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## TERRITORY, DICTATORSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES REFLECTING REGIONALIZATION PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL

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### Abstract

*The article aims at adding contributions to the studies of regionalization in Brazil, presenting an overview concerning the institutionalization of the national program of regional development, within the framework defined by the Civil-Military Dictatorship (1964-85). In order to achieve this purpose, institutions, publications of experts, among other unpublished primary sources will be detailed. We assume that the national-developmental project, closely attached to authoritarianism, encountered in the projects of regionalization its reason for being. Such a trait may be observed in the characterization of regions solely under economic criteria targeting industrialization, in the political, scientific and corporate conflicts which approached the urban topic and, finally, in the association regarding the concept of regionalization as an intrinsic function of development.*

### Keywords

*Regionalization; Civil-military dictatorship; Urbanization; Urban planning; Developmentalism.*

## TERRITÓRIO, DITADURA E DESENVOLVIMENTO: PERSPECTIVAS HISTÓRICAS SOBRE OS PROGRAMAS DE REGIONALIZAÇÃO NO BRASIL

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### Resumo

*O artigo pretende agregar contribuições para os estudos sobre regionalização no Brasil com a apresentação de um panorama da institucionalização do programa nacional de desenvolvimento regional, no quadro delimitado pela ditadura civil-militar (1964-85). Para isso, são pormenorizados órgãos e instituições especializadas, publicações de experts, entre outras fontes documentais primárias inéditas. Como principal inferência, assume-se que o projeto nacional-desenvolvimentista, associado ao autoritarismo, encontrou nos projetos de regionalização o seu território de materialização por excelência. Esse traço pode ser observado na caracterização de regiões baseada unicamente em critérios econômicos, nos privilégios legislativos concedidos à instalação de fábricas fora das grandes capitais, em planos e projetos de remoção de bairros residenciais em prol de indústrias e, finalmente, na associação da ideia do conceito de regionalização ao de desenvolvimento.*

### Palavras-chave

*Regionalização; Ditadura civil-militar; Urbanização; Planejamento urbano; Desenvolvimentismo.*

# TERRITORY, DICTATORSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES REFLECTING REGIONALIZATION PROGRAMS IN BRAZIL

*Danielle Heberle Viegas*

## 1. Introduction

The rise of the urban question<sup>1</sup> as a public issue in Brazil is related to the specific time frame between the so-called Old Republic and the military dictatorship. During the period in question, changes took place in institutional administration and in the legal apparatus. Additionally, the topic gained strength on the agenda of the mainstream press and within the specialization of professionals. In this context, Brazilian cities were conceived as providers of national modernity, since “the desired model of development associated industrial production and urban conditions of social reproduction, led by a strongly active, verticalized, hierarchical State”<sup>2</sup> (FERNANDES, 2012, p. 51).

In a veritable “dissemination chain” (FELDMAN, 2005, p. 277) of ideas, practices and models, planning came to be recognized as an instrument capable of steering Brazilian territorial development, both in its urban and agrarian dimensions. Part of the specialized historiography (DÉAK, 1999; VILLAÇA, 1998; FELDMAN, 2009) recognizes the set of measures, implemented in moments immediately linked to the 1964 military coup, as the culmination of urban planning. It should be noted that, at that time, the notion of planning assumed multiple meanings, as a mere de-

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1. The understanding herein of the “urban question” is adopted in the terms put forward by Schmidt, i.e., “a complex set of political and social demands and of an urban character” (1986, p. 12). SCHMIDT, B. *A questão urbana*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 1986.

2. This, and all other non-English citations hereafter, have been translated by the author.

claration of intentions and enunciative strategies, development programs or, even, development plans (CAMPOS, 1974, p. 74). Thus, this text addresses the institutionalization of regionalization practices in Brazil,<sup>3</sup> seeking to aggregate reflections on how this understanding was consistent with the project of developmentalist planning, one of the milestones in the country's national-statist culture (REIS, 2014).

In methodological terms, the study conducts a qualitative and content analysis based on the following axes collated throughout the article: a) agencies, institutions and autarchies; b) publications of technical and scientific circulation related to the theme; and c) executive practices and measures, such as programs, aimed at legitimizing regional development. The time frame is restricted to the years between 1964 and 1985, and includes sources from a variety of research collections, notably the IBGE (The Brazilian Institute of Statistics and Geography) library and the IPEA (The Institute of Applied Economic Research) library (Rio de Janeiro), the National Archives (Brasília) and the Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut (Berlin, Germany).

