

THE TERRITORY IN THE CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN GEOGRAPHICAL THOUGHT¹

O TERRITÓRIO NO PENSAMENTO GEOGRÁFICO BRASILEIRO CONTEMPORÂNEO

EL TERRITORIO EN EL PENSAMIENTO GEOGRAFICO BRASILEÑO CONTEMPORÁNEO

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Abstract

This article is part of a survey conducted at the doctoral level, about the concept of territory in contemporary Brazilian geographical thought. It is a historical and theoretical study of bibliographical character, but also statistical, within the Human Geography, through which we aim to identify the geographic productions on the concept of territory. The assumption that the territory has become, along with the space category, relevant to the knowledge and the contemporary geographical thought guided this research. However, it interested us to discover when and how the territory has assumed relevance in the geographic studies among the predominance of studies on space and identify the intellectual settings that the territory has taken in contemporary Brazilian geographical thought.

Keywords: Territory, Geographic Production, Brazilian Geographic Thought.

Resumo

Esse artigo é parte de uma pesquisa realizada, em nível de doutorado, sobre o conceito de território no pensamento geográfico brasileiro contemporâneo. Trata-se de um estudo histórico e teórico de caráter bibliográfico, mas também estatístico, no âmbito da Geografia Humana, por meio do qual objetivamos identificar a produção geográfica sobre o conceito de território. Orientou essa investigação o pressuposto que o território tornou-se, juntamente com a categoria espaço, relevante para o conhecimento e o pensamento geográfico contemporâneo. No entanto, interessava-nos descobrir quando e como o território assumiu relevância nos estudos geográficos em meio à predominância dos estudos sobre espaço e identificar as configurações intelectuais que o território assumiu no pensamento geográfico brasileiro contemporâneo.

Palavras-chave: Território, Produção Geográfica, Pensamento Geográfico Brasileiro.

Resumen

Este artículo forma parte de una investigación realizada, a nivel de doctorado, acerca del concepto de territorio en el pensamiento geográfico brasileño contemporáneo. Se trata de un estudio histórico y teórico de carácter bibliográfico, sino también estadístico, en el ámbito de la Geografía Humana, a través del cual se pretende identificar la producción geográfica sobre el concepto de territorio. La investigación fue conducida por el supuesto de que el territorio se ha convertido, juntamente con la categoría espacio, nos interesaba descubrir cuándo y cómo el territorio ha ganado relevancia en los estudios geográficos a pesar del predominio de los estudios sobre espacio e identificar las configuraciones intelectuales que el territorio ha asumido en el pensamiento geográfico brasileño contemporáneo.

Palabras clave: Territorio, Producción Geográfica, Pensamiento Geográfico Brasileño.

1 Article translated into English by Leticia Lima Vieira from the Department of Scientific Journals – Cegraf - Universidade Federal de Goiás

Introduction

This article comes from a research conducted between 2006-2010 for doctoral dissertation: *O pensamento geográfico brasileiro na travessia do século XX para o XXI: o território na trama das significações imaginárias*. The periodization proposed covered from the 1980s until the early decades of the twenty-first century. This periodization includes: the outbreak of the *renewal movement* of Brazilian geography, in the last two decades of the twentieth century and its upsurge at the end of that century; the rise of Human Geography, as one of the most receptive areas to epistemological changes in geography, especially with regard to the appreciation of the concepts of space and territory in the first decades of the twenty-first century. Research materials consisted of oral evidence, in the form of interviews¹ and written production, in the form of books and articles. Once the doctoral thesis has been completed, we continued to research the theme through other sources: articles published in the Proceedings of the events held by the Association of Brazilian Geographers (AGB)², theses and dissertations completed from 1980 to 2012³.

One of the research goals aimed to assess the renovation of Human Geography and its implications on the revaluation of the territory concept, considering the production of geographers, published in the Proceedings of meetings and symposia organized by AGB. We also seek to identify the settings of Brazilian geographic thought in relation to the concept of territory and thus present a “state of the art” on the topic.

In identifying the settings of this thought, it was sought the traces of tradition and renovation of Human Geography in the final decades of the twentieth century and the first decades of the twenty-first century. Considering the theme and the goals to this research, it was developed a research methodology that sought to combine historical information, quantitative data and analysis of the geographical production.

Human geography in the renewal movement

In the twentieth century, human geography has undergone major transformations, expanding its themes of reflection beyond the classical theme of man-environment relationship, reviewing its methods of research and its conceptions of object of study. One of the consequences of these

changes resulted in the reformulation of the concepts of space and territory in a dialogue with new theoretical and philosophical contributions and different social theories, besides the attention to the phenomenon of globalization. It is highlighted the human geography as a large area of geographical science, for the plasticity in which it absorbed the new theoretical, methodological and thematic perspectives at the end of the last decades of the twentieth century. When the set of transformations originated the so-called *renewal movement* of Brazilian geography, moment when it is verified a vast theoretical production with great historical and epistemological focus on the concepts of space and territory. With regard to the concept of territory, particularly, studies have been intensified from the 1990s through the predominance of studies on space, but gained greater relevance in the first decade of this century.

