

Full Length Research Paper

Indigenous way of seeing tourism and conservation in the Colombian Amazon

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This paper is about the way in which indigenous people changed their relationship with natural resources due to the creation of the National Natural Park Amacayacu in 1975, and the way in which indigenous peoples perceive the increase of tourists with the concession of ecotourism services in the same Park in 2005. The purpose of the paper is to show how indigenous people worked previously in the traffic of animal species and wood and, now, aim to promote conservation of these. Also, the paper shows how tourism has not benefited all and therefore has become demotivated to young people who are looking for other alternatives in education and work. For this, environmental interpreters and young people mainly from the community of Mocagua were interviewed. Although, different ways of viewing conservation and tourism in surrounding communities and in the same Park visitors' center were observed. As a result, it was observed that the interpreters have learned a conservationist speech but also are not passive subjects in relation to tourism since they maintain a different way of seeing tourist activities and the people who get involved on it.

Key words: Conservation, Amazon indigenous, tourism, anthropology of tourism, national natural parks, tourism studies, anthropology and sociology of tourism, Colombian Amazon, Amacayacu, ticuna.

INTRODUCTION

For those Colombians who live in the main cities like Bogotá, the southern area of the trapezium is without exaggeration as a place with a few cottages, and a few indigenous persons in traditional costume, surrounded by a pristine nature. It is inconceivable ignorance on a region that covers 34% of the territory of the country.

The territory of the National Natural Park Amacayacu constitutes a large portion of the Colombian Amazon Trapeze. One might think that their policies and activities influence the 295 thousand hectares that comprise it,

which added to the surrounding communities, are close to constitute the whole Amazon Trapeze. However, the Park was created in 1975, and some indigenous communities were overlapped. Before the Park, the natives were living in a boom of traffic of skins of animals and wooden, but with the creation of the Park this process was interrupted. At that time, the park officials conducted trainings for the indigenous peoples and now we can read of the environmental interpreters a conservationist speech.

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The launching of the granting of ecotourism services of the Park in the year 2005 increases the number of tourists in the region and motivates the indigenous peoples to be part of the tourist activities. However, they are placed on the lower end of the production chain, receiving low wages and discouraging as well to the generations of young people whose wishes are to leave the communities and go to study and work in the major cities in Colombia.

At the beginning the author explains how environmental interpreters have a direct relation between conservation and tourism, because they incorporate elements in their discourse of conservation and later they started to work on tourism activities. In this way, they learnt that extraction activities they were used to do it before the creation of the Park are harmful for the community, while actual activities are perceived as profitable, especially for their sons.

Secondly, young indigenous want to conserve but they have problems to satisfy their own necessities of work and education. This group perceives the tourism as a way to obtain money and a manner to conserve the natural resources. But, they have realized tourism do not benefit to everyone, only those who are working with tourism activities.

Finally, the author refers to the ethnography of Cure (2005), which talks about the rumor of the head cutter and how the tourist, and even anthropologists can be seen by the indigenous as head cutters or co-workers of the head cutters.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Disciplines such as Economics, Sociology, Anthropology, and Business Administration have contributed to the analysis of tourism and have interpreted from different theoretical perspectives. The interest of anthropologists in tourism is relatively recent. According to Nash (1996), was in the seventies that they began to show a little interest and, although tourism has involved people and places, few anthropologists have perceived it as a focus of analysis.

Implications of tourism on local population have been studied from different points of view. For example, Fredline and Faulkner (2000) studied reactions and perceptions of members of local communities by the arrival of tourism. In this line, Brunt and Courtney (1999) present a research on the perceptions of the population of a community due to socio-cultural impacts of tourism development.

On the other hand, local population can develop perceptions and positive attitudes toward tourism, but they can also have a limited vision of new investment and employment opportunities. In this way, Campbell (1999) concludes that this limited vision will reduce the benefits for local community, while investors who come from the

outside, take the opportunities.

