

Public policies and territorial development in the State of Goiás, Brazil: is there a place for local governance?

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1 Introduction

Among the world's largest countries, Brazil has long adopted public policies to promote territorial occupation, to foster economic development, and to diminish regional inequalities. After a developmental period with public policies planned and financed mainly at the central level, a neoliberal phase with market promotion and local action ensued. Both tendencies facing difficulties, a “neodevelopmental” compromise establishes broad directives at the national scale while adopting democratic decision making processes at the regional and local levels. One of the areas receiving attention is the central plateau, a large yet thinly populated region between the developed Southeast and the Amazon forest, in which we find the state of Goiás. A formerly mining area which evolved to house extensive cattle breeding, in the last decades Goiás has become a wealthy state steered by exports of agricultural commodities, particularly in the soybean complex. In spite of this dynamic scenery, inequality perseveres with the permanence of poor stagnant areas. In this text, we summarize the relations between socioeconomic processes and territorial policies in Brazil and in Goiás in three different periods. As a reference for the analysis, a brief discussion about the role of governance in territorial and urban development follows.

Brief theoretical notes

A number of studies acknowledge the role of the central State which, inspired by Keynesian economics, was during a certain period relatively active in the promotion of regional and local development (Brenner 2004a; Brenner 2004b; Helmsing, 1999). During the 1970s and 1980s governmental action was particularly strong in Brazil. In this line, Helmsing (1999) describes how federal economic regulations and their financial incentives tended to influence the localization of firms. Criticism about the limits of this model, however, has shown that uneven regional development remained, even after substantial amounts of incentives (Brenner and Theodore, 2002).

In the last decades, with the emergence of neoliberal orientations, Buarque notes, a number of authors argued in favor of endogenous policies as a means to promote development (2004). Different approaches, such as those favoring endogenous development, envisage processes that interplay with global forces and include non-economic values (see Wilson, 1995). In recent years, following the recognition of the limits of local policies as well as of centralized policies, a third orientation has emerged which considers both exogenous and of endogenous policies as necessary (Helmsing, 1999). According to Helmsing these policies cannot be exclusively local or solely regional, but have to fit both in the national and international territorial systems. Thus, they subsume not only the cooperation between firms, but also articulation to supporting institutions as key factors for development.

In the last decades, new trends have transformed the as yet uniform system of local government into a more complex mesh of local governance where a multitude of unelected agencies (public, private and voluntary) have become involved in attempting to influence the fortunes of local areas (Goodwin and Painter, 1996). Furthermore, the construction of strategies for local development is strongly influenced by the principle of territorial governance (Davoudi et al, 2008) which concerns the relationship between governance and territory. Over the last two decades the nature of territorial management and spatial planning has taken a variety of conceptions. The concepts generally associate with local development, regional development, community development, endogenous development and bottom-up development (Simard and Chiasson, 2008).

In the context of territorial development, governance plays a fundamental role, consisting of coordination, communication and collaboration between actors at different government levels – vertical partnerships – and between a wide range of actors coming from public and private sector as well as civil society – horizontal partnerships (OECD, 2002). Improving governance is therefore related to the strengthening of the institutions, the articulation between various governmental levels, decentralization and the process for construction of citizenship.

The research problem

This paper draws upon exploring the role of socioeconomic processes upon territorial policies in the state of Goiás. The outlook expands to encompass governance and to pave the way – in a future phase of this dissertation - to understand to what extent the municipalities that most developed in the state of Goiás – focusing on what has been called “industrial districts” – were the ones that had better conditions in the promotion of governance. An exploratory analysis suggests that alongside state action and the existence of natural resources, municipalities in Goiás with greater social participation, institutional arrangements and political power have had better conditions to promote economic development. Based on a literature review, a step envisioned concerns the identification of top-down and bottom-up policies in different historical periods and their results at national and sub-national levels.

Format of the discussion

The article begins by reviewing the evolution of socioeconomic changes and corresponding territorial policies in Brazil. The discussion focuses on social and economic aspects spatial planning and territorial development. Next, it presents the context of the state of Goiás, following the previous structure, in the light of the evolution of state policies and their consequent changes in the territory. It concludes with correlations between bottom-up and top-down approaches on development.