It is shown by the geographical production that reports the *renewal movement* a close connection with human geography. Silva (1984: 73) states that “[...] the renewal movement also had roots in an old institution: the Department of Geography, Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences, University of São Paulo”. Beyond the source, Silva (1984, p. 73) points out that the movement “[...] joined the efforts of the professors of the Department, of its field of Human Geography, the Association of Brazilian Geographers, then regional section of Sao Paulo through the Geography Bulletin from São Paulo “.

The direction of the Bulletin adopted a policy of publication in 1976 that considered the needs and problems that Geography and other Human Sciences faced in the decade of 1970. The AGB promoted the publication of the discussions held in the Cultural Meeting, created with the intention to resume the intellectual debate repressed by the military dictatorship. These meetings were attended by “Twelve geographers from the Human Geography area”, as reported by Silva (1984, p.74). It was a movement that agglutinated efforts of institutions such as the AGB and universities, a “new generation” and geographers from the human geography area, although they did not adopt that denomination.

The dissatisfaction with the practices and geographical theories existed, but were in meetings organized by AGB, especially in the 1970s, when it accentuated the conflicts between different conceptions of thinking and doing, that emerged the possibility of agglutination and more effective reaction, contrary to current state of geographical science⁴. While

they did not constitute an explicit collective project and an organized reaction, the themes of renewal were up outlining: social transformation, requiring a new purpose for the strategic use of geographic knowledge; the establishment of a theory with concepts and its own categories of geographical discourse; reconstruction of all through the space; the search for the method that overcome the dichotomy between physical geography and human geography; the concern for the theoretical foundation, setting a comprehensive and consistent philosophy; the concern to avoid fragmentation and excessive spatialization in various “geographies”.

The renewal movement had also, among others, two important developments: the creation of “new geography” and “critical geography” designations for new trends in Geography and the reassertion of space as an object of study. But this was a new conception of space – the social space, historically produced by the social relations of production and class struggles – which did not suit the design of the New Geography⁵. These developments have fueled significant part of the theoretical work in Human Geography aiming mainly at giving it simultaneously ontological and epistemological⁶ status. The Human Geography was receptive to the critical thinking concerning the concept of geography, the nature of its object of study, the methodological and theoretical perspectives of current research in the academic environment and, therefore, did not refuse to discuss the strategic dimension of geographical knowledge.

However, what appeared to give identity to geographical science, the social space, soon became the subject of criticism. Such criticism, in turn, took two features: one that highlighted forgetting the territorial dimension of the phenomena, as emphasized Egler (1983), and another that questioned the transformation of Geography in a “spaciology” as stressed Souza (1988).

Movement of renewal and emergence of studies on territory⁷

In the 1980s, at the height of renovation, some “discordant voices” critically commented on the critical geography and the permanence that the space occupied in geographical thought. One of the major challenges of the moment was to go beyond the work of the negative, undertaken by theoretical and ideological criticism towards effective propositions, especially when it concerned the national reality: the restoration of

democracy as a social value amid a long period of military dictatorship; the political openness and the democratization; the political engagement and popular struggles; the concern for the social, the economic and technical development; the environmental issues, the expropriation of the peasantry; the need for a national project to Brazil. Throughout that decade the critical words and crisis gave the keynote speeches and debates in the Brazilian geography.

One of these “discordant voices” (Egler, 1983, p 73), questioned the critical geography because it would “[...] have been restricted in seeking to interpret the world from the basic conflict between capital and labor; reducing to oblivion the political and economic struggle that the ownership of capital and earth creates within the ruling class [...] “. Accordingly, such a view ignored the “national and regional conflict since the interests of the capitalists would be homogeneous across the surface of the earth [...]” (Egler, 1983, p. 73). As the New Geography continues Egler (1983, p. 74), showed up “[...] unable to analyze and understand the profound changes that were processed in the last thirty years in the political-territorial framework of the contemporary world [...] “. These criticisms did not exempt Brazilian geographical thought at the time, because that thought would have denied the essence of the political conflict, for “Denying the national, the regional or the local features of the political conflict, ‘pasteurizing’ space worldwide, the new trends of the geographical thought have systematically pushed aside the analysis of concrete reality, territorially defined “(Egler, 1983, p. 74). The terms of the crisis were also questioned: the geography or the geographers were in crisis.