For the conducted analyzes, the territory has not been understood as a pre-established factor, nor as a reflection of practices, but rather through a dynamic in which "the political organization and the territorial organization of the nation cannot be considered as separate data, but should be thought of as a unit, as a political-territorial organization" (SANTOS, 1987, p. 190).

The work seeks to add to those that have analyzed urban planning based on the circularity of ideas and practices (FELDMAN, 2009; SOUZA, 2012; LEME, 1999; MARICATO, 2000), and that have filled a gap in terms of augmenting the history of regionalization practices in Brazil.

## 2. "*A dissociated archipelago*": regional development as an alternative to urban problems in Brazil

As with the diversified base on which urban planning was grounded in Brazil, the country's voluptuous urbanization process<sup>4</sup> was not the target of a single axis of theoretical elaboration, nor of professional practices originating from an exclusive group. The two strands (STEINBERGER, 1976, pp. 63-64) that found the

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3. The terms "region", "regionalization" and "regional development" are analyzed herein based on their occurrence in primary research sources, and not in the historiography. For a conceptual review, see: LENCIONI, S. *Região e geografia*. São Paulo: Edusp, 2003.

4. José de Souza Martins (1992), for example, signals the last quarter of the nineteenth century as a landmark for urbanization. With regard to the Latin American sphere, see Fridman and Abreu (2010). MARTINS, J. de S. *Subúrbio*. São Caetano do Sul: Editora Hucitec, 1992; FRIDMAN, F.; ABREU, M. A. (Orgs.). *Cidades latino-americanas: um debate sobre a formação de núcleos urbanos*. Rio de Janeiro: Casa da Palavra, 2010.

most support in scientific-academic publications integrated local urban planning and regionalization, a perspective that will be detailed within this text.

The regionalization-development binomial has historical support, with different mobilizations that may be nucleated around explanations such as the colonization of demographic voids, the occupation of areas for the purposes of military protection and, finally, the one that found the most adherence during the civil-military dictatorship (although not only during this period): regionalization aiming at territorial assimilation and integration, through industrialization. The specificity is in the fact that the disciplinarization of the territory was deeply involved with the development agenda, focused on a model of industrialization driven by state planning projects considered as a means of overcoming Brazil's underdevelopment (BIELCHOWSKY, 1988, p. 7).

Thus, regionalization encountered adherence both in the technical-scientific environment and across academic discussions, as well as in the public institutional organigram that was being assembled, a fact that marked both the variations and the uses of the meanings of the term, either as "regionalization", or as "regional development".<sup>5</sup> As Almeida explained: "After the 1964 military coup, the federal government was concerned with the spatialization of economic development and viewed with great interest any research that could organize the Brazilian territory or assist with this process" (2000, p. 168).

However, it was disclosed that "integrated regional development lent national order to Brazilian progress, giving a continental dimension to an economy that was marked by the transformation of the country into a dissociated archipelago" (MINTER, 1967, p. 3). The national territory began to be regarded as a vast field of practices, considering that "spaces appear more and more as if differentiated through their capital load" (SANTOS, 2013, p. 143). Thus, the national program for regional development was the target of executive actions and involved the colonization of areas considered inhospitable, the creation of new states within the Federation and the institutional recognition of regions as political-legal entities. Therefore, it was not sufficient to sketch out a new territory using maps; it was necessary to ensure access to them. For Schmidt (1983, p. 9):

[...] like other countries that experienced a late integration into the world capitalist market, the State in Brazil has historically tried to fully occupy the national territory through directed or subsidized

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5. It is well known that the addition of the term "development", composing the expression "regional development", marks a large part of the documentation produced by the government in relation to the theme.

colonization, through the construction of new urban sites, and by redirecting national urbanization flows originating in the historical trade patterns.

Programs for regional development and for mitigating imbalance have been included in state publications (BRASIL, 1974), as is the case with the Revolutionary Government's Economic Action Program [the *Programa de ação econômica do governo revolucionário*] (1964-1966) (BRASIL, 1967). In 1964, the Special Ministry for the Coordination of Regional Organisms<sup>6</sup> was created, within a prerogative from the existence of regional superintendencies since the 1950s. Actions appeared, such as the National Integration Program (PIN), which included projects such as Proterra, Prodoeste and Provale (BRASIL, 1974), as well as the Information System for Planning and Assessing Regional Development (Sipade).

In line with the established institutional architecture, the national regionalization program emerged in the technical, academic and scientific spheres. According to this perspective, urban centers were functionalized on an equal basis with other regions of the country, such as rural, forest, industrial areas, etc. The theory found support in research institutions, such as the National Council for Geography (CNG) and the IBGE, for which, ever since its origins, during the "Estado Novo", the regionalization agenda had been central (ALMEIDA, 2000). The IBGE itself recognized and institutionalized the theoretical concepts of polarization and homogeneity through publications such as *Subsídios à regionalização* [Assistance for Regionalization] (1968) and the *Divisão do Brasil em microrregiões homogêneas* [the Division of Brazil into homogeneous micro-regions] (1970).

