“Water Creatures”: Urbanization, Displacement and Developmental Paths in Amazonia

Part V: Seminar on Indigeneity

GUEST SPEAKER
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Overcoming Amazonian nature and the ways of life associated with it has been a key aspect of the secular quest by regional, national, and transnational elites to “develop” the Amazon rainforest. The imposition of permanent built environments has been at the center of this project. It has often involved material and discursive assaults against indigenous peoples and other riverine communities, their customs, and their histories, which were invariably associated with waterways, the region’s dominant environmental features. In this presentation, Adrián Lerner focuses on a series of modernizing efforts by the military dictatorships in Brazil (1964-1985) and Peru (1968-1980) that targeted indigeneity and customary Amazonian livelihoods in Manaus, Brazil, and Iquitos, Peru, the largest cities in Upper Amazonia. A comparative approach to these governmental policies and their effects reveals that tropes of indigeneity could be politicized to different ends, and that the two authoritarian regimes ultimately set their Amazonian territories on divergent developmental paths.

Tue., Mar. 29, 12:00pm (New York) / 11:00am (Mexico)
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