they must analyze the power of human beings and how they divide land into private properties and public domains, taking the sociopolitical structure as a starting point.

The aesthetic valorization of natural landscapes from the tourism viewpoint has accelerated the urban scene production process and nourished the permanent and contradictory construction of the meaning of the concept of environment. This environment, this highly valued environment in the aspirations of tourism-making, has turned itself into the organized by public policies, sold by tourism markets, incorporated by cities and consumed by manifold social groups.

Having reinvented nature as a valuable landscape, contemporary environmentalism opened the way to the mercantilization of natural landscapes as well as to a new sociospatial segregation profile. The same preservationist spirit that protected natural ecosystems also selected landscapes to be sold and transformed into new territorialities of urban elites, who are now *nature's guardians*. This process restricted or excluded older social subsistence practices belonging to traditional Brazilian populations, implanted selective access to preserved natural landscapes (seaside, mountains, forests) which gained socially distinctive attributes and have contributed towards the strengthening of socio-spatial inequalities. Hence, the association between tourism and environment has shaped itself as a political and economic tool that has legitimated socioterritorial interventions based upon the valorization of natural scenery and of exotic cultural expression.

The mythification of sites so that they can be sold on the tourism market is part of a greater aesthetical process of consumption within social life. Contemporary tourism reinvented landscapes, places and regions by creating attractive features for society flows, and social practices, as landscapes were revalued and regional cultures intensified their consumption. From the infinity of mythical places produced for sale, a series of characteristic rites are developed in accordance to the "mythified" place: large or prestige hotel chains, resorts, jungle hotels, ecological inns, second homes impart new materialities demanded by the touristic valorization of the territory.

This new way of selecting and rebuilding attractive places is part of the appropriation of land parcels that are disassociated from the place in order to be converted in symbols of consumerism and centers of social attraction. Therefore, in addition to organizing, planning is an instrumental rationality that imposes itself on territorial organization – it is indispensable in places where tourism is developed.

Assuming that tourism planning must take social and economic dynamics of the territory, the regions and sites into account, not in the strict sense of a refunctionalization but of (re) signification instead, including the time and space of daily life and leisure, i.e., of tourists and of the subjects who build and inhabit cities, rural areas and regions isolated from the economic dynamics of the country (such as the many fishing villages along the Brazilian coast, riverine communities

living in the Pantanal and Amazonia), this article exposes the socio-spatial contradictions of this process in Brazil. To highlight the existing contradictions between place and imposed territorialities with the settlement of touristic infrastructures, we restrict ourselves to present a few expressions of this activity, in an attempt to bring to light the need of territorial planning as a counterpart to site mythification.

It is imperative to think of local development from its socio-cultural contents. The re-signification of place, strengthened by the organization of the community is the starting point for such communities to react against hegemonic market power. Social management of the place allows thinking about the introduction of tourism activity as a consented re-territorialization process and not only as a de-territorialization of the sites – as is seen in countless cases.

The valorization of natural landscapes

In each epoch, the collective imagination defines the social conception of nature and translates it into material and symbolic artifacts, such as culture. Its more perfect translation was registered in history through the elaboration of the landscape concept, which far from being solely an abstract model of understanding the environment is also the materiality by means of which human rationality organizes mankind and nature into territories.

While social process impinges materiality on time, producing forms/landscapes, landscapes which are built and valued reveal social structure in shaping sites, regions and territories. The landscape is the materiality, but it is the one that allows society to give concreteness to its symbolic representations. The production of a new material context alters form/landscape and introduces new objects such as functions, values and intentions.

The transformation of natural landscapes, primarily since the Second World War, took social imagination to a certain nostalgia related to landscapes of the past and to the intensification of the ecological concern about the environment. The decay of industrial cities, radical ecology and material deterioration of a great many landscapes involved an aesthetic restlessness and ecological inquietude – both trying to build a new discourse about nature and, consequently, about landscape (Béguin, 1995). For that matter, the contemporary construction of idealized touristic landscapes plays a prominent role.

The elimination of traditional landscapes from human sight put in question the capitalist development model and the boundaries to growth. Landscapes deprived of beauty as well as the symbolic landscapes of an eminent socio-environmental risk strike the eye: forests devastated by lumber merchants or by agriculture or cattle breeding; "moonlike" landscapes abandoned after mining, deserts provoked by inadequate handling of land, rivers transformed into industrial and domestic waste canals, shantytowns, land occupations, huge garbage dumps (the last resources for survival of so many garbage pickers), scar the images of an society of abundance. After all, repugnant landscapes that we wish we did not see because we know they were not engendered by a hostile and vengeful nature can now be compensated for by idealized tourism landscapes (Luchiari, 2001).

Nevertheless, it is market rationality that impregnates the ideology of social practices: this new way of looking which transformed nature into environment and an attractive natural landscape for tourism has produced a socio-territoriality of exclusion. Thus, the concept of environment is one of a political and economic ideology that does not generate any structuring logic for a re-enchantment of nature, but for a reorganization of territorialities. This is the symbolic reason imposed upon the beautification of natural landscapes through touristic consumption.

The positive expression of contemporary landscapes refers to domesticated nature. Even when conserved as "wild", they are controlled and monitored. Nature-landscapes – postcards of ecological discourse –, according to current trends, will be transformed into parks, reservations; walled-off, segregated, privatized areas, nature enclaves within the social organization of the world. In addition, this is the meaning which contemporary society has ascribed to the landscape by means of aesthetical valorization of nature. We revalorize it at the same time as we fence it as though it were the last resource left to save the remains of the traditional landscape without realizing that this landscape no longer exists – it is the selectively organized society which is represented in these refuges.