The theory of regionalization has been disseminated since the late 1950s by professionals such as the French geographer Michel Rochefort, who produced notable work in Brazil, first at IBGE and, later, with the National Commission for Metropolitan Regions and Urban Policy (CNPU) and the Federal Housing and Urban Planning Service (Serfhau). Rochefort's main interlocutor in Brazil was the geographer Lysia Bernardes, who held top positions at IBGE during the 1950s and 1960s (LAMEGO, 2014, p. 5).

Rochefort became responsible for disseminating the so-called methodology of urban networks, with an emphasis on analysis of the tertiary sector. In his work *O problema da regionalização do Brasil* (The problem of regionalization in Brazil), he proposed dividing the national territory into empty regions; traditionally balanced regions with a low population density; traditionally balanced regions with a

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6. Law No. 4344, on June 21, 1964.

strong to medium population density, in addition to growth regions (ROCHEFORT, 1967). The organization of the territory would occur through establishing homogeneous regions, defined from typological classifications based on questionnaires and cartograms. This theorization is associated with the so-called applied geography, the rise of which was linked to the “national-developmental context, of state intervention in the economy and confidence in planning” (BOMFIM, 2015, p. 366).

The theory of regionalization is intertwined with that which forecasted growth poles, developed by the economist, also of French origin, François Perroux. While regionalization was ordered to classify the country into sectoral zones, the growth poles served to induce potentialities encountered in the projects.<sup>7</sup> In these terms, each area was functionalized according to its economic potential. This criterion marked the overcoming of the physiographic bias of classification of the territory, elaborated by Fábio de Macedo Soares Guimarães, who conducted pioneering studies in the area during the 1940s (ALMEIDA, 2000, p. 167).

This meaning was incorporated into publications coming from the field of politics, such as the Strategic Program for Development, dated 1967, which stated that “the identification of growth poles in each region is important to avoid the dispersion of applications in accordance with the guidance of the strategic program” (MINISTÉRIO DO PLANEJAMENTO E COORDENAÇÃO GERAL, 1967a). The document indicates the lack of integration as being an obstacle to national development, hence “the need to design integrated planning, which should cover four basic aspects: the economic, the social, the territorial and the institutional” (idem, p. 144).

The responsibilities of the regionalization program came under the domain of the Ministry of the Interior (Minter), which, alongside the Ministry of Planning (Miniplan), and its sequential appointments, formed the upper echelon of urban planning during the military dictatorship, since it housed the main autarchies and agencies dedicated to the theme.

Minter came about as a result of the division of what was one of the oldest ministries in the history of the country, namely: the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs, the origin of which dates back to the beginning of the republican period.<sup>8</sup> Hence, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Internal Affairs appeared as independent spheres; and it is onto the latter that we intend to shed some light. This

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7. For more details on growth poles, see: TOLOSA, H. *Planejamento regional*. Rio de Janeiro: IPEA, 1970, and BRASIL. *Pesquisa sobre polos de desenvolvimento e regiões homogêneas no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Miniplan – Epea; Biblioteca IPEA, [s.d.].

8. Law No. 23, on October 30, 1891, in turn related to that of July 3, 1822, which created the State Secretariat for Affairs of Justice.



ministry absorbed certain additional responsibilities from the Special Ministry for the Coordination of Regional Organisms, the beginnings of which are linked to the 1964 coup.<sup>9</sup>

The responsibilities of Minter included: I - **regional development** (emphasis added); II - the settlement of populations, occupation of territory and internal migration; III - federal territories; IV - basic sanitation; V - the improvement of areas and works for protection against droughts, floods and irrigation; VI - assistance for populations affected by public calamities; VII - assistance for the indigenous population; VIII - assistance for municipalities; IX - national housing program (MINTER, 1967, p. 4). It is not by chance that, included amongst the agencies and autarchies, which Minter commanded, either full- or part-time, were the Regional Development Superintendencies (Sudene, Sudeco, Sudesul, Sudam, Suframa), Serfhaú, the National Housing Bank (BNH), Banco da Amazônia (Basa), Banco do Nordeste do Brasil (BNB), the National Department for Works against Droughts (DNOCS) and the National Department for Works and Sanitation (DNOS).