Other research focuses specifically on the implications on indigenous populations. In spite of the fact that the anthropologists are fleeing a little of the term, now politicized, of *acculturation*, the concept is present in public and academic discourses about tourism in indigenous communities. Acculturation is what many fear that happens with the arrival of tourists: consumption and marketing of culture. This can be found on the research of Stronza (2001), Chicchon (1995), McLaren (1997), Rossel (1988) and Seiler-Baldinger (1988). Stronza describes the "commercialization of culture" as the process by which traditional practices are first evaluated in terms of exchange value and then converted into goods. For example, a festival could lose its cultural and symbolic meaning for the local, indigenous in this case, when it is showed to the tourists and is then marketed like any other merchandise (Stronza, 2001:269).

The thesis of Rodríguez (2007) shows the negative implications on the indigenous Ticuna due to the concession of ecotourism services of Amacayacu National Natural Park. In the same community of Mocagua, León and Cortez (2007) analyzed the reactions of indigenous peoples due to ecotourism and particularly the effects of the concession. The position of León and Cortez shows the fear that the ecotourism will finish with local culture.

On the contrary, Stronza (2001, 2005) explores the way in which the ecotourism and other forms of alternative tourism can generate social, economic and environmental benefits to local communities and at the same time, create real experiences of transformation for the tourists.

The environmental movement is talked about because the theory is used to explain the results obtained in this article. Martínez-Alier (2004) classifies environmental movements in three streams: the cult of the wild, the gospel of the eco-efficiency, and the ecologist of the poor.

The cult of the wild is characterized by a deep ecology and a biocentrism attitude of nature and its actors radiate their powerful doctrines through Non-Governmental Organizations - NGO - located in First World countries (ibid.:17).

In the second current environmentalist defined by Martínez-Alier (2004: 20), the actors that make part of the "gospel of eco-efficiency" downplay the importance of attractive of the nature and its intrinsic values, and rather are concerned about a good use of natural resources. According to Martínez Alder, in this line are the engineers and economists environmentalists, who analyze the impacts of economic growth on the population in pristine areas, industrial, agricultural and urban. In addition, they believe that it is possible the sustainability of natural resources by maximizing the utility and improving technical efficiency (ibid.).

The third, commonly referred to as the "ecologist of the poor", has a close relationship with the protected areas

and natural parks. Since the developmental point of view, these have become capital reserves for future generations, and the local populations that live in them, such as the indigenous peoples of the tropical rain forest of the Third World, "are being recognized as owners of their territories only if they have accepted it as reserves of capital" (Escobar, 1999:88). From this comes a recent stereotype toward indigenous people as "guardians of the forest" (Martínez-Alier, 2004) or "guardians of the natural and social capital" (O'Connor, quoted in Escobar 1999:88). Thus, the responsibility is falling on populations that are generally poor. Therefore, the current of the ecologist of the poor "criticizes that the conservation plans are for future generations while the poor are clamoring for the daily support" (Martínez-Alier, 2004:27). In this way, "the poor harvest animals and tourists pay to see them" (Jacobson quoted in *ibid.*). Therefore the current is a demand that searches for "environmental justice between humans" (*ibid.*).

METHODOLOGY

In this article, interviews were performed with older adults in the community of Mocagua and young people of the same community were surveyed. A survey was carried out by one of them. In relation to older adults, three environmental interpreters were interviewed based on open-ended questions that first made reference to the historical processes of extraction, and then to the control and prohibition. The questions served as a guide, because due to the positive atmosphere, they began to tell the story. They were allowed to speak to understand their speech; later the information was generalized assuming that this is the discourse of the first environmental interpreters.

In relation to the methodology used to interview the youths, a questionnaire of open-ended questions was used to learn about the activities they perform, what they think about tourism and their concession, their dreams, how they see themselves in the future and what are their expectations for life. The purpose of the interviews was motivated by the conservationist speech that includes the preservation of natural resources for future generations. Also, given that the young people between 15 and 29 years of age are 31% of Mocagua's population, it can be said they project their life and work in the community. Mocagua's community was chosen to perform these interviews because it has been the one, which has received more revenue from tourism since the construction of the visitor's center in 1986.