2 Territorial policies and development in Brazil

The landmark of territorial policies in Brazil may be established in the 1930s when the federal government launched a process of industrialization known as import substitution, which led to a transition from an agro-export model to an industrial-urban model. The beginning of a long process of rural exodus and rural-urban migrations, which started as early as the 1950s, were among the consequences of industrialization. The process of implementation of public policies in Brazil may be envisaged through three phases: the developmental phase (1970-1985), the neoliberal phase (1986-2002), and the “neodevelopmental” phase (2003-2010).

2.1 Public policies and the territory in Brazil during the developmental phase (1970-1985)

2.1.1 Social and economic background in Brazil during the developmental phase

Social and economic aspects

During this period, the Brazilian economy underwent a rapid economic growth, based on the expansion of manufacturing activities. At the same time, the combination of a modernizing agriculture and the stagnation of traditional activities resulted in a decrease in rural occupation. The ensuing search for jobs directed a steady flow of rural migrants to small and medium-sized cities as well as to fast growing metropolitan areas. In spite of the creation of a significant number of jobs, the urban economy was not able to absorb a growing number of former agricultural laborers. Historically rooted poverty as well as the informal economy grew to high levels. Faced with external and internal crises, the economic growth of the early nineteen seventies faltered in the 1980s, to a decade of stagnation. For Fiori, the early 1980s witnessed the end of the developmental era (2001).

Planning

Inspired by Keynesian directives, this phase privileged state participation in the economy and a model of federalism commanded by the central government. Accordingly, planning models privileged centralized policies, technical determinations and a comprehensive orientation.

2.1.2 Territorial policies in Brazil during the developmental phase

During this phase, the process of industrialization and provision of infrastructure initiated by the federal government concentrated in the Southeastern region. Due to regional inequalities, the State’s interventionist strategy led to the creation of regional development agencies for the Northeast and Amazon regions such as Sudene (Superintendência de Desenvolvimento do Nordeste) and Sudam (Superintendência de Desenvolvimento da Amazonia) in that period. Due to disputes, these regional public policy agencies gradually lost their role in territorial planning and regional development. The

economic benefits generated by the Keynesian period failed to effectively reduce regional and local inequalities.

During the 1970s and 1980s the military regime introduced large scale projects such as industrial districts inspired by Perroux's growth poles, roads and mineral exploration. The emergence of metropolitan areas, such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo and significant industrial concentration in the Southeast characterized strong regional imbalances. Concentration of the population alongside the concentration of production and social organization within the coastal band became a spatial pattern (Becker and Egler 1994: 28). During the 1980s, Latin American economies were hit quite hard in what was considered a lost decade for the region (Becker and Egler, 1994: 169). The interruption in the process of historic economic activity and industrial concentration in southeast Brazil indicated stagnation in the production process.

In the period, due to the acute emphasis in economic development, social issues became secondary. The State's fiscal crisis of the 1980s and economic instability contributed for social services to have become deteriorated to an extreme (Becker and Egler, 1994:121). Bred by a federal government which concentrated high levels of power, public policies in this phase are known to have been top-down oriented. This trait expressed an authoritarian administration of the territory.

2.2 Public policies and the territory in Brazil during the neoliberal phase (1986-2002)

2.2.1 Social and economic background in Brazil during the neoliberal phase

Social and economic aspects

During this period, there was a general slowing of pace in the economy while public debt increased and inflation soared. Only after the mid 1990s did inflation rates decrease to reasonable levels. Unable to keep measures to protect national manufacturers, the government significantly reduced import taxes while trying to make productivity gains possible. Meanwhile, increased investments in agricultural technologies and mining supported the expansion of the export commodities sector. Aside to modernizing processes, the economy remained unable to absorb an increased number of workers. In metropolitan centers, medium sized cities, and to a certain extent towns, a growing number of people lived in expanding slum areas. Parallel to a continually increasing informal sector, unemployment, poverty and social exclusion kept growing.