Public tourism policies in the territorial normativeness³

It was only from the 1990's that tourism sectors in Brazil began to receive greater attention on the part of the government and greater credibility on the part of private initiative. According to Caio Luiz de Carvalho, chairman of Embratur (Brazilian Institute of Tourism) and Managing Director of the Executive Office of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the *National Policy for Tourism* (conceived in 1995, developed in partnership with WTO, Banco do Brasil, Sebrae and Caixa Econômica Federal and ratified by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso) "symbolizes the re-engineering of Brazilian tourism" (BrasilTuris, 1997:7). For Caio Carvalho, "it is necessary to transform raw materials into products", one of the anchors of the project *Brasil Empreendedor ...* Tourism, a strategic activity of the Brazilian government. In Brazil, this contemporary dynamism of the sector is associated with currency stability during this period, the consolidation of business tourism, mainly associated with Mercosur, and with the implementation of various governmental policies, which have in sight not only the transformation of the tourism sector into an important instrument for economic development but also transforming the country into a competitive product within the international tourism market.

Although in frank expansion, Brazil occupies the 29th position among the main touristic destinations in the world. It had more than three million foreign tourists in 1995 and 5.1 million in 2000. Despite the unmistakable ascent of the sector, there is a lack of planning, skilled labor, infrastructure, adequate transport systems, accessible airfares and qualified services. Moreover, in many attractive regions, principally in the Northeast, the Center-West and North of the country, there is a lack of basic sanitation.

Despite increasing dynamism, it is, more often than not, contrasted with local realities and with socioeconomic, cultural and environmental issues of the

receiver region. Therefore, it is very important that the guidelines for local, regional and national tourism development are widely discussed in different forums, including the participation of diverse segments and representatives of the society.

With the multiplication of federal, state and municipal public policies for the sector, we are able to effectively say that, today, there is a Brazilian government strategic activity devoted to insert the country into the international tourism market. This project, which is centered on basic infrastructure improvement so that tourist business can be received, modernization in tourism infrastructure, in international marketing strategies and in the training of skilled labor, sees national tourism development through a foreigner's eye. Therefore, noteworthy projects have been implemented independently from the local population's interests concerning land management and even to the detriment of internal tourism⁴.

The Action Program for the Development of Integrated Tourism (*Programa de Ação para o Desenvolvimento Integrado do Turismo - Prodetur*), for instance, with funds from the Inter-American Development Bank funds and counterparts of both federal and state governments conceived and structured in both federal and state spheres, is aimed at establishing urban infrastructure in regions which are still poor though having a high potential in natural attractions for the organization of tourism activity. This program makes parcels of the territory technically viable to draw private enterprise towards the development of infrastructure and touristic equipment. Initially, it was established in nine states of the Northeast Region and now it has programs under development in the North, Center-West and South Regions.

Cruz (2000) calls this process "urbanization for tourism", in opposition to this conception of "tourism urbanization" (Mullins, 1991, Luchiari, 1999). The former refers to state investment in urban infrastructure in areas which are still poor though bearing natural potential for international tourism development; the latter, of regional range, occurs in either valorized and attractive areas which are structured mainly by private enterprise, by individual funding and by local consent. Cities and counties are the ones who choose tourism as their main economic activity, defining specific urbanization traits: increase in real estate speculation, residential segregation, greater visibility of consumption in relation to production, aesthetic valorization of natural and built landscapes, fast population growth propelled by migration flows, seasonal job offers, strengthening of dweller's associations, high cost of living during tourist season, production of new consumer spots such as shopping centers, malls, fast food restaurant chains, airports, residential condos, etc, insertion of a new system of objects that are concerned with the identity of the modern consumer society.

Urbanization for tourism implemented by Prodetur made use of financial resources amounting to US\$8 billion to promote territorial modernization (building and modernization of airports, road construction and paving, sanitation infrastructures, historic site recovery in the Northeast, among other actions), offering tourism infrastructure initiatives to private capital. This policy stimulated a boom of hotel undertakings along Brazilian coast: in 2002, either international or local groups have invested US\$6 billion in the construction of about 300 resorts, hotels and inns. Greater undertakings (amounting to about US\$ 100 million)

include the American group Marriott; the Portuguese Pestana, Amorim, Vila Galé, Alto Relevo and Alexandre Almeida; groups such as Odebrecht, Andrade Gutierrez, Bozano and Multiplan; the Mexican group Posadas; the Italian group Studio Europa Engineering; the French hotel chain Accor, among others.

In general terms, Brazilian businessmen face greater difficulties in large enterprises than do foreigners. With credit lines reduced and interests higher than abroad, the national businessman ends up investing in smaller businesses (small hotels and inns). This is the case of more than 300 hotels now under construction, which are financed by the National Bank for Economic and Social Development (*Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social* – BNDES).

However, this economic vitality was not preceded by a far-reaching debate within municipalities and local populations. This fact puts both environmental conservation and social participation at stake. After the conclusion of a various undertakings, a few local populations have learned how to organize themselves to prevent this kind of implantation. That is what happened to the town of Ipojuca, State of Pernambuco, where local population rejected the construction of buildings having more than two stories in the neighborhood of Porto de Galinhas. About 1,300 apartment buildings are already under construction in this seaside village by either local or international groups.

These new forms of tourism have been turned into true enclaves in socio-territorial organization. The continuity of valorized landscapes is submitted to the permanent spatiality of tourism that, in the use of the territory, transforms and segregates forms and functions. To local eyes, the action which gives meaning to these forms is a great show: this is a time outside of local temporality, these are impermeable structures isolated by security mechanisms, through self-owned technologies and a series of new objects... Outside the tourist season, it is drained to the last drop, a moment when the local population begins to live with the scene left behind, void of function - as seasonality makes a large portion of the established urban and touristic infrastructure idle (Luchiari, 1999:183).

At present, Brazilian hotels have a surplus of beds. Growing as fast as 7% a year, the hotel network has expanded along with the rhythm of real state speculation but not tourist flows. According to Herculano de Albuquerque Iglesias, Chairman of the Brazilian Hotel Industry Association (*Associação Brasileira da Indústria de Hotéis* – ABIH), Brazil already has around 1 million hotel beds.