The terms of criticism and debate were reserved because they demanded the exercise of self-criticism and the return of a basic category of geographical thought: territory, placing it at the heart of reflections. Overcoming the crisis required: clarity in the identification of the contemporary political conflict, political and ideological positioning and more attention to the ways that the materiality of space assumed at the end of the century.

The materiality of space is manifested in the territory, which is submitted to private appropriation, to the struggle for its possession and its natural resources. It is the use and the appropriation of the territories that expose the capitalism nature and bring up the concrete relations of production. Active scenario of class struggle, competition among the owners of the means of production, the

territory is the concrete determination of the capitalist mode of production contradictions. (Egler, 1983, p. 75.)

The debates between tradition and renewal recognize in the status territory that not everything in the tradition could be denied, without losing the identity of their own Geography because “*Geography was born as ‘science of territory’, understanding the territory as a portion of the surface land subject to appropriation by the socio-economic formations in different stages of development*” (Egler, 1983, p. 75, emphasis added). What were in debate were the contours and the settings in which they delineated the territory.

At the end of the 1980s and early 90s, the territory is also presented as a category of analysis that makes it possible to understand capitalist accumulation in relation to the forms of reproduction of peasant agriculture, for capital would act monopolizing territories in a territorial process of agriculture, which differs from the spatial distribution of the struggle for land in the country. As Oliveira (2000, p. 44) territorial capital and spatialization of the struggle for land would constitute necessary concepts to understand the Brazilian agrarian space. Among the agrarian geography there are Fernandes developments (1999, 2005, 2006, 2009) to articulate social movements and territory, in other words, his concern to develop a “geographic theory” of social movements. In his testimony he presents what he considers his contribution to the Brazilian geographical thought: “My contribution [...] is in the understanding of the territorial and dispossession process; in an attempt of building a Geography of peasant movements as socio-territorial movements” (Fernandes, 2008, p. 50-51). This conviction has been one of the motivations of his researches on social movements in the countryside.

The 1990s were replete with propositions about the territory in relation to various themes. Among them stand out items from: Santos (1994): *O retorno do território* that has become emblematic of the contestation of the single thought on globalization and neoliberal ideas and policies; Souza (1995) *O território: sobre espaço e poder, autonomia e desenvolvimento* that redefined the concept of territory in a critical perspective on the ideological content; Becker (1997) *Tendência de transformação do território no Brasil. Vetores e Circuitos*, whose reflections highlight the economic dimension of the territory, the moving border and the issue of national sovereignty; Castro (1997a) *Solidariedade territorial*

e representação. Novas questões para o pacto federativo nacional which seeks to identify the links between the institutional dimension, political power and territory; Gomes (1997) *A dimensão ontológica do território no debate da cidadania: o exemplo canadense*, which aimed to elucidate the ontological dimension of the territory in the debate of citizenship and national issue. This compilation aims to highlight the issues in which the territory was shaping up theoretically. In this 1990s, as important as the articles were also the books⁸ to the Brazilian geographical thought, namely, Andrade (1995), Costa (1989.1992), Haesbaerth (1997), Moraes (1988), among others, who gave the keynote to the debates and research on territory, making it obligatory⁹ references.

In the first decades of the century, many researches in the form of books or theses were published and have become reference works on the territory. Some still remain unexplored as the relevance of its proposals. It would be impossible to name all the researches, but it is possible to indicate some authors who we consider essential, such as Arroyo (2001), Castro (2005), Costa (2005), Haesbaerth (2002, 2004), Lopes (2004), Moraes (2000, 2002), Santos; Silveira (2001). In all these authors the reflection on the territory is linked to a theme or research problem whether it be the economy, culture, politics or history, or whether the technique. Identify the questions posed and the research courses, theoretical affiliations is fundamental task to those who are dedicated to producing geographical knowledge. Some of these geographers pointed out in their testimony, the motivations that led to the “encounter” with the territory. According to Costa (2007, p. 7):

The geographer is always very passionate about his place and the look he developed on different scales. [...] Is there, too, my tendency to value the territory. Because the territory is a way for you to humanize the region. The territory is nothing more than the humanization of the region, place and space. [...]

As for Moraes (1996, p.148), by opting for a reflection that prioritizes the political aspect was gradually emphasizing the territory in its theoretical production. As opposed to the liberal perspective and positioning himself as critical geographer, he affirmed:

Critical thinking in Geography will contrast these views, attacking head-on what they have in common: the perspective of reducing the nation to its spatial dimension [...]. To critical geographers, the

territory is seen as a social product, a historical result of human practice on the surface of the Earth.

Moraes also elected a conception of history, in one of the strands of Marxism, and promoted the crossing between territory and history as the central core of his definition of human geography as a “territorial history.” He devoted himself also thinking a national project for the country and the challenge involved in this project.