Given these data, attention should be drawn to the fact that the urban question is inserted into a far broader field than that which historically made claim to it, namely, architecture and urbanism. The topic was, after all, included in the Ten-Year Economic and Social Development Plan, published in 1967, and detailed in the section “Regional and Urban Development”, which covered the guidelines for formulating a regional development policy and the regionalization of programs (MINISTÉRIO DO PLANEJAMENTO E COORDENAÇÃO GERAL, 1967b).

Thus, the urban problem only began to be assessed at a ministerial level when Minter lost its responsibilities related to the territory category, with the creation of the Ministry of Urban Development and Environment, in the 1980s.<sup>10</sup> Despite the requests that go back to the times of the conferences promoted by the Brazilian Institute of Municipal Associations (Ibama), a Ministry of Urbanism and/or Urban Development was never registered. The dictatorial State ignored suggestions made by the Organization of American States (OAS) and its proposal to create a National Department of Urbanism for Brazil, elaborated in 1941 (FARIA, 2015).

The closest to this was, in fact, Minter, which focused on the overall territorial management, including borders (federal territories such as Amapá, Rondônia, Roraima) and populations (particularly migrants and indigenous peoples), and,

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9. Law No. 4344, on June 21, 1964.

10. Decree No. 91,145 on March 15, 1985. This new ministry had two name changes: Ministry of Housing, Urbanism and Environment (MHU, by Decree No. 95,075, on October 22, 1987) and Ministry of Housing and Social Welfare (MBES, by Decree No. 96,634, on September 2, 1988).

finally, urbanism (courted, with notoriety, due to the housing aspect). Echoes of this debate may be deduced through letters from this ministry. In a document that addressed the creation of the Local Development System in the mid-1970s, the superintendent called on the authorities to designate a “Special Secretariat for Urban Development” in order to provide hierarchical parity to the urban and environmental sectors by the government “In view of the investments and performance already foreseen in PND”.<sup>11</sup>

The finding that the urban question was part of a broad political-administrative structure is an interesting loophole with which to refer to the other ministry considered fundamental to the institutional framework that was being reconstructed. This was the Ministry of Planning.

The function of Miniplan, a priori, was economic coordination and, at that time, commanded the National Bank for Economic Development (BNDE). However, in the early 1970s, planning took on a global character, not essentially related to the financial sphere, as was the case with the Planning Advisory Council (Consplan). Also under the wing of Miniplan were the Funding Agency for Studies and Projects S/A (Finep), IBGE and the Institute of Economic and Social Planning (IPEA).

The responsibilities of Miniplan were: I - the Government's General Plan, its coordination and integration of regional plans; II - **socioeconomic studies and research, including sectoral and regional** (emphasis added); III - budgetary programming; annual budget proposal; IV - coordination of international technical assistance; V - national statistical and cartographic systems; VI - administrative organization. As far as it is possible to assess, there were activities under the aegis of this ministry that spanned across the urban field.

Other institutions were adjoined to Miniplan, making the ministry's organigram more complex. In 1972, the Federal Planning System (SFP) was created and, two years later, the ministry would become a secretariat directly linked to the Presidency of the Republic - Seplan, thereby confirming the importance of the sector to the government and its executive character. Thus, it assumed the following duties: I - coordination of the planning, budgeting and administrative modernization system, with regard to monitoring the implementation of **national development plans** (emphasis added); II - coordination of measures related to the economic and social development policy; III - coordination of the scientific and technological development policy, mainly in its economic and financial aspects, except for the responsibility granted to the General Secretariat of the National Security Council; IV – in the coordination of related or interdependent matters, which would be of

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11. The National Development Plan.

interest to more than one ministry, Seplan would become, at the command of its ministers, the center of the country's economic decisions. This secretariat was responsible for bodies directly related to the management and study of the country's urban question, such as the IPEA, IBGE and the National Research Council (CNPq).

With regard to the autarchies, the first to be mentioned, not by chance, is the famous entity related to urban planning in Brazil during the civil-military dictatorship: this was Serfhau. Its acronym places urban planning and housing side by side, which was then the focus of the concerns of experts and the State. Together with the National Housing Bank (BNH), the Real Estate Credit Societies and Real Estate Letters were created in 1964, through Law No. 4,380. Article 1 of the Law states that it will provide for:

[...] the national housing policy and territorial planning, coordinating the action of public agencies and guiding private initiative to encourage the construction of social housing and to finance the acquisition of home ownership, especially amongst the low-income population.