Planning

Favored by globalization trends, the market hegemony thrived not only in material processes but also in the dissemination of values. Disseminated through European and North American experiences of gentrification and equipment of urban areas for international events, strategic planning reached a number of Brazilian cities. Opposition to these processes, already established in rural social movements, reemerged in urban areas as well. In cities with social, economic and political tradition, participatory planning started to develop.

2.2.2 Territorial policies in Brazil during the neoliberal phase

During this second phase, with open elections in 1982 a new process of "redemocratization" started. Among a number of changes, decentralization of the distribution of financial revenue and political strength ensued (Souza, 1996). The 1988 Constitution of 1988 represented a definite impact towards decentralization. A new balance among the three governing entities, federal, state and municipal,

contributed to the emergence of more individualized decisions, with greater decision-making autonomy to states and local governments.

This favored the development of policies at the states level, which were aggressive and competitive. In order to attract investment, a number of Brazilian states offered tax exemptions and entered into the so-called "fiscal war" among themselves. This dispute led to spatial changes in the municipalities where new plants were established and had implications on the territorial configuration of various regions. There were different "fronts" in this war (Dulci, 2002), such as the automotive industry, the information technology sector and agro-industry. Manufacturing industries had a central role in metropolitan growth and urban agglomeration in general, and Brazil, in a few decades, was transformed in a more urban country.

The process of agricultural modernization and the development of agro-industry began in the 1970s continued to rise in the 1990s. The emergence of agribusiness increased urbanization in the areas of agricultural modernization associated with agro-industrial complexes. However, in one hand, inequalities within and between the urban areas were sharpened and the urban-rural relation was modified. At the other hand, small towns and even rural areas linked to agro-industrial production gained a high standard of development and integration into production networks, communication and transport (Cidade et al; 2006).

This second phase of public policies, influenced by a neoliberal orientation, had as its main features bottom-up policies. It was when civil society organizations represented by diverse associations, and municipal, state and federal councils from different sectors could emerge and learn how to organize themselves in order to understand their role in achieving their aims.

2.3 Public policies and the territory in Brazil during the "neodevelopmental" phase (2003-2010)

2.3.1 Social and economic background in Brazil during the "neodevelopmental" phase

Social and economic aspects

During this phase, with an open economy and increased integration to the world market, Brazil has suffered yet not succumbed to the bitter outcomes of the crisis which hit the international scene at the end of the decade. While the economy underwent oscillations, the government privileged balancing the budget aside with controlling the external debt and keeping inflation relatively low. For Bradford, there are good prospects for the growth of manufacturing while agricultural exports account for 35% of the country's exports. The author notes that Brazil is the main world exporter of six key agricultural commodities: sugar, beef, chicken, orange juice, green coffee and what is known as the soya complex, of beans, meal and oil (2010). Such as in previous phases, urbanization and metropolitan areas kept increasing as well as the population living in slums. Investments in infra-structure, the continuity of mining activities, and the expansion agricultural complexes witnessed the increase of company towns and of as yet small towns now associated in rural urban networks. In spite of a growing economy, while the informal sector remains very large, unemployment, poverty and social exclusion remain.

Planning

In light of continued economic integration and flexible accumulation trends in the global market and following contradictory tendencies at home, planning also expresses mixed tendencies. While not without opposition, strategic projects thrive, social movements increase their demands for more democratic forms of representation. Increasingly sensitive to these demands, decision makers at different levels have

established integrated policies and processes to establish pluralistic governance settings at different territorial scales.

2.3.2 Territorial policies in Brazil during the “neodevelopmental” phase

The third phase has its landmark in a series of federal four year plans starting with the Multiyear Plan (*Plano Plurianual - PPA*) for 1996/1999. According to Cidade et al., the Cardoso government faced difficulties in keeping extensive infrastructure networks and to finance productive investments. Thus, the plan focused attention on selected “development axes” which included strategic projects to remove obstacles for the transportation of export crops and minerals (2008). After wide criticism, the 2000/2003 PPA extended the proposal to include social objectives. These plans were marked by an inter-sectorial vision and had geo-political features. They highlighted the development of industrial productivity growth and of policies to enhance the competitiveness of Brazilian producers. At the same time, this period signaled the culmination of agricultural modernization and development of agricultural complexes.