For the young people interviewed, the author collaborated with a youth from the community of Macedonia, as some questions refer to personal aspects, which are difficult to ask an unknown and lack of confidence person. This young man was studying at the school of Macedonia through a university program delivered by internet. In this way it is assumed that young people would be in an atmosphere of trust that would improve responses and therefore reduce the bias.

In total there were ten interviews, of which the author performed two, while the remaining eight was carried out by the indigenous youth, using the questions written by the author as a guide. An indigenous Uitoto told her life story and how she came to work with the tourism; the conversation was spontaneous and was carried out during the field work. All interviews were recorded. The names of the interviews were changed to respect confidentiality.

Finally, observation was done in the communities of Macedonia, Mocagua, El Vergel, La Libertad and Monifue Amena. Also the author stayed at the Amacayacu National Natural Park and interact-

ed with different ethnic groups such as Ticuna, Uitoto and Yagua.

Discourse of the first environmental indigenous interpreters

The author interviewed indigenous people older than fifty years, who when younger, lived on trafficking of skins and extracting of wood, in the sixties and seventies. In the next lines, they express how this extraction period was perceived and of course how this was interrupted through controls and prohibitions imparted by the officials at the moment of the creation of the Park Amacayacu at 1975. Although, the indigenous interviewed notice the importance of have been participated in the trains guided by the Park, that generated guilty feelings because of the scarcity of animals and woods, and in consequence they developed ways of understand the conservation and incorporate their sons as the final purpose of the duty.

Before the Park

Interviewed indigenous people talked about the arrival of "people with money" to the communities, asking them for skins of "tigers, jaguars and wild pigs". Without defining these "people with money" as possible dealers, they remember that were sailing from community to community until they got to River Atacuari, asking indigenous people for animals' skins and offering money as exchange. When a month pass (right time enough to hunt animals), the "people with money" went down the river to each community, picking the skins up. Also, they remember for this mission ticunas indigenous used more blowguns (cerbatanas) than shotguns for one reason: with the shotgun they will scare the animals while with the silence blowguns could kill more.

In the same way, Santiago said: "none care, we take out the wood for sale". So, he remembers that at Leticia Port "the people sell wood in the same way as now sell fish"; Santiago says, "neither police nor anybody asked if wood has license; there was no control". These arguments explain actual scarcity of "good wood" in the communities. As Luis argues, "the cedar is over, to find good wood you must go far away, because we have finished it". In this manner, the hunt of animals for skins and not for consumption, as well the chopping down of trees for sell and not for construction of the houses in the communities became current activities to indigenous during the decades of sixties and seventies.

The interviewed indigenous people justify their activities because of the absence of "the law", and they relate "the law" with the arrival of INDERENA¹ in 1975. They did not mention the creation of Park Amacayacu in this year, they did mention the arrival of the "chief", that is to say the "Park Chief", who started to convoke meetings in order to prohibit and control the extraction activities. Jaime remembers these first meetings as follows: "too many people jump, most of them did not agree with the Chief, because law came to oppress and control all of have to do with flora and fauna" (sic). Interviewed indigenous people did not refer to the dealers either to the market in order to justify their extraction activities. This would be the beginning of a guilty sentiment generated from a power and control hierarchy over the natural resources, which they identify as the "law" and were imparted through the "Chief".

The natives would explain this restriction with the "arrival of tourism and training". It was the first time, they say, "someone came and talk to us about the fauna and flora". To the natives who

1 INDERENA – Instituto Nacional de los Recursos Naturales Renovables y del Ambiente -, created on 1968 until Law 99 of 1993 close it and create UAESPNN -Unidad Administrativa Especial del Sistema de Parques Nacionales Naturales- as an institution responsible for the Park National Natural System of Colombia.

participated in the training process it was, as Jaime tell, “a great truth” or “an advantage”, because they were finishing the natural resources of their “own community”, and also considered that, if they continued with the extraction they will not be resources for their children. In other side, the training was referred to as new figure at the communities: the ‘resguardos’, which in this area of the Amazon Trapeze began to be acknowledged legally on the decade of the eighties. It was the first time officials talk them about a territory that belongs to them and the propitious opportunity to generate a feeling of appropriateness.