From the above, it may be inferred that Serfhau was instituted more as an agency focusing on compensatory housing policies, in spite of the urban planning with strong technical and academic support that it ultimately promoted. Even though the agency represented progress in terms of the State valorization of the urban question, it is necessary to consider that the autarchy, in institutional terms, was on the side of entities such as the National Service for Assistance to Municipalities (Senam) and the Service for the Protection of Indigenous Populations (SPI) (MINTER, 1967), i.e., linked to territorial questions and not essentially urban questions.

This was because Serfhau, as an entity, had absorbed the functions of the former Popular Housing Foundation (FCP), founded in the 1940s. A communication from 1975,<sup>12</sup> states that all properties built by the former FCP would be managed by the Caixa Econômica Federal Bank (CEF), as would later occur with the BNH projects. This situation only changed with the regulation of the agency, which occurred in 1966, composed by the Office of Applied Economic Research (Epea), Article 1 of which indicates that Serfhau constitutes an

[...] entity that elaborates and coordinates the national policy in the field of integrated local planning, established within the guidelines of the regional development policy in conjunction with the

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12. Serfhau Communication/GS/574/75 on May 13, 1975. Minter Archives/AN BSB.

Ministry of Planning and the Ministry for the Coordination of Regional Agencies.<sup>13</sup>

Publications of the time present aspects of regionalization. The II National Development Plan (1974), for example, dealt with the National Urban Development Policy (PNDU) and is considered the first national plan to critically incorporate the country's regional divides, even though it received sparse backing and specific measures from previous administrations. According to Amendola (2011, p. 178):

[...] the concept of spatial planning for the Brazilian government involves promoting the organization of the urban network into a system that would satisfy the objectives of the populations from the different regions of the country, and as a consequence, would bring a reorientation to migratory flows, through aligning public and private investments to the objectives of regional development; initiate a process of urban decompression, redirecting investments to induce the growth of medium-sized cities and their inner nuclei.

The document proposed strategies for regions such as the Northeast, the Amazon and the Midwest, sometimes called “islands of underdevelopment” (MINTER, 1967, p. 4), in line with the circulation of concepts on a transnational level. In the same vein, a suggestion was put forward to boost the industrial core of the central south region, thereby avoiding its centralization into the metropolitan region of São Paulo.<sup>14</sup>

The institutionalization of regionalization alongside the public authorities also included the training of technicians. Processes originating from Minter and Miniplan reported sending employees from agencies connected to urban administration abroad, to participate in conferences and courses in the area. In 1971, for example, it was suggested that federal government employees should attend post-graduate courses at the Universidade Federal de Paraíba with a view to preparing specialists so as to put the National Irrigation Plan into practice.

Towards this direction, while there was a desire to optimize planning activities, institutional centralization was strengthened, according to institutional organigrams attached to Minter communications, which suggest an institutional configuration based on elements, such as: i) system heads; ii) executive agencies

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13. Decree No. 59.917, on November 30, 1966.

14. Numerous measures were launched, such as: the Program for Agricultural and Agri-mineral Poles in the Amazon, Program for the Development of Integrated Areas in the Northeast, Program for the Development of the Geoeconomic Region of Brasília, Programs for the Integrated Use of Valleys.

iii) means; iv) implementation. The urban development policy was being bureaucratized: it would be up to one agency to provide financial resources, another to provide technical assistance and Minter to coordinate and authorize all the requested activities.

Another example of this constant sectorization was the creation of agencies in order to finance the plans, as in the case of the National Fund for Urban Development (FNDU)<sup>15</sup> and its execution, and much like the Strategic Development Program (PED), which assessed the national system of local planning, as well as the first experiences of the integrated local development plans, and provided for: i) an analysis of the special structure of Brazil; ii) predictable changes in the factors that affect urban development; and iii) an analysis of the existing institutional structures (BRASIL, 1971, p. 11).

Also forming part of this organizational concept, which constituted Minter's second attempt to meet the disordered urban growth in a satisfactory manner, after the CNPU, were agencies such as the Local Development System (SDL), the Information Center for Local Urban Development (Cidul) and the National Institute for Urban and Local Development (Indul). These pioneering entities were responsible for preparing and implementing the Development Plans for Metropolitan Regions.

One of the steps within the project of the civil-military dictatorship for regional development was the creation of agencies to collect data and indexes concerning Brazil's society, territory and economy. A prominent entity within this context was IPEA, created in 1964 originally with the nomenclature of Epea.<sup>16</sup>

IPEA was in keeping with research activities conducted by IBGE with regard to the systemization of data and took on the functions of this agency for a number of years. Its duties went far beyond the production of technical knowledge, since, outstanding amongst its tasks were: I – to assist the Planning Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic in creating government global programs and in coordinating the national planning system; II – to assist the Planning Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic in linking the programming and the federal government's annual and multi-annual budgets; III - to promote activities of applied research in the economic and social areas; IV – to promote training activities for planning and applied research. In 1976, the Research Institute (Inpes), as an academic establishment, received its headquarters in Rio de Janeiro.