The challenge put into reflection of a democratic geography today is to think of Brazil as a society, giving new quality to the approach of the national territory, this should be understood as a heritage of the nation (and not its reason to be). [...]. Overcoming the authoritarian *espacialismo* should not be the elimination of the territory in the national project planning, but its suitable orientation to the democratic ideal. (Moraes, 2002, p. 13)

As for Santos, the theoretical and methodological approach, as well as the motivations that led to the joints between space and territory are denser and deserve a separate article. It has often been asked about the use or abandonment of categories and concepts in his theoretical production. In his last reflections at the end of the twentieth century, Santos (2004, p. 115-116) warned about the influences of globalization and neoliberal ideas in geography.

Such influence of globalization and neoliberalism reaches the very geography when it accepts to become a geography without territory, as indeed is becoming frequent and may even be appointed as hegemonic practice in some universities. Examples of this geography without territory are not limited to the discourse of discipline for external purposes, but are inserted in the very core of scientific work and training of young geographers, both in research and in teaching.

The consequences of this “geography without territory” were expressed in the theory and in the political aspects, as well as teaching, in the formation of future geographers. Hence the need to reconstruct the concept of territory in a broad sense as, at the risk of the destruction of geographical science. Santos sought to overcome that situation and insistently pursued the project in all his reflections. With the advent of globalization had to rehabilitate the territory in geographical thought and through it also rethink the identity of Geography.

A geography without territory is a contradiction which helps to explain the growing absence of this category of analysis and deep debate of nation. This is a setback for the country, and for the geographical discipline may amount to a kind of suicide. If geographers are absent from the debate over the territory, there is a parallel impoverishment of political science, sociology and historical interpretation, and, in practical terms, an impoverishment also in the political life of the nation. Fortunately, a strong reaction is outlined in academic circles but also in political circles, and so we can expect the territory, that forgotten reality is resumed, avoiding the weakening of the optical without which the worldview of countries, places, is incomplete and even unreal. (Santos, 2004, p. 116-117.)

At the beginning of the century, in 2001, Santos published, co-authored with Silveira, the book: *O Brasil: território e sociedade no início do século XXI*, on which he made the following comment: "I interpreted the Brazil from its territory. He is the central character of this reading. I want to show that the territory allows you to tell the nation "(Santos, 2002, p. 69). This work not only meant to fill a gap in theoretical work in geography. It remains a theoretical and methodological proposition over the country.

With the movement of renovation, which took the features of an iconic landmark of the Brazilian geography, the concept of territory was rehabilitated in the contemporary geographical thought, to which were added the technical dimensions, culture, citizenship, economics and development, among others. The territory also started to be thought in other scales and not only on a national scale.

The geographical production on territory in the event of AGB

With the changes that occurred after the ENG 1978, the forums were driving more and more its thematic to the socioeconomic aspects. The renewal movement reflected in the study proposals, universities and forums geographic community, as reported by Monteiro (2002, p. 28):

[...] in the Geography departments of universities, it was to increase the socioeconomic character of disciplines to the detriment of that environmental. It came to a point where the participants of physical geography were taken to generate their own discussion forum through the creation of the "Symposium of Applied Physical Geography" [later added to these, the Geomorphology and Climatology. This practice was installed in the first week of

December 1984 in Rio Claro-SP - movement initiated by Antonio Christofoletti].

Such events have become moments of reflection on the social and political purpose of geographical knowledge, the nature of work of geographers and what they thought of their profession as scientists. The themes of the meetings show the closest thematic discussions in the context of human geography: *Geografia e realidade brasileira: formas de resistência* (1988), *Movimento brasileiro, movimento geográfico: território, ambiente, cidadania* (1990), *Geografia, democracia e a (des) ordem mundial* (1992), *Velho mundo – novas fronteiras* (1994), *Espacialidade e territorialidade: limites da simulação* (1996), *A geografia brasileira e as transformações no trabalho e no espaço* (1998), *Os outros 500 na formação do território brasileiro* (2000), *Por uma Geografia Nova na construção do Brasil* (2002), *Setenta anos da AGB: as transformações do espaço e a geografia no século XXI* (2004), *A Geografia e a Amazônia no contexto latino-americano: diálogos, práticas e percursos* (2006), *O espaço não para: por uma AGB em movimento* (2008), *Crise, Práxis e Autonomia: espaços de esperança e de resistência* (2010) ¹⁰.