For Ticuna², tourism has a thought. Interviewed natives say, “the thought of the tourism want to see animals, the tourism arrive here to the Amazon, to observe the cayman”, and they say, “the tourism do not feel alright because there are not animals to see as it was before”, and they recognize themselves as “guilty” because they affirm “we hunted all the animals”. They do not assume the tourism as an economic activity nor an industry, the tourism is an entity who needs to see animals more than nature, but do not need to observe indigenous. For ticuna people, the manner to explain tourism implies a direct relation with nature, because in that way, thanks to the training and to the arrival of the first tourists it was understood.

Some natives who worked in the Recovery Program of piuri’s specie (*Crax globulosa*), a bird that was disappearing from Mocagua Island because of the fish extraction with nets given that these birds feed with these fishes, began the problems, as Jaime explained me, with their own “community partners” and with the other communities of the Program as Mocagua, Macedonia and El Vergel. This is not a surprise, because one of the tasks of the Program was to monitor the Island, and this implies to avoid to their own partners to fish with nets. Logically, the problems arose when “partners” do not obey the agreements between communities and officials, and arrived to fish at prohibit areas. Also, the problems began when the Peruvians from Vista Alegre, as they say, “arrived stealthily to fish with nets without knowing the agreements”. Interviewed indigenous do not refer to those who disobey the agreements as enemies, but they refer to them as “gross and lazy partners”.

The Recovery Program succeeded, the piuri population increased and also the paujil population (*Pauxi unicornis*). Also, for indigenous, it became in a way to understand conservation process. Jaime explains “when you navigate around the island at five o’clock in the morning, you will listen to the birds, which are the paujil and the piuri”. Natives explain that “today conservation will be reflected in a near future”; they say, “in 20 to 25 years, they will be enough time to allow the animals that have gone to return”. These are reasons to support the work with the Park and the communities as a joint effort waiting that the “richness come back”, referring to the animals. Natives understand that species recovery is a matter of time, and for the other side, concern about future generations arise. These two conclusions prove an appropriation of the conservationism discourse that is reflected in the testimony of indigenous that became environmental interpreters.

²Most of indigenous population of the communities that works with Park Amacayacu is ticuna, and the rest of them are cocama, uitoto, yagua, and other ethnics. Ticunas name the people that are laboriously relate with tourism activities as *turista gü maa I kuagü*, which means “the people that work with tourism”, in an open category for environmental interpreters (or tourist guides), artisans, motorists, and even those who work at the restaurant of the visitors centre of the Park. When publicly a ticuna says *gü maa I kuagü*, he refers himself to all these people with different works but all of them relate with tourism. This mean that do no exist words on ticuna language to make a difference between activities, in other words, there is only one general category for *duätä*, or people (ancients, men, women, young and children) to become part of tourism economy and activity. As well, is relevant to recall that tourism and tourist are new words for the ticuna vocabulary, so they do not have translation, and in these cases they add the word *gü*, for example *turista gü*, to mention that this belong to or that become to.

For indigenous, the reasons to conserve are relate with tourism and recovery of extinct species, but constantly they refer to other important reason for them: their sons. Luis says: “my son ask me, ‘father, I want to see a bird’; ‘son, how can I show it, how can I take you to the Forrest, when there is none?’” (Sic). Luis add: “here exists too much youthfulness, while we soon become old, I want my sons to see animals alive and not by pictures” (sic). These young begin to live in the conservation process, waiting that in 20 years could tell a different history about species recovery with a direct relation to tourism and not the one relate to resource extraction.

Analysis of the discourse

According to the environmentalism theory of “environmentalism of the poor” presented by Martínez-Alier (2004:27), when prohibiting the use of natural resources to local population once they become part of the limits of the protected areas, these populations are converted to ecologists. The problem is that, in most cases, these people are poor. It is therefore critical that the current conservation plans are for future generations while the poor are clamoring for “securing the livelihoods of today” (ibid.).

