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Cherishing varieties in Apurinã community-based oral history initiatives

Short description / Abstract:

At the time of intensifying pressures from biodiversity loss and climate change, the Apurinã—an Arawak-speaking people of the Purus River region, Brazilian Amazonia—have sustained multibeing coexistence of waters, animals and vegetations through diverse community initiatives of language and music tradition vitalizations. Drawing on a methodology of reciprocal knowing and co-research, this paper considers particular songs, which became transformative, intergenerational, and land-based pedagogic tools to vitalize Apurinã stories, language, and territorial knowledge. We discuss several community activities, which have included revisiting, recording, transcribing, and composing songs, collective mapping of the places and beings highlighted in the songs, as well as reflections on Apurinã concepts. In Apurinã cosmopolitics, trees, animals, winds, and waters shape all life and well-being. We show how the varieties of the songs and stories became recognized and thus to sustain the relations with ancestral beings and landscapes. By foregrounding Apurinã initiatives, we show how community initiatives can challenge educational policies often centred on linguistic and narrative standardisation.