In the investigated period, 1980-2010, were held 16 events by AGB, 13 National Meetings of Geographers (ENG) and three Brazilian Congress of Geographers (CBG). In relation to the events of the 16 promoted seven occurred between the North (1974, Bethlehem, 2006 White River), South (1982 and 2010, Porto Alegre, 2000 Florianópolis) and Midwest (1986 Campo Grande, 2004, Goiania); and the rest (nine events) with distributed organizations between the Northeast and the Southeast. As shown in Chart 1, throughout the 1980s the results were more than 600 jobs, with 27 productions about the Territory and 70 on Space. From the meeting in 1986 in Campo Grande - MS, more targeted to agrarian theme, there was a considerable increase in the submitted works in the events.

Until the 1970s, the scientific production in Geography was developed by a small groups of geographers linked to the AGB and the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)¹¹. Mamigonian (1987, p. 136) emphasizes the importance of AGB's meeting in intellectual formation, especially of geography undergraduates, because "[...] were more productive and democratic than the existing Geography courses in universities and held trainings research and discussions that were scarce in the courses [...]".

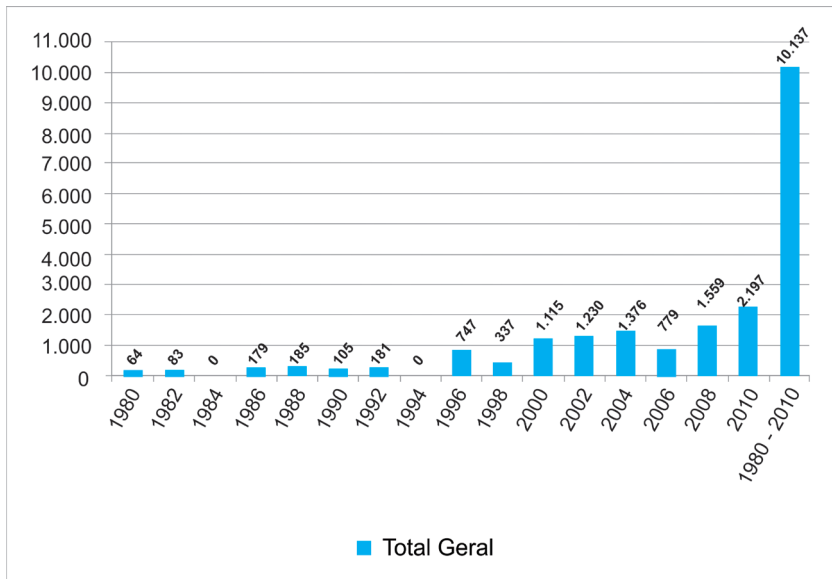


Figure 1: Publications on the AGB events between 1980-2010

Source: events of the Proceedings of AGB (1980-2010). Org.: Silva, M. F.; Silva, A. C. 2013.

In the 1990s, there was again a general increase in the production resulting in almost 2,400 jobs, with about 160 of Territory and 190 productions of space. Especially the last three events of the period, mainly XII ENG, held in Florianópolis - SC, in 2000. Of the approximately 750 productions in 1996 in Recife; and 340 in 1998 in Vitoria da Conquista, over 1,100 jobs were enrolled in 2000, 70 on the category space and about 80 on the Territory. This exceeding for the first time that in many productions.

In the third and last analyzed time frame (2002-2010), it amounted to more than seven thousand productions, with almost 890 on Space and 803 on the Territory. During this period, each region hosted an event and all preserved in their formatting, the general axis of publication: "Dialogue Spaces". Meetings in 2006, in Rio Branco, and 2010 in Porto Alegre, again producing territorial issue exceeded production about the space. At the Meeting in 2010, it is noteworthy that the number of registered exceeded two thousand units. Almost 1,400 productions in 2004 in Goiania, and 800 in 2006, there was further growth of registered, around 1,600 in 2008, in São Paulo, for more than two thousand jobs in 2010.