Large chains have wagered on the segmentation of tourism offers (ecologic inns, resorts, large hotels or more accessible ones) and in private partnerships. This is the case of Accor, a French hotel group that is the brand name leader of fastest growth in the country: Sofitel, Mercure, Novotel and Ibis. In addition to the segmentation, this group knows that "recycling solid residues and investing in environmental conservation can be a choice even for economic competitiveness" (DCI, 05.04.02)⁵. This economic strategy of market oscillation defense cannot be, however, an alternative for smaller local or national investors as they are at the mercy of their attractions product instability.

A new generation of a great many resorts and mega-resorts all over Brazil, primarily along the northeastern coast, brings to center the question of the interference by these large tourism undertakings on the daily life of the local

population. The Costa do Sauípe complex, a group of five resorts 47.5 miles away from Salvador City, State of Bahia, cost US\$340 million and even has a small cinema-graphic set designed for the consumption of goods in stores, bars, restaurants and travel agencies. This complex is bound to do nothing less than ban local populations from their territorialities. A population formed by illiterate fishermen, who cannot dream of frequenting this new territoriality, who are not expected to become a qualified workmanship in this enterprise. In spite of the creation of the Hospitality Institute – an Odebrecht Constructors initiative, aimed at recovering flora and fauna species which have been ousted from their natural ecosystems for the construction of the complex, and aimed at providing training for a group of people chosen from the local population so that they can be trained to work in the complex –, it is hard to see these few indicators as socio-territorial integration. Even handicrafts to be sold to tourist must be produced by craftsmen brought from Bali or Colombia to be the monitors of local artisans. Could it be that this region, with its fishermen and its natural ecosystems, does not have its own cultural artifacts?

The alienation imprinted upon the place substitutes collective organization for individualism by the pasteurization of forms. Citizenship, which should be exercised through culture and territory, is reduced to the economic power of producing, selling and buying a product. Tourist sites, structured by corporative forces, which impose a market value upon land, convert the right of citizenship into a war for consumer power: consumption of land, goods, services, infrastructure (Luchiari, 1999:198).

Under the proposal of regional tourism development, the Federal Government Development Program "Advance, Brazil!" ("*Avança Brasil!*") reserved financial resources of more than R\$800 million reais for Embratur for the implementation of a tourism program entitled "Tourism: the industry of the new millenium". This program aims to develop itineraries and events that better the image of natural and cultural attractions with a target of attracting up to 6.5 million foreign tourists and widen the domestic tourism flow to 57 million consumers.⁶

During the last three years, the valorization of the dollar in Brazil played a decisive role in increasing internal tourism. High purchasing power Brazilian tourists reduced their number of trips abroad, increased the number of trips inside the country and became important subjects who demanded better services from the national tourism industry. According to a study undertaken by the Economic Research Foundation (Fipe) and by São Paulo University (USP) for Embratur entitled "Characterization and Dimensions of Domestic Tourism in Brazil", the changes which occurred during the last few years apply mainly to three factors: better professionalization of companies involved in the sector, reducing the prices of products and an income increase in the upper classes (*Folha de S.Paulo*, May 6, 2002).

This picture broadened the use of air transport, hotel lodging and the transference of income from richer regions such as the Southeast to poorer ones like the North and the Northeast. According to the research: "In 2001, Brazilians put around R\$20 billion into motion to enjoy traveling across the country. This direct spending represents almost two thirds of the Brazilian touristic gross national

product, estimated in R\$29.5 billion, but the money came from a minority. Only 36.4% of the population can travel (about 50 million people) and 70% does so only once a year, during ten days, and they do not leave the region where they reside." (*Folha de S.Paulo*, May 6, 2002).

The majority of travelers from anywhere in the world do not leave their own region. In Brazil this is not so different. According to the research we are quoting, even in the State of São Paulo, one of the largest tourist-sending centers of the country, 47.7% of tourists do not leave their own state. The Northeast generates more income from both national and international tourism, though investors in both the North and Center-West Regions are already reproducing its model. Thus, the beaches on the northeastern coast, the Amazon Forest and Mato Grosso's Pantanal are products that are re-elaborated by external visions, homogenized by market euphoria and adapted to these demands independently from the context of local socio-cultural development.

A first step used by local organization as a reference for the development of tourism activity was the National Program for Municipalization of Tourism (*Programa Nacional de Municipalização do Turismo* – PNMT), developed by Embratur with WTO methodology and adapted to the Brazilian reality in search of a decentralized and participatory management model by means of three moments or phases: 1) Community awareness through training of Multiplier Agents (national and state) and Monitors (municipal), 2) Training – times when Agents and Monitors guide community segments in forming a Municipal Tourism Council and a Municipal Tourism Fund, and 3) Planning – guidance for the elaboration of the Municipal Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development.

In seeking the seal as a touristic municipality,⁷ almost 2,000 counties engaged in PNMT throughout Brazil. Around 1,500 were recognized in a process which brought counties to readapt resources and attractions: theme park construction, rural tourism dynamization, revitalization of historic sites, revalorization of long forgotten cultural artifacts (handicrafts, culinary arts, buildings, etc), concern with socio-environmental indicators, and so forth. These premises for national tourism are repeated on the local scale: available infrastructure is concentrated, attractions disconnected from local traditions are created and much is invested in image rebuilding – marketing strategy which is converted into currency when selling these commodity-cities.

Rural tourism, a recently expanding national tourism segment shows local development feasibility. Nevertheless, the lack of regulations and of specific legislation places the sector at the mercy of agrarian and tributary laws that permits its disordered growth.