With the creation of Park Amacayacu were banned the extraction activities commonly undertaken by indigenous peoples. As shown in the testimony, the indigenous people were called for in the first meetings, but not for the sustenance of today, because they lose a source of income of extraction activities, even they have not mentioned it. The skins of animals were being demands by the market and snob consumers located mainly in the First World, through luxury articles and accessories. Wood responded to a wider market through goods that we could consider in some cases necessary, since it is difficult to imagine a home without articles having wood materials.

In this way, “if the environmentalism of the poor demand for an environmental justice among humans” (Martínez-Alier, 2004), the demand in the case of the Park Amacayacu should be by a justice of the market. If the “West economic culture what is looking for through the develop mentalists is the transition from a traditional society to an economic culture (Escobar, 1999:63, my own translation), indigenous had taken this step. If we move away from the moral judgments and the purposes of conservation, it is criticized the way the people are looking a multitude of development projects, environmentally friendly, and also the way these communities move from a traditional society to an economic culture. It is not logically advised to return to exploitation and extraction of animals and nature of the decades sixties and seventies, but contributing to analysis implications for the exercise of the conservation and tourism fall on the indigenous (young and adults) and on the future generations.

Young people in the communities

To the indigenous environmental interpreters the fundamental purpose of the conservation became their children, in line with the trend of the conservationist speech that seeks to meet the needs of future generations. However, the current needs of the young people are concentrated in the limited opportunities for access to education. So this section shows how young people are looking for alternatives to resolve some of these limitations. The result of interviews with young people shows that the majority of them are not projected living and working out of the community.

Young people think that in Bogotá and in other major cities will be their desire to do a college career, even those who have initiated courses in higher education. Some young people were interrupted by several reasons from their baccalaureate studies. During these periods they do not attend school, they accompany their parents to farm for cropping, fishing and hunting. In fact, some already know

how to hunt with gun, and their parents learned from 16 years old. However, these activities are not related to the concept of work. Work has to be money paid, as biker boat to bring in the tourists, as construction and maintenance at the visitors center in the Park Amacayacu, stemming from the economic activity of tourism.

When young people speak about tourism, as well as adults, they referred to "environment", "nature" or "biodiversity of fauna and flora", as well as recognize tourism and "as a means to care for and to preserve nature". But they, as indigenous people, don't say be part of this relationship, nor be part of the tourist attractions. In spite of this, youth expressed an additional ingredient omitted by adults: "tourism is also a source of income and labor". Some of the young people expressed to me that they felt envious of the environmental interpreters when they saw them pass by with a group of tourists, and in the majority of the cases expressed disagreement because both tourism and the concession does not have provided work for all. This explain in part why young people think that in the cities, in addition to better opportunities in education will find better job opportunities.

Alternatives to young people to improve their education

Educational opportunities in the community of Mocagua are limited because the school only offers up to primary, therefore the majority of young people studying secondary school in the community of Macedonia. Some of them opted to attend secondary school in boarding schools located in other communities, such as the case of Pablo; and others at Leticia, at La Normal School, as the case of José. However, only studied for a year and then returned to the community to continue their studies at Macedonia. Young people who were studying at Leticia depend in large part of the money their parents can send and this is the condition that makes possible to stay in the city. In the case of Pablo, the constant theft of his belongings in the boarding school was the reason to leaving the school and return to his community. Despite these limitations, young people expressed their interest to continue studying.

The limitations are growing when young people complete their secondary school studies and intend to continue with a professional career. In spite of this, these constraints are solved, at least in part, in a variety of ways. For example: Sara began to study theology at a University in Caballococha in Peru, where she had been offered the opportunity to remain a time studying by way of seminars, later return to her community to make her practices and at the end of two months return to study. Her concern was not associated with transportation or accommodation at Caballococha, but with the high prices of the books needed to acquire to continue her studies. Another way in which graduates continue their study is through the technical courses offered by SENA (National Learning Services) in Leticia and that sometimes are taught in the communities. Administration of hostels, design of hostels, customer service, chickens for fattening, assistant of cabinetmaker, assistant of baker and assistant of butcher, are some of the courses that have made the young with SENA, although some of these courses are not applicable in the context of the community.