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15. Law No. 6.256/75.

16. Epea, within the 1967 Administrative Reform, changed its name to the Institute of Applied Socio-Economic Research and, later, in 1969, the Institute of Socio-Economic Planning. In May 1990, it definitively became known as the Institute of Applied Economic Research.

The Planning Institute (Iplan) was launched in Brasília, undertaking responsibilities of a technical nature. However, IPEA had been conceived with the differential of disseminating data to assist the federal government in formulating public policies and development programs. Numerous publications were issued with this purpose, from the Ten-Year Plans to the Economic Development Plans, Guidelines for Metropolitan Regions, amongst others, such as colonization projects.<sup>17</sup>

The Integrated Local Planning System and the Fund for Financing Project and Program Studies (Finep) were also established in 1965. BNH began to operate in a similar manner and, in 1972, three urban development funds were launched, each aimed at the less developed regions of the country: The Northeast, East, Midwest and South, and the Amazon.

One notable factor in the relationship between developmentalism and the regionalization of the territory was the continued incentive aimed towards the country's highways. In 1964, the National Roadway Plan was launched, with a chapter dedicated to the National Highways Plan, setting out nomenclatures and guidelines for the highways that were supposed to provide links between the capital cities and the interior, to tourist areas, to the borders, etc. (UEDA, 2007, pp. 177-78). It should be highlighted that the routes were chosen according to the services they were supposed to provide, revealing the strong ideal of functionalism present in the territorial organization. In addition to integrating the territory that had been outlined during the previous period, the bases were constructed to enable a true fluidity throughout the territory, a process that was corroborated by advances in computerization. The project even reached the maritime territory of Brazil, which, by 1970, against the will of the United States, had expanded from 12 to 200 miles.

The newspaper O Estado de S. Paulo, on February 21, 1973, paid tribute to the then President of Brazil, Emílio Garrastazu Médici (1969-74), for publishing the national Integrated Modular Plan, the objective of which “was to fill demographic voids”.<sup>18</sup> One of the exponents of the perspective of interiorization and territorial control was the Rondon Project, in 1967. Having been recently reactivated (2005), it involved the participation of university students in assisting with activities in areas of the country that were difficult to access, mainly in the North and Northeast.

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17. See, for example: CORRÊA, R. L.; DAVIDOVICH, F. R. Centros de polarização do Brasil (metodologia adotada). In: *Esboço preliminar de divisão do Brasil em espaços homogêneos e espaços polarizados*. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, Conselho Nacional de Geografia, Divisão de Geografia, 1967, pp.1-7.

18. Newspaper cutting attached to the letter dated February 22, 1973, under Protocol No. 382. From Vergueiro Planejamento Serviços Ltda. Minter/AN BSB Archives.



The main projects directed towards these regions involved the construction of highways and providing incentives for housing and the installation of industries, amongst other measures that sought to legitimize the motto “occupy to avoid surrender”, associated with the military governments. The proposal had historical support: the “March to the West”, promoted by the Vargas Government, was a well-known attempt to internalize the country with a view to maintaining national sovereignty. The Constitution, prepared under the government of Gaspar Dutra (1946-51), dated 1946, also included articles referring to the colonization of areas, defense against droughts, the valorization of the Amazon and the organization of areas for roadways, amongst other measures.

Enveloped in criticism and difficult for the State to operationalize, the French-influenced project promoted by IBGE and IPEA gradually gave way to the Anglo-American matrix, already very influential in the area of urban planning (ALMEIDA, 2000, p. 176). This period marked a paradigm shift within the IBGE, from human geography towards quantitative geography,<sup>19</sup> although the latter had never been totally prevalent, as is explained in the publications of the *Revista Brasileira de Geografia* (LAMEGO, 2000, p. 8).

In the presented terms, the above outlook provides support for an understanding of the “complex amalgam of causal influences” (SCHMIDT, 1983, p. 13) that defined urban planning in Brazil from the perspective of regionalization. This conjuncture, in turn, mirrors the origins of certain characteristics of Brazilian urbanization and metropolitanization, such as the intensity of the flows of people, goods and capital, the concentration of management and administration activities, the use of information technologies and communication, the exacerbation of the association between financial capital and that of the construction industry and, finally, producing a way of living and consuming specifically linked to the metropolises (LENCIONI, 2013).