The National Program for Rural Tourism, devised by Embratur, is still limited and not legally supported. Both the South and Southeast Regions are expansion areas of this segment. Respectively, they represent 19.41% and 55.78% of the total activity in the country, according to the Brazilian Association of Rural Tourism (*Associação Brasileira de Turismo Rural* - Abratur). Among the labor force, it is important to emphasize the fact that 97% of the hired population is made up of local people. Of these, 28% are family labor, a factor which points to the possibility of fixing the population in the countryside, to rural production maintenance, mainly

on small and medium sized properties, and to local development which, by means of properties which offer rural tourism, add value to agricultural products, many times in regions where agriculture is in decadence.

There is a tenuous frontier between rural and nature tourism. The main offerings involve natural attractions, trails, historic architecture, local talents (music, typical dance), recreation, games and rural chores (rodeos, milking, cultivation, harvest, etc).

The definition of rural tourism often overlaps other segments and varies according to each country. In Brazil, rural tourism is thought of as every tourism activity developed in rural areas, (which, according to the Brazilian Institute of Statistics and Geography – IBGE, 1996, – includes every area situated outside the boundaries of cities, villages and urban areas) does not help in defining the segment.

One of the few guiding documents elaborated by Embratur in 1994, the Rural Tourism Operational Manual (*Manual Operacional de Turismo Rural*) adopts polysemy:

Rural tourism has a multiple concept – a different tourism, countryside tourism, domestic tourism, integrated tourism, endogenous tourism, alternative tourism, agrotourism and green tourism. It is the tourism of 'the nation', tourism conceived by and with the inhabitants of this 'Nation', tourism that respects its identity, tourism of the rural area in all forms (Embratur, 1994: 7).

More recently, Embratur itself (2001: 4) attempted to give more objectivity to this definition: "Rural tourism is a set of tourist activities developed in the rural environment, committed to rural and agrarian culture and cattle breeding production, aggregating value to products and services, redeeming and promoting the cultural and natural property of the community".

Tulik (2000) emphasizes two indispensable elements to define rural tourism: accommodations, organization, and productive processes in rural areas. In rural tourism, despite contact with nature being part of the activity, there is a greater valorization of the local community and of its way of life, customs, values, production techniques and daily chores.

According to Silva, Vilarinho and Dale (2000), there are three tourism modalities within rural space: agrotourism, rural tourism and tourism in rural areas. While several leisure activities (rural inns, rural spas, countryside second homes, fishing hatcheries, farm-hotels or events such as shows, rodeos and typical festivals) are part of tourism in rural areas; rural tourism aggregates services to agricultural productive activity practiced by agriculturists, their family members and by hired workers. In this same line of interpretation, Rodrigues (2000: 54) states that this modality is determined by the local rural property and by the agrarian way of life. The way of life would be what defines the specificity of the modality.

Countless development possibilities of rural tourism have projected the expansion, in rural areas, of a different urbanization process. In Brazil, the regulation of this sector is of fundamental importance to land normativeness. Although territorial-planning power ends up being indirectly transferred to market

hands within the globalization process, the function of the State is fundamental in the areas of inspection and implementation of decisions that have been taken.

Supported by legislation, this tourism modality can help the local development of a great many agrarian communities. By means of labor force, in handicraft production, in the supply of agricultural and cattle products, and of lodging services, these populations can dynamize their economies by remaining in rural areas. The absence of legislation exposes local communities to the power of the tourism industry, to political interests and to investments of external agents and who see it as a profitable business prospect and not from the perspective of local development.

Though these three proposals ("*Avança Brasil*", PNMT and rural tourism) stimulate local development and regional tourism, federal investments do not prioritize these projects. Both regional and national tourism develops on the margins of the federal project, which is to implement international tourism. This fact, in addition to inciting the "war of places" in search of investments and tourist flows, reinforces regional inequalities due to increasing the ability of turning tourism into one urban and regional development vector in the more economically consolidated regions in the South and in the Southeast as compared to the North, Northeast and Center-West Regions. These poorer areas seem to be reliving colonization, the establishment of large tourism projects instead of stimulating local development, renders the territory to international interests.

Technical densities established in new tourism formats make up a specific rationality to amplify economic and spatial productivity of the activity. Therefore, one of the features of contemporary tourism projects is infrastructure concentration. This procedure optimizes the investment and puts the life of local population in precarious conditions: as these people cannot pay for modernization, they are, therefore, segregated in their own land. Hence, one can see the technical modernization of great portions of the national territory propelled by public investments in infrastructure, as preparatory action for the establishment of large tourism undertakings, the greater part, from international capital.

Economic sustainability of the activity becomes the best locational strategy and the most privileged landscape resource. The attractive potential of the region is determined by external valorization of the environmental endowments, regardless of local productive and cultural dynamics. The re-functionalization of place, determined by the international markets, is organized by rational economic models that program local territorialities from top to bottom. The valorization of cultural diversity presents in our territory, as well as community emancipation and autonomy is substituted by the confinement of natural remains and of economically privileged social groups.

The institutionalization of nature tourism in Brazil

The most evident form of the reinvention of nature and landscape by environmentalism is, perhaps, ecotourism. Imprecisely and contradictorily defined in relation to the greater part of the practices realized under its name, ecotourism maintains a strong commitment, at least in its more broadly accepted

conceptualizations, with voluntary and equalitarian inclusion of local populations, bio and sociodiversity conservation and sensibilities of the hosts and guests regarding environmental issues.⁸ In a utopian perspective, it is intended to either promote or stimulate a rupture with daily life structured by unconscious consumerism and by the characteristic homogenization of globalized culture. Meanwhile, the reduction of superfluous consumption and waste in a segment where each modality possesses its own consumption arsenal, in the form of ever more modern equipment, it amplifies consumption necessities with an even greater sophistication⁹.