Another opportunity is the recent offering by a distance learning University that are taught at the school in the community of Macedonia, initiative that arose through a project funded by Swedish co-operation. For example, Nelson was excited because he began to study environmental management, a career more in line with the context and the needs of the community if compared to the technical courses. Thus, the community of Macedonia became an education center for the surrounding communities, opening up new opportunities for high school graduates begin higher education even at a distance learning University, for what mechanisms are needed to support and strengthen this initiative.

Also, the young people that have made technical courses and even those who are studying in the University, as Sara and Nelson

expressed their desire to continue studying another college career but in one of the major cities of Colombia. They mentioned careers such biology, economics, politics, nursing, tourism, culinary and music, while others were not very clear what they are going to study, as well as either the university or the city where they are going to perform these studies. This is due in part to their lack of information on the opportunities to continue their studies, what can be explained by a lack of access to media in the community as Internet, since they only have television and radio. Some said they have come to the Internet when the system worked in the school of the community, however, after a while did not worked again, without knowing the reasons. In spite of this, the school in Macedonia offers the service of Internet, although with limitations of access and intermittent service.

Media such as television and radio give young people a vague idea of other places outside of the community. If the majority has lived and remained in the community alongside their parents, this explains in large measure, the desire of all to travel to Bogotá, as well as to the major cities of Colombia. Only Sara expressed his desire to know and study in Iquitos, Peru, and the others, in addition to Bogotá, mentioned: Medellín, Cali, Santa Marta, Armenia y Pereira. But the desire is not only due to know these cities but to study in a university and to find a job. Some mentioned that the purpose of becoming professional is to help the family. But in most cases, they will not work in the community to apply their knowledge. With the exception of some, like Sara, who said that at the end of the studying theology would like to work in the Evangelical Baptist Church in the community or be a teacher in the school; or as Nelson, who expressed their interest in improving the system of planting.

Experience of an indigenous uitoto linked to tourism

Other indigenous young people have a different view of tourism, such as the case of Lina, an indigenous uitoto of the Corregimiento La Chorrera, to the North Amazon Trapeze and distant of the study area who, after completing the primary level at the boarding school of her community traveled to Bogota; studied and worked there for twelve years. At the end of this time, she returned to Leticia where she started to work in tourism as an employee of the Company that administers the Concession. After a year of work for the company she resigned, she formed a small separate company and now works as an independent tourism guide. This shows the possibilities to indigenous peoples to create companies linked to tourism, as well as the possibilities of return to the region or to the community to create companies after having studied and worked in the cities, and not necessarily to be an employee.

In the same way as young people of Mocagua, Lina had desires and expectations of traveling to Bogotá in search of work-study opportunities. A great impact caused her to live in Bogotá, especially because she was accustomed, according to her, "to share food in her community and to greet the people"; in contrast, "in the city none's gifted a glass of water". In spite of this began to work caring the plants that an academic brought to the Bogotá's Botanical Garden and after she found other jobs to continue to work during the day and to study during the night. She worked in a teddy shop, she cleaned a hotel in Chapinero and she selected models in an agency of film and television. In this way she spent twelve years living in Bogotá and only traveled occasionally to her community.

After twelve years, she decided to leave the city to return to the region. She found work in Leticia in the Hotel of the Concession but despite she had found a good job apparently at the end of the year resigned. The reasons to resigned to her job in the Hotel were related to a bad work environment, with the pressure provoked by the boss and in the work on Sundays, public holidays, and in the months of December and January. During that year, Lina's job consisted in designing tourist packages and promotional brochures.

Troubles with others employees and no reasonable increase of wages for employees who, she says, “worked less”, joined the causes of her resignation.

Despite these drawbacks, Lina, along with other people, decided to create a little company that offers the services of tourist guides, so that now she works as a freelance guide. Travel agencies and hotels sometimes do not have enough staff to accompany tourist along the activities of the tourist package, for this reason outsource a company such as Lina’s.