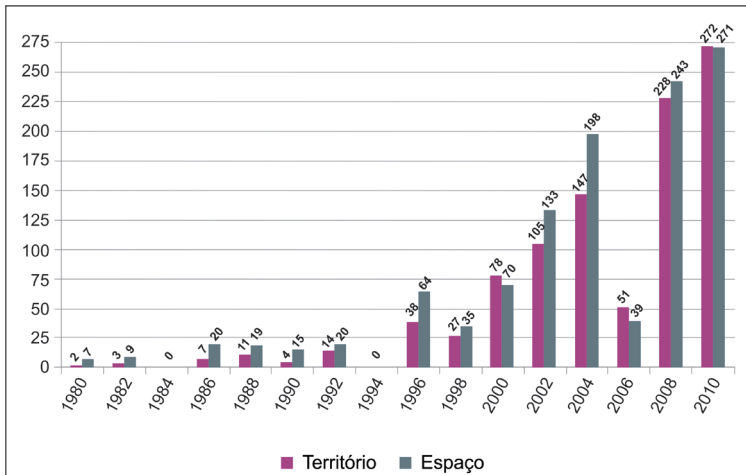


Chart 2: Publications on Territory and space in the AGB events between 1980-2010

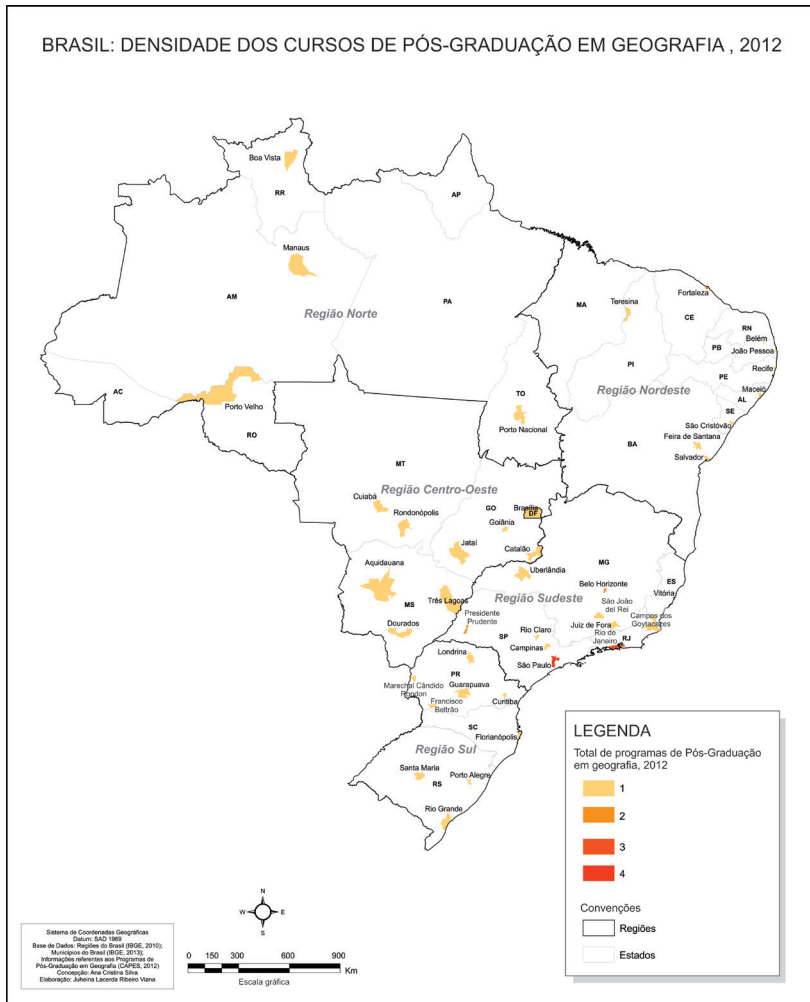
Source: events of the Proceedings of AGB (1980-2010). Org.: Silva, M. F.; Silva, A. C. 2013.

Although in the first two decades (1980 and 1990) analyzed the productions on the category “Space” has surpassed the productions about the Territory, there was an increase of percentage presented by the last, with remarkable quantitative increase in the first decade of the century XXI. Between the period of 1980-1990 to 1992-2000, there was an increase of 482% in territorial themed productions, and in the same time lag, the production on Space category increased 170%. In periods of 1992-2000 and 2002-2010, both categories performed well, however, the production of Territory had the highest growth rate, almost 412% before almost 368% of the category space.

In addition to the Annals of AGB’s meetings there is a vast production in the form of dissertations and theses, to be systematized and investigated. The lack of systematization of work on the Brazilian geographical production was one of the reasons that prompted the present investigation. Another reason relates to the elucidation of contemporary Brazilian geographical thought: research themes in vogue, the categories of analysis in question, and the theoretical and methodological perspectives. It was, therefore, to conduct a quantitative survey on this production, to systematize it trying to identify the settings of Brazilian geographical thought over the territory and identify where it concentrates this production.

Spatialization of the geographical production on territory

In the 1970s there is the creation of the first graduate programs in Geography in Brazil. In the crossing from the first to the second decade of this century, it is possible to identify the existence of 41 masters programs and 18 doctoral programs in Geography, distributed in the regions of the country (Figure 1).