In Brazil, the development of these practices takes us back to the 60's and "environmental studies" trips by São Paulo schools. In more characteristically market terms, since the mid-80's, it is possible to envisage the organization of a sending market from the big cities (especially São Paulo) and, in the subsequent decade, the structuring of more professionalized and competent receptors in the destinations forcing, even, a change in the forms of operation and commercialization of products by sending agents.¹⁰ For that matter and at present, we are able to say that the reinvention of natural landscapes and of communities and cultures yet little influenced and included by capitalism as being places and symbols for the consumption of privileged parcels of the Brazilian society becomes evident.

In the same way as traditional tourism activities, ecotourism only becomes the object of any regulation attempt in mid-1990's, in spite of the creation of a National Technical Committee, in 1987, by Ibama – the Brazilian Environment Institute – and by Embratur. Thus, through discussions involving representatives of various sectors of society, *Guidelines for an Ecotourism National Policy* were presented. This proposal is concerned with sustainable development and with the conciliation of economic exploitation and the rational management of natural resources. Public organs, private enterprise sectors and members of organized civil associations assessed ecotourism, as it was related to the Brazilian reality, and not yet presenting a definitive structured:

... ecotourism as practiced in Brazil is a still disordered, stimulated, almost exclusively, by market opportunity, neglecting the generation of awaited socioeconomic or environmental benefits. Not rarely the concept and the image of the Brazilian ecotouristic product is jeopardized in both internal or external markets" (Brasil, 1994:9).

Following this initiative, there was the release of Ecotourism National Program, in 1995, with the formation of a Coordination Technical Group – GTC-Amazonia, responsible for the establishment of a pilot project in the Legal Amazon Region with financing by Proecotur with funds from the Inter-American Development Bank¹¹. The focus of this project has been human resources development, infrastructure creation and strategic planning in nine states of the North Region.

Embratur has also supported projects such as the Vale do Ribeira Ecotourism Agenda (*Agenda de Ecoturismo do Vale do Ribeira*), implemented by the Forest Foundation of the State of São Paulo (*Fundação Florestal do Estado de São Paulo*); the Ecotourism Pole of Ceará Central Midlands (*Pólo Ecoturístico do Sertão*

Central do Ceará); the training of technicians in Serra da Capivara National Park executed by the American Man Museum Foundation (*Fundação Museu do Homem Americano*); and the Lagamar Ecotouristic Pole (*Pólo Ecoturístico do Lagamar*), implemented by the SOS-Mata Atlântica Foundation. Meanwhile, in spite of this effort on the part of the federal government, public policies, which have been proposed so far, are modest and their actions still have little visibility. The ecotourism market continues to expand and no further debate involving the many social actors takes place beyond localized efforts in some regions, such as in Bonito (MS) and Brotas (SP).

These counties have noteworthy experiences: in the former, the control on visitors at touristic sites arose from the perception of the owners that the activity would not be durable owing to the conditions of the natural environment itself (mainly calcareous caves); the involvement of local population with services rendered resulted from a discussion concerning tourism interest in the area. A network of local guides, the centralization of reservations for visits, among others, are strategies which demonstrate some efficacy in spite of the already identifiable infrastructure problems in town.

In Brotas, ecotourism comes from the local environmentalist movement, who, mobilized against the pollution of the river which crosses the county and industrial installations, considered tourism an alternative. The town became the most important center for radical sports in the State of São Paulo and, in spite of the presence of several "external" tourism operators, not committed to the conservation of the place in the long term, of the difficulty to control the number of visitors to each site and of the urban infrastructure saturation. The Municipal Tourism Council (Comtur) is still an active organ that seeks the adequate development of local tourism.

Another governmental action within the range of the Brazilian territory is the "Ecotourism Development Poles" project, which is part of the Tourism National Policy. The targets included the contribution "for the formation of an ecotourism systemic network", the facilitation of the "interaction of both public and private agents who act in the sector", the promotion of "human resources development", the dissemination of "knowledge which makes environmental awareness feasible" and new business stimulation (Magalhães, 2001: 66).

Through this project, between 1997 and 2000, places where ecotourism was already practiced and were seen as an alternative means of development were identified. A survey of its potential, infrastructure and main characteristics was made. This diagnosis identified 96 poles scattered throughout the country, though with an expressive concentration in the Northeast and in the Southeast (Magalhães, 2001: 65-68). In May 2002 funds amounting to R\$2.5 million were released by Proecotur, the Environment Ministry, with resources from the Interamerican Development Bank for training (the formation of guides and monitors) and research on the regional potential for the establishment of those poles. This task will be executed by non-governmental organizations¹².

The efficacy of those poles in their developmentalist aspirations is something still in need of assessment, and its implantation merits close attention. Previous experiences, such as the Lagamar Ecotourism Pole (SP),¹³ among others, shows

the need for constant support for the communities involved over long periods of time and not just in planning and establishment. If the (dis) continuity of public policies plays a decisive role in any field, when it is a matter of community development, the reorganization the economic and social practices and the negotiation of identities and values – as demanded by the ecotourism activity – , becomes an indispensable condition.

Foreign territorialities within the unequal regionalization of tourism

The dynamization of tourism in the Brazilian territory, which is positive in many aspects, accentuated, however, a selective socioeconomic development as much on local scales as on regional scales.

On the local scale, we can cite three examples of this affirmation: the construction of large tourism complexes in counties which are poor and distant from the economic dynamism of other regions of the country; the valorization and the subsequent urbanization around Conservation Units; the tourism urbanization process which occurs mainly by means of second homes in medium-sized and small towns of the South and of the Southeast.

Touristic complexes or *touristic enclaves*¹⁴ are concerned with a format which is produced by a given tourism activity present in third world countries. Their establishment appropriates territorial parcels from the area and builds a foreign social content in the same place. These are the international hotels tourism, Mediterranean style or jungle hotels, lodges or mega-resorts, such as Costa do Sauípe. Though there are exceptions to this rule, this type of touristic infrastructure is not accessible to the internal market. It does not make local populations' lives any better and it does not establish communication with the place.