A tourist can be a “Head Cutter”

The author was in the bungalow of Nicanor, with him, his family and an indigenous woman called Griselda. We got out of the bungalow and we sat outside to chat a while under the light of the moon. Griselda asked me: “Ivan, Haven’t you heard about the Head Cutter?” I answered her: it must be all that lie. It was August 2005. By then, I knew very little about the Head Cutter. Only I heard that human bodies were flying and were radiant in the night - with a strong light- to cut off the head of indigenous people. By the end of 2005, I learned that Cure (2005) was researching and writing a thesis about the murmur of the Head Cutter. According to Cure (2005), the Head Cutter is defined by the indigenous people as “ones who pursues to another for purely personal benefit; it is an aggressive entity, that comes to kill and therefore does not respect rules or social norms; non-reciprocal, but on the contrary, petty and customizes all that he has and gets”. Indigenous commented to Cure: “The Head Cutter is not like us, that we are attacked and persecuted by them” (Cure, 2005:105, my own translation).

According to Cure, “while the ‘gringo’ is potentially a Head Cutter and is well suited to this dangerous and antisocial behavior, the data obtained cautioned that some white people who are not called ‘gringos’, as well as certain indigenous, they behave as a ‘gringo’ Head Cutter” (Cure, 2005, 105 -106, my own translation). Then, Cure points out, “the Head Cutter is defined most powerfully by the ‘gringo’; but the ‘gringo’, beyond a national origin or some physical or material attributes is -as would say Goulard (quoted in Cure 2005:106, my own translation) - “a new category of persons, which may assumed by other white people (mestizo or white people which nationality are from three of the countries of the frontier) and also by indigenous”.

In addition Cure points out, those appeared mostly linked with the Head Cutter in the comments of the indigenous, were “‘gringos’ related to scientific foundations, no governmental organizations and tourism” (2005:111, my own translation). I cannot affirm that because of the arrival of the Chief of the Park, in 1975, indigenous have identified him with a Head Cutter. What is certain is that now the Park and its officials, new concession enterprises, NGOs with presence in the area and the researchers and people actively involved with them, are being identified as Head Cutters. Finally, in 2008, during my stays in the Park, an official told me they were having problems with the new houseboat to tourists on the Amazon River. I told to the officer: The problem is that indigenous people are identifying the houseboat as the place where hides the Head Cutter. Although at that time the officer laughed at me, shortly after the houseboat sank.

RESULTS

Although the indigenous communities are the owners of a good part of the territory where the tourist activities take place, they have not acquired a negotiating role in the chain, so that indigenous peoples are normally employed as guides in the jungle. Only to give a value to their work, park officials have decided to appoint them as

“environmental interpreters”.

In addition, owners of the agencies are not indigenous, and have a colonialist and paternalistic vision about indigenous peoples. When indigenous peoples are linked with other tourist activities such as handicrafts, tourists do not recognize their work and buy handicrafts at a very low price, which generates lack of motivation. In addition, some shops in the nearby cities buy the indigenous crafts at very low price and sell to the tourists at a higher price, generating more profits than the indigenous people themselves.

In some communities have organized some associations to improve the price, however the cost-benefit is not profitable for the indigenous people because the time and energy invested in the development of handicrafts are not normally compensates for with the sale.

Finally, the indigenous people are in the category of lower profit if we consider the actors in the chain of tourism and its earnings per activity. In this way, the indigenous are located in activities such as handicrafts, guides, tours and food, which are the segments of lower profitability. It is therefore logical that as a result of the interviews, the young people want to seek other opportunities outside of the community, because tourism is not a concrete alternative.

On the other hand, for Gabriela (interviewed by Cure 2005:121) “things are achieved through the hard work in the chagra - the real work for her - or the fishing; but none of these allows you to have much; why who suddenly starts to have things nice, new clothes, improved home, shop, as well, out of nothing, it is because it is working with the gringos cutting heads”. The manner in which the indigenous people perceive those who receive high income by other jobs that are not part of their common activities set them in the lowest ranks of income. In addition, not all get to work in tourist activities and those who do are seen as collaborators of the head cutter.

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