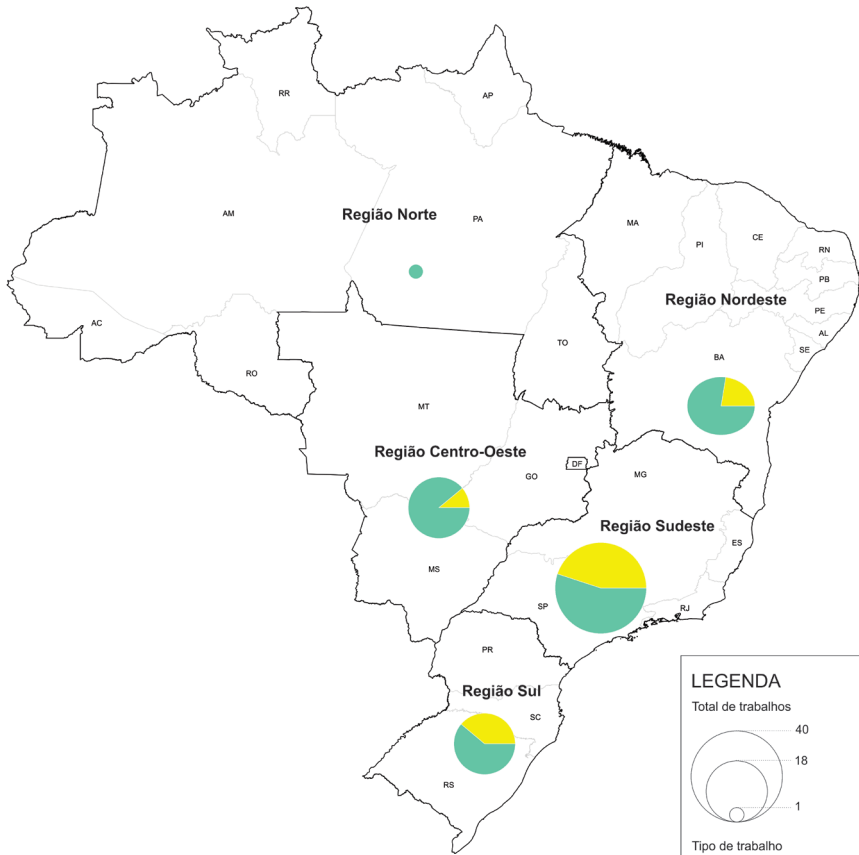
In Brazil, the growth of graduate programs has intensified in the first decades of the twenty-first century. However it is concentrated in the Southeast region, historically a pioneer in graduate school, followed by the South Region. The graduate programs elect areas of concentration that refer to issues related to regional and / or national issues, the profile of their researchers and local or national demand for training of new researchers. Within the postgraduate Geography there are the following areas of concentration as systematization made by Mota (2012, p.5, emphasis added):

Environment and Nature in which encompasses environmental issues; *Space*, which includes the organization, ownership, production, dynamic and spatial analysis; *Territory*, covering issues related to territoriality and the dynamics and spatial planning; *Region*, involving issues related to analysis, dynamic and regional planning, as well as issues related to urban and rural. Other areas also identified by the Capes are the *Treatment of Information*, *New Technologies*, *Teaching*, *Theory and Method*.

In one of the stages of the research, it was possible to see a growth of studies on territory and it showed that the oldest postgraduate courses, such as the University of São Paulo (USP) presented the highest number of dissertations and theses in the period under study (1980-2012). At this institution has been produced since 1982, about 109 surveys that identify the concept of territory, 54 dissertations and 55 theses. Academic productions have growth, both in the form of dissertations as in the form of theses. Figure 2 shows the regional distribution of dissertations and theses in Geography, about territory¹².

The Southeast and South still concentrate most of the academic literature in a territorial approach. Although the data and information collated for this study also highlight the growth and expansion of graduate programs in other regions.

BRASIL: DISTRIBUIÇÃO REGIONAL DAS DISSERTAÇÕES E TESES EM GEOGRAFIA SOBRE TERRITÓRIO, 2012



LEGENDA

Total de trabalhos

40
18
1

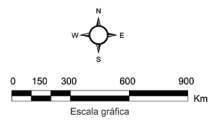
Tipo de trabalho

- Dissertação
- Tese

Convenções

- Regiões
- Estados

Sistema de Coordenadas Geográficas
Datum: SAD 1969
Base de Dados: Regiões do Brasil (IBGE, 2010);
Municípios do Brasil (IBGE, 2012);
Informações referentes aos trabalhos
publicados (CAPES, 2014).
Concepção: Ana Cristina da Silva
Elaboração: Jheline Lucinda Ribeiro Viana



Final Considerations

This research enabled us to identify: the emergence and growth of research on a territorial approach in the contemporary Brazilian geographic thought through the quantitative survey works (at the undergraduate and graduate) presented at the events of AGB, at dissertations and theses that characterize the academic production in the period under study (1980-2012). However, it is not possible to say that there is a theoretical and methodological unity in this production. There are dissertations and theses which start from a theoretical and methodological perspective dialectic, other phenomenological within the humanistic and cultural geography. Studies stand out on: microterritorialities in urban geography; dispossession; social movements and struggle for land in agricultural geography; territory, borders and sovereignty in political geography; planning and land use planning; territorial political and geographical ideologies. What can be said is that there is polysemy (many senses and meanings are attributed to the concept of territory) and polyphony in the studies that have the territory as a central category of analysis or as a concept.