The strangeness of the place, appreciated only in its exotic or picturesque version, is made distant by spatial reclusion enclaves. The liberty of these tourists – mediated by guides, monitors and special transport – is restricted to visits to the touristic sites included in a previously arranged itinerary.

In order to offer benefits to surrounding communities, this type of touristic infrastructure should foresee a counterpart undertaking aimed a revalorization of the site, city or county and respective socio-environmental patrimony¹⁵, such as: the extension of infrastructure and services, inclusion and training of local population as a workforce, valorization of local cultural assets, recovery of degraded areas, adequate treatment of waste (garbage and sewerage), etc. However, the exclusion of autochthonous populations from the new socio-spatial organization is common. Hence, original territorialities are often lost.

Nevertheless, a few efforts to break with this "tradition" can still be found. The search for economic alternatives through ecotourism, which characterizes the urge for an alternative tourism practice, can be demonstrated by two cases: one involving Mamirauá Sustainable Development Reservation and the Silves community ecotourism project, both in the State of Amazonas.

The environmental conservation in Mamirauá – originally an ecologic resort (1990) transformed in Sustainable Development Reservation in 1996 – is noteworthy owing to the management of natural resources made by the local

population through associations of inhabitants and users supported by the Sustainable Development Institute (*Instituto de Desenvolvimento Sustentável*), which was created by the federal government. A group of researchers, extension workers and administrative personnel gives support to an economic alternative program, which deals with the formation for the use of new practices of product commercialization and production, accountancy management and access to financing such as microcredits for fishing, agriculture, handicraft, community forest management, and ecotourism. One ecotourism program already developed is a floating inn that was designed under a minimum impact on the environment.

In Silves, the pioneering local initiative is internationally supported by the Austrian government and by WWF. One dweller's association, which is strengthened by ecotourism operated by the local population, now looks for resources for the conservation of fishing lakes, thus contributing to environmental conservation.

Rather distant from the conception of these projects, the multiplication of resorts along the Brazilian coast is considerable and is now moving to the interior, especially towards the North and Center-West Regions. They use the same logic of sociability and of conversion of public space into a collective space without shopping centers or private condominiums.

Resorts have the same luxurious hotel standards with a variety of equipment and activities that resemble luxury liners. Among the oldest projects one can cite the Transamérica Ilha de Comandatuba, an island near the continent, 43.7 miles away from Ilhéus (Bahia) and the Praia do Forte Eco Resort, 34.4 miles away from Salvador (Bahia). Among the most recent, we can mention the Blue Tree Park in Cabo de Santo Agostinho, 31.2 miles from Recife (Pernambuco) and in Angra dos Reis, 100 miles away from Rio de Janeiro (RJ); the Summerville and Nannai, with Polynesian super-bungalows and private swimming-pools in Muro Alto (Pernambuco), 6.2 miles away from Porto de Galinhas village, the older Venta Club Pratagy, 12.5 miles away from Maceió (Alagoas), which offers of Italian cuisine and hosts mainly Italians; the Barceló Oasis Praia das Fontes, reopened in 2001, 53 miles from Fortaleza (Ceará), the Club Med de Itaparica (Bahia) and Rio das Pedras (Rio de Janeiro)¹⁶.

Among jungle hotels, an undertaking in expansion, we can cite the traditional Ariaú Jungle Towers, two hours away from Manaus (Amazonas) by boat, and the Refúgio Ecológico Caiman, in the southern Pantanal. In the countryside, the Pousada do Rio Quente in Caldas Novas (Goiás) is the most visited resort and is served by several charter flights. It has a hot-water acqua-park open 24 hours a day. In the south of the country, the Mabu Termas, in Foz do Iguacú, offers thermal springs, ecologic trails and waterfalls.

The expansion of internal tourism and the possibility of turning tourism into a lever for both regional and local development do not exclude international tourism. However, the mythification of places for the establishment of internationally attractive touristic enclaves in regions that still maintain their natural ecosystems and their natural populations living at subsistence levels, robs from these people the last resource left.

If we think of Brazilian traditional populations territorialities, we are forced to consider contemporary contradictions that they experience in relation to the extensive appropriation of the national territory. Here, we regard as traditional populations people like artisans, fishermen, riverain populations, *Caboclos*, Indian tribes, *quilombos*, etc. In relation to the extensive appropriation of the Brazilian territory, we refer to the countless occupational processes (either planned or not) which are determined by the actions of State, of the market and of new social practices¹⁷. Manifold examples can be mentioned: from the large areas occupied by up-to-date agricultural production, the multiplication of either individual or business projects concerned with the industry of building, the installation of infrastructure (urban, road and air transport) and, mainly concerning the case we are in right now, the establishment of Conservation Units (Unidades de Conservação – UCs)¹⁸ and the touristic valorization of places that become less isolated.

Generically speaking, one can say that until the 60's it was possible to see two absolutely different types of social organization based in the national territory: one formed by traditional groups and another one formed by the industrial urban society. From the 70's on, this configuration was drastically transformed; at the same time when new projects incorporated areas which were previously and relatively isolated, traditional social groups underwent some disarrangement in their social organization structures. The loss of ancient territorialities resulting from this extensive appropriation did not imply only the loss of property or land possession (something that effectively took place in various instances). It also implied the derangement of the social structure that was sustained by the previous territoriality.

The number of populations who lived in a relatively autonomous economy is countless. They had more subsistence centered productive activities sustained by the reproduction of species and nature cycles, isolated from consumer society and culturally organized according to the historically established territorialities between the social group and the surrounding environment – sometimes more limited, as the simple people who live along the northern coast of São Paulo on small coastal flatlands, sometimes in broader environments such as the rubber latex extractors of the Amazon Region.