### 3. The limits and meanings of regionalization in the dictatorial developmental project

Although many of the proposals put forward by the government of the armed forces constituted nothing new, it was nonetheless under its aegis that agencies, autarchies and ministries were implemented, served by ample resources to manage

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19. Here, a change may be observed regarding the influence of the French matrix, dominated by Rochefort and Perroux, to that of Anglo-American matrix, for which the most influential names were John P. Cole, Brian Berry and John Friedman. Its main interlocutors at IBGE were Pedro Geiger and Roberto Lobato Corrêa.

the urban issue. The attention given to regionalization was, after all, adopted for the purpose of interconnection, occupation and technical-territorial dominion.

Despite the interiorization projects and the diagnoses of demographic voids, Brazil was relatively dispersed in urban centers when compared to countries such as Argentina, where 35% of the population lived in Buenos Aires, and Venezuela, where 21% lived in the capital, Caracas (BRASIL, 1965, p. 4). Arthur Bernady Santana asserted the exclusionary character of attempts at colonization through regional development, since:

[...] this “void”, to which the texts and speeches of the military governments refer, denies the existence of more than 170 first nation and indigenous populations, being unaware that this territory was a land of ancient occupation, which housed squatters, miners, *quilombola* populations, among other individuals. The military government policy for the Amazon used the motto “occupy to avoid surrender”, as if this immense region was a “demographic void” (SANTANA, 2009, p. 3).

Ironically, attempts at national uniformity and integration, conditioned by the industrial potential that each region presented, caused the reverse effect, considering that industrial development policies were unrelated to concerns of spatial conditioning, except in relation to possible locational and economic advantages, thereby causing “The worsening of inter and intraregional inequalities and, in the areas with a greater concentration of activities, an increase in pollution levels (BERNARDES, 1986, p. 86).

Both the number of designated institutions during the period, and the technologies and financial resources applied, enshrined this time frame as being peculiar, dealing with the emergence of regionalization with a State agenda associated with the valorization of a technocracy, the resonances of which were present, for example, in the rise of quantitative geography in Brazil (LAMEGO, 2014). This did not negate the fact that critics of regional development projects often encountered challenges from effects contrary to those they were aiming at, such as urban nucleation.

The 1960s were characterized by an attempt to expand industrial decentralization policies aimed at reducing the inequalities between Brazilian regions, prioritizing the Northeast by adopting fiscal incentives for the implantation of industrial parks in its two largest metropolises, Recife and Salvador. Such policies, managed by the Northeast Development Superintendence (Sudene) did not, over those years, produce results that could be clearly felt by their economies (ALMEIDA, 2000, p. 181).



Territorial planning, in these terms, was configured as a professional field as well as a government function. Authors such as Lamparelli, Camargo and George (2007, p. 13) explain that the State had become a standardizer of the contradictions of interurban space, acting as the “producer of urban space”.

Regionalization practices were circumscribed far beyond the boundaries of the field of urban planning. During this specific period, its structure was associated with the creation of something that a part of the historiography has dedicated to the civil-military dictatorship, called the State of National Security (ALVES, 1989), and was part of the organization of a territory of order, given that the situation was assessed as being calamitous. According to Serra (1991, p. 146):

[...] the advent of authoritarian centralism occurred in the midst of a crisis in the accelerated urbanization process and is often associated with it. Indeed, it was between the 1950s and the 1970s that the urban population in Brazil presented the highest growth rates. At the end of the 1950s, on the eve of the 1964 coup, the process was in its most acute phase, causing all its most critical characteristics to be felt in the Brazilian urban network.

The ideal of control was clearly represented in the ideology of national security. Brazilian society should function as an integrated system, with its parts adjusted to the rhythm of the whole. The military State had the role of an authoritarian regulator, capable of eliminating and diluting conflicts that might threaten its integrity (REIS, 2014, p. 116). Based on these prerogatives, the understanding was that the regions should be characterized according to elements in common with the territory to which they belonged and, above all, respond to the national project of integration and industrialization, one of the notable motives of national-statism. According to Bomfim (2015, p. 367):

[...] national developmentalism itself and all of its creators, in Brazil, France and other countries, believed in “correction”, the charge of the State, of regional inequalities, carried out through the penetration of industrialization and the “modern” poles of the economy, in order to gradually overcome and defeat “backwardness”, a posture that would appear to be above any political-institutional environment.