It appears that there is an intellectual setting in contemporary Brazilian geographical thought, including several locations around the country. This diversity comes from different studies and researches by their origins, their objectives, theoretical and methodological positions that do not have a common core epistemological or philosophical and political convergence. It results in a plurality of conceptions about: what is territory, Geography, what is geographic, the “strategic” purpose of knowledge of this science and of being a geographer. In such a configuration there is the predominance of theoretical pluralism, methodological and thematic.

In the early twenty-first century, Correa (2001, p. 10) proposed to accept generously the methodological pluralism that emerged in the 1980s in reaction to orthodoxies. In his proposal of topics, it presupposes the continuity of spatial differentiation process engendered by globalization. He draws attention to the need to recognize the trajectory of Brazilian geography, to identify the existence of traditions – especially the “research solidly established in the country” – and elements to think about the future, highlighting the “gaps in National Geographic production.” But this plurality also appears as a threat to all, highly valued category in the renewed Brazilian geography. For now, we get the proposals Santos (1994,

p. 15) about the territory “It is an impure form, a hybrid, a notion that [...] requires constant historical revision. What it has to be permanent is our living environment. Its understanding is therefore crucial to avoid the risk of alienation, the risk of loss of the sense of individual and collective existential, the risk of renunciation of the future. “

Endnotes

1 The interviews were crucial in directing the research and we try not to unlink the testimony of a broader geographic production. They sought to identify characteristics of the Brazilian geographical thought that were not in the form of books or articles. Through them it was possible to identify the vocational training and life trajectories, positioning and forms of participation of geographers and geographers in *the movement of renewal*, as well as interest in the territory concept. The respondents, geographers and Brazilian geographers, were selected for research themes predominate in which the concept of territory and for being expressive of new concepts in the territory of contemporary Brazilian geographical thought.

2 This stage of the research was developed as part of a scientific research program (PIBIC), with the CNPq scholarship by Michael Fernando da Silva by the Work Plan: Renewal of Human Geography and the return of the territory in the Brazilian geographical thought: a study of the geographical production presented in congresses of AGB (1980 - 2010), under our guidance, in 2012-2013.

3 This stage of the research was also developed as part of a scientific research program (PIBIQ) with CNPQ the stock exchange for Paulo Roberto Ferreira de Aguiar Junior, through the Work Plan: Renewal of Human Geography and the emergence of research on territory in contemporary Brazilian geographical thought: a study of the geographical production in the form of dissertations and theses (1980 - 2012), in 2013-2014.

4 An extensive renovation movement manifested itself in the Fortaleza event, held in 1978, would continue with the assembly of AGB, held in São Paulo, in 1979, contributing to the changes in the 1980 meeting in Rio de Janeiro.

5 In order to understand the differences between New Geography and Geography Critics see the articles of Faissol (1978) and Crhistofoletti (1985).

6 One of the most emblematic works from that moment stands out: The geographic space as a philosophical category, hosted by Milton Santos in the National Geographers meeting in 1982 and published in 1988. In it combine a definition of Geography and technique and assertive Geography as a social science: “[...]. Geography is no longer a part of physics, a philosophy of nature, to be a philosophy of technology” (Santos, 1988, p. 10).

7 We do not know all the reasons that gave meaning to the rehabilitation of the territory in contemporary Brazilian geographical thought, but we know some of them. Therefore, “locate” and “map” such motivations through the experiences and the memory that the Brazilian geographers have from them and that are contemporaries, either through their testimony or by the understanding of the world proposition that is in their written works.

8 Some such as Costa and Moraes have been published in the late 1980s.

9 For the purposes of this article, we chose not to highlight the influence of foreign authors in the debate about the territory in the Brazilian geographical thought since exceeds our goals right now.

10 During the research they did not identify thematic titles in previous events at 1988.

11 Until the 1970s, the IBGE also constituted an important reference point of geographical research in Brazil, having gathered and formed generations of geographers in applied research. Institution linked directly to the Brazilian state government, the IBGE is still one of the bodies responsible for research that serves as a reference for territorial planning and government policies. According Faissol (1996), IBGE promoted the training of its staff by sending them to training courses and graduate abroad. Since its creation until the 1970s, the IBGE brought together geographers on their boards and study groups directly influencing the formation of researchers in Geography. With the advent of the military regime in the 1960s, the IBGE has undergone profound internal reforms, which also reflected in the composition of the professional framework of the institution, with hiring economists and reducing the number of geographers.

12 The geographical distribution of academic production by region was drawn from the CAPES database, which only in 2004 began to make this information available on its website.

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