As these communities suffered the pressure of environmental legislation, of urban-industrial society demands and of the touristic valorization of their landscapes, they lost the access to natural resources and to patrimonial technologies. The loss of cultural patrimony in this process is enormous. After all, the organized knowledge in classificatory systems for the translation of nature into culture was substituted by the consumption of nature and culture. As Diegues (2000:42) puts it, in relation to the Conservation Units: "According to this apparently modern and globalizing view, parks have been privatized or passed to third parties so that companies assume the task of building and managing touristic equipment, transforming these protection areas into *natural Disneyland*s exclusively for the sake of profit".

This is a great irony, to find that while traditional populations are banned from their original territorialities or while they simply lose the ability of maintaining their subsistence activities due to environmental legislation which is restrictive to economic use or due to the valorization of these areas for production or for the

consumption of leisure and tourism, we create one more excluding way of dealing with traditional communities, concerned as we are about global environmental sustainability. As large areas of the national territory were taken from these populations to be converted into Conservation Units and be excluded from market dynamics, they were also re-incorporated by the market through the appropriation and the valorization of tourism enterprise.

Tourism urbanization is another expression of the activity that is in frank expansion along with the mythification of sites. We are talking about tourism in green areas: mountain ridges, flatlands, valleys or seaside. The main attraction is the quality of life which these preserved natural areas can offer, where valorization is said to be a propeller of several tourism urbanization processes, where contradictions relating environmental preservation, tourism activity and social justice are evident.

As they revalorize nature for leisure, for tourism or for the establishment of their second homes, social elites have stimulated a touristic urbanization process in manifold regions. Neighborhoods, districts, cities, counties, all are now concerned about their remaining forests, their natural attractions in an attempt to find there a source of development for the place. Conservation Units (UCs), Environmental Protection Areas (APAs), National, State and Municipal Parks, Ecologic Resorts, public or private Environmental Reservations are transformed into distinctive symbols so that nearby or local counties can maximize their incomes and enhance their infrastructure offers necessary for urbanization.

However, places, which are valorized this way, are restricted and either middle and upper classes or urban elites gradually conquer the hegemony of appropriation and of the construction of new local territorialities. In those areas, preservation presupposes the prohibition of an excessive division of the area and of high occupational density (both residential and populational). This means that this urbanization proposal is tributary of social exclusion. Assuming that there is a paradox between rarefied horizontal occupation and social justice and between dense vertical occupation and environmental preservation, one can state that this tourism urbanization process urgently needs careful planning in order to correctly arrange the rational mapping of natural sites, different tourism and leisure demands of each county and ways of the insertion of local population within their own land.

Through tourism urbanization the environment takes up a certain modern materiality though it brings from outside its own social subjects, i.e., the city infrastructure locational logic imposes a socially selective appropriation of the urban ground (Luchiar, 1999). Landscapes, which are valorized by their ruggedness and their remoteness from urbanity, are rapidly transformed into the reproduction of objects and actions that are necessary for daily life.

Horizontal private condominiums as second homes form an extreme example of these scenarios, which, regardless of the context, are sold for the consumption of tourism. These new urban forms institutionalize the isolation of sociabilities ignore the context of the place and the local narrative codes, in addition to making unfeasible the encounter between society and its surroundings. Beyond all else, if we consider that this touristic refunctionalization constitutes one materiality of occasional use (seasonal stays, vacations, holidays), we are able to detect the

existence of a complex urban infrastructure in the most valorized areas of those cities, deterritorializing local population and becoming idle during several periods of the year.

Idealized in large cities, these valorized places, which should prioritize the constitution of public spaces (as they are dynamized by the proximity to environmental areas which mostly privilege public use), are framed by market corporative forces. In tourism urbanization, this process is more pronounced. Cities are designed by the economic determination of the building industry and by consumption power (Luchiari, 1999).

On the regional scale, a distinction can be made between regions under reorganization by the incorporation of a part of their territories for the settlement of prominent international tourism projects, such as the Northeast, the North and, more recently, the Center-West and the regions that find new local development means in the development of rural tourism and in the tourism urbanization of their counties, such as in the South and Southeast Regions. In the former, urbanization for tourism, propelled by investments from tourism public policies in Brazil, have incorporated attractive places by creating an extremely exclusory territoriality in relation to the place. As Santos (1997) puts it, the verticalities of a project that has been managed under global economy fall upon the horizontality of the place. Thus, the model of resorts in the northeastern coast, for instance, is a standard product that is very similar to the Caribbean model. It does not matter whether pre-established territorialities are used to refer to another socio-spatial organization format: fishermen villages, sailors, artisans... The model that was planned from the external conception is hegemonic. The sovereign territory of the Brazilian socio-spatial formation submits itself, then, to the hegemonic territorialities of a globalized touristic market.

Meanwhile, in the south of the country, in regions which are more economically dynamic and traditionally more developed, one can see the incorporation of tourism development strategies as indicators of the possibility of better equated local development. Through cultural and nature tourism we can detect local power legitimating the urban development of the county and rural tourism placing value in an economic activity which was in frank decadence in relation to a wide range of products (this is true for many regions in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, where wine growth is stimulate by means of itineraries that include the grape growing areas).

The new possibility of socioeconomic development presented by tourism has been incorporated in diverse ways in Brazil. Although generically, we are bound to state that regional inequalities, traditionally made natural by the sociopolitical construction of the territory have been strengthened by tourism development.

Final considerations

Within diverse processes of tourism infrastructure establishments in the Brazilian territory, tourism planning reinforces the mythification of attractive sites instead of avoiding it. Territorialities that should be valorized (as they restore the

reproduction of the daily life of the place) constitute externalities against which tourism planning refuses to confront. The planning of the touristic space should have the reality of the site as a reference and only from there should it choose the possibilities of aggregating new forms and functions without running the risk of losing local attributes (Boullón, 1997 and Pearce, 1991).