Thus, the regionalization of the territory emerges as one of the categories in which authoritarianism and developmentalism are locupleted: where colonization, forest clearing, road construction and reduction of distances were the main topics of the national planning agenda during the period in question. Among the

main results, there are precise definitions of zones according to economic criteria; massive data collection, as a means of knowledge and, therefore, control; and numerous expropriations, usually for industrial and non-social purposes. In other words, the urban issue and regional development became guidelines for national economic development. However, it must be considered that the desired territorial balance was advocated more in conceptual than effective terms, since cities:

[...] corresponded to the huge profitable means of the capital invested by the State and by private initiative. It was not in the government's interest, therefore, to limit the concentration of investments in these places or to promote the decentralization of large urban centers, since ultimately, the very generation of urban jobs was a way of containing social conflicts (MONTE-MÓR apud VERRI, 2014, p. 104).

It is important to note, in these terms, that developmentalism was the result of a tacit pact between major rural interests and industrial capitalism, which had expanded reproduction as its main consequence and thus, the modernized reproduction of the Brazilian rural oligarchy (MOREIRA, 2008, p. 190) at the expense of social development. Such oligarchies were able to convert the developmental project to their advantage, because:

[...] industrial intensification simultaneously demanded an expansion of the internal consumer market of industrialized products, as well as a greater physical and economic link between the "coast" and the "interior", i.e., between the agricultural and industrial sectors (MOREIRA, 2008, p. 184).

Because of this, one of the main critics of inducing poles was Bernard Kayser, a French geographer for whom the dualist structure of Brazil - with areas focused on exports and others totally subsistence - would not support integration. It should be remembered, in time, that the proposal for regionalization came up against issues such as the administrative and legal limits that delimited Brazilian cities and states. The difficulties regarding the regional development project were listed in the Ten-Year Plan of 1967:

an unequal knowledge of the national territory; the inability to equalize the hierarchy of parts of the country, distanced in space and time; a lack of knowledge on the regional dynamics and the dominant phenomenon capable of identifying the type of region (MINISTÉRIO DE PLANEJAMENTO E COORDENAÇÃO GERAL, 1967b, p. 113).

Planning, in the authoritarian context, was concerned with “an imposition of forms that constitute an imposition of techniques, to the extent that forms respond to purpose and structures” (MORAES, 2013, p. 40). The developmentalist project, in association with authoritarianism, encountered in the regionalization projects the territory par excellence for its materialization. This trait may be observed in the characterization of regions based solely on economic criteria, in the legislative privileges granted to the installation of factories outside the big capitals, in plans and projects for the removal of residential neighborhoods in favor of industries and, finally, in associating the concept of regionalization to that of development.

#### 4. Final considerations

The national project for regionalization considered industrialization as the main alternative for the underdevelopment attributed to Brazil in accordance with international order. Thus, it is essential to emphasize that proposals for the regionalization of the Brazilian territory integrated both public and private authorities in a national-developmental project of industrialization. According to Campos (2012, p. 111):

[...] through the implantation of a regional infrastructure and the execution of works, with a general preference for local contractors, which corresponded both to the interests that were organized and housed within these institutions and to the guidelines of the policies that commanded the action of these organizations, given that they attempted to strengthen the companies of the region.

This model did not begin with the dictatorship, nor was it totally abandoned when it ended. However, it took on a particular configuration during the 1960s and 1970s, thereby inducing territorial inequalities on every scale, a phenomenon that would be one of the hallmarks of metropolises towards the end of the twentieth century. (VELTZ, 1999).

In order to fully perceive the approaches conferred upon the urban phenomenon in Brazil, it is crucial to consider the ensemble of detailed studies, which although they do not oppose one another, they are also not consensual, with regard to the political, scientific and corporate conflicts, which included the institutionalization of the urban problem in Brazil. In addition to being designed within a diversity of theoretical perspectives, such approaches have revealed disputes regarding the legitimacy of the interpretation of the Brazilian urban phenomenon, manifested through the creation of a series of professional bodies based on different areas of knowledge, such as Geography, Urbanism and Economy.

The recognition of regionalization projects as a field for dealing with urban problems by public opinion and by the State took place in the midst of their centralization and of silencing points that favoured the social sphere. This was because changes in the technical and administrative spheres were not accompanied by social and agrarian reforms, which is a substantial fact considering that, historically, land ownership in Brazil is not necessarily associated with the production that takes place on it.

Thus, an emphasis on rebuilding the economy through industrial growth has vehemently nullified any consideration of the spatial problems contained within its complexity (BERNARDES, 1986, p. 80). Nevertheless, recent research has demonstrated that regionalized developmental projects, such as those that occurred in the Amazon, proved to be a catastrophe in the face of the emerging environmentalism (ACKER, 2014). Therefore, the economic induction of the territories may be viewed, intrinsically, in the global geopolitical division, in the internationalization of companies and in an effort of regionalization, the main current of which is urban nucleation.<sup>20</sup>

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