It is important to emphasize the fact that the development of specific methodologies for the planning of touristic spaces should avoid the excessive pessimism about the impacts caused by tourism. Nevertheless, it should be careful about exacerbated economic optimism which, when defending the benefits of the short term, loses sight of socio-environmental costs in the medium and long terms. The simple imitation or the transference of both consumption and development models may not be appropriate to certain regions or places.

Above all, tourism planning should mean a contribution to the planning of the place, to the life of everyone who remains within their daily activities, regardless of the myths through which their places are taken by assault. Myths fade because they have no substance. Tourism urbanization imparts its materialities by crystallizing the promise of a socially and spatially different urbanization.

Tourism urbanization is a process that raises a dialogue between the place and the world. This process promises to mix places and build in each more hybrid sociabilities. If the role of tourism in the mythification and in the consumption of place has been enhanced by means of natural landscape revalorization, then it is necessary that tourism planning potentializes positive possibilities of a new urbanization process that comes to light.

Tourism forms that have promoted social exclusion and spatial segregation within the territory should be thought about through the great challenge of devising qualified tourism planning able to overcome its constitutive myths. It is not only a matter of organizing the formats of new imposing territoriality or of building fragmented territories into attractive spots. Tourism planning should also conform to the social content that preexists in the place's daily life.

Mythification surrounding natural landscapes has fed tourism flows as well as the connection between sites and the world that passes through them. Unraveling such myths is to prevent that these places are devoured before tourism enchantment becomes a contemporary version of Pandora's Box.

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Notes

¹ Even Embratur altered its definition of Ecotourism, from 1991 to 1994, adding to the target of shaping an ecological/environmentalist in awareness the promotion of the "welfare of populations involved" (Brasil, 1994).

² Check instances of historic site revitalization in several capital cities of the Northeast, where local populations (generally the downtrodden, beggars and prostitutes) were dispossessed from their old locales to allow the settlement of cultural centers, nightclubs, restaurants, etc, only for the populations having a high standard of living.

³ Official documents used for the execution of this article are available in Embratur's homepage (May/2002).

⁴ Among these tourism territorialities one can quote the establishment of networks of high standard hotel, jungle hotels or lodges in the North Region, the resorts of the Northeast and of the Center-West. These undertakings have been multiplied by international funding though they have been stimulated by tourism public policies that anticipate the establishment and the extension of infrastructures (mainly urban and the those for circulation: roads and airports).

⁵ Accor presented its conservation project ("Ecology-Brazil Program") to the France-Brazil Trade Chamber. Created two years ago, it includes the recycling of solid residues inside hotels, a partnership for the collection of residues, power and water use control, water recycling, solar power utilization, reforestation, and architecture and landscape suitability.

⁶ According to the Economic Research Foundation (*Fundação Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas* - Fipe), in 1998 they amounted to 38.2 million.

⁷ Through Touristic Information Guidelines (Rintur Program), Embratur established an annual process of identifying and assisting priority counties for tourism development. Thus, Embratur classifies Touristic Municipalities (Municípios Turísticos - MT), which have a consolidated tourism network, and Municipalities with Touristic Potential (Municípios com Potencial Turístico - MPT), the ones which have expressive natural and cultural resources and which are able to make of tourism a potential for their socioeconomic development.

⁸ According to Embratur and Ibama, ecotourism is "... a segment of tourism activity which uses natural and cultural patrimony in a sustainable ways, stimulates its conservation and seeks the formation of an environmental awareness through environment interpretation, promoting population welfare." (Brasil, 1994)

⁹ Far beyond these difficulties, there is also the which delimitates the range of the activities. There is not only a polysemy but a wide range of practices. It is possible to assure that ecotourism is an "umbrella" activity due to involving a multiplicity of activities such as trekking, hiking, climbing, rappel, speleology, mountain biking, horseback riding, diving, rafting, floating, kayaking, sailing, hang gliding, paragliding, ballooning, environmental studies, photographic safaris, fauna and flora observation, fishing (catch-release), esoteric tourism and rural tourism, just to mention the most usual ones. Cf. Serrano, 2001.

¹⁰ On this topic please see Pires (1998) and Serrano (2001).

¹¹ Information available on Embratur's homepage (May 2002).

¹² The presence of a third sector in actions related to Brazilian ecotourism is something that deserves special attention, mainly in this context of vague public power action. Among others, these nongovernmental organizations develop their projects in this area: WWF, SOS Mata Atlântica, the Hospitality Institute, Funbio, the Brazilian Ecotourism Institute and Conservation Internacional, not to mention Unesco, through Mata Atlântica Biosphere Reservation (*Reserva da Biosfera da Mata Atlântica*).

¹³ The Lagamar Ecotourism Pole, devised by SOS Mata Atlântica, despite its participatory conception and the initial support given by Embratur shows no evidence of having produced the expected results, after almost five years after its establishment, in terms of stimulating regional development or community involvement.

¹⁴ The idea of enclaves presented here refers to two conceptual definitions. On one hand, the one concerned with highly programmed specialized areas of contemporary urbanization (shopping centers, theme parks, private condos), the fortified enclaves by Davis (1990) and Caldeira (1997). On the other hand, what Boorstin (1964) called *environmental bubble*, idealized as a touristic heaven which is isolated from the environment and the most significant example of which is the one involving the Méditerranée Club. Both are conditioned by sociospatial segregation.

¹⁵ Some attitudes that are still weak, though included in the elementary principles of ecotourism in relation to local communities, such as medical care to riverain populations, which are visited by tourism boats in the Amazon, can be seen in Pires (1998).

¹⁶ *Viagem* magazine (May/2002) organized a list of the 37 best Brazilian resorts.

¹⁷ Specifically regarding Indian settlements, we could cite the strong influence of the Church as well.

¹⁸ Among the 40 existing National Parks in the country, 19 have been liberated to implement ecotourism.