A key aspect of the 2000/2003 Plan supports the principles of sustainable development, the promotion of decentralization, the integration between states and municipalities, and the forming of partnerships between the public and the private sector. According to Gartenkraut (2002), the basic methodological orientation of this plan is geo-economic and aims not only at integrating the territory but also at reducing regional and social disparities. One distinctive trait of the Plan is that it involved attention to society's demands as well as to social and economic dynamics.

3 Territorial policies and development in Goiás

Goiás is a vast Central-Western state with 246 municipalities, Brazil has 5565 municipalities, 26 states and one federal district (Brasília). This state has undergone a considerable economic, social and political-institutional development in the last two decades. More recently, the outburst of highly technical export crop agriculture has brought a new wealth to the region and territorial transformations. Governmental policies induced the growth of urbanization (in 2000, 87,9 % of urban population in the state), road networks and actively supported a few successful industrial districts. Although a dynamic state, there are some areas that have developed more, contrasting to other stagnant areas

Based on population census before 1960's, Goiás state had a low demographic density compared to other states in the dynamized southeast region of Brazil. From the 1930s, the federal government started policies on population settlements in Central-West region. Called “march to the west”, it defined new orientations to the socioeconomic structure of the region and expanding the agricultural frontier. The end of 1930s, was marked by the construction of Goiânia, as the new planned capital city of the state of Goiás. At the end of 1950s, the new federal capital, planned city of Brasília, had a great influence on the territorial transformation of the region. Brasília had its impact in Goiás, as for the population overflows the limits of the Federal District surrounding area reaching municipalities in Goiás state. These policies attracted a contingent of population, coming from other regions of the country, which would cause an accelerated urbanization process from the 1970s on, although before 1970 urban population surpassed rural population.

3.1 Public policies and the territory in Goiás during the developmental phase (1970-1985)

3.1.1 Social and economic background in Goiás during the developmental phase

Social and economic aspects

From the 1970s the modernization of agriculture, based on its tecnification, the production of commodities, a supply-driven economy towards the external market (Moyses and Silva, 2008), and an increased urbanization, changed the scenario of a region which, decades before, was predominantly rural, some towns originating from the mining cycle, a century before, and an economy based on agro-pastoral archaic form of production.

The formulation of public policies during that period did not take into account relations of society with natural resources. The plain relief of the Brazilian Woodland Savanna (known as Cerrado) was impacted directly by agriculture modernization and intense migratory flow. The Cerrado landscape was rapidly changed by the dominant model of production which occurred concomitantly with the process of urbanization.

Planning

As to the state government planning policy it was aligned with the federal government. For administrative and planning purposes the state was regionalized in seven areas or sub-regions.

3.1.2 Territorial policies in Goiás during the developmental phase

Some programs were launched by a federal governmental agency, specifically created for the development of the Center West region of Brazil, in 1975 (Sudeco- Superintendencia do Desenvolvimento do Centro Oeste). Most of these programs were based on growth or development poles intended for developing and modernizing agro-pastoral activities and its use in enterprise scale. Another program, from the same federal agency was intended to strengthen the urban centers of the federal capital, Brasilia, and its surrounding areas in the state of Goiás, providing for physical and social infrastructure in order to integrate the region on regional development issues.

3.2 Public policies and the territory in Goiás during the neoliberal phase (1986-2002)

3.2.1 Social and economic background in Goiás during the neoliberal phase

Social and economic aspects

The 1990s was a decade marked by public policies of a more restrictive profile and confronted those of previous decades, assuming explicit functions of dismantling regional economic tools structure and signaling the advent of neoliberalism approach policies (Moyses and Silva, 2008) .

Due to strong migratory flows to the state's sub-regional areas mostly to Brasilia and Goiania (capital city of the State of Goiás) metropolitan surrounding areas, these two regions showed incapacity to absorb an increasing population. There were no economic policies focused in the municipalities surrounding areas of Brasilia and Goiania. Issues of social assistance for the population, lack of urban equipment and increase of slums have had consequences such as unemployment, high level of violence and environmental degradation.

Planning

Due to lacking of national policies which promoted regional integration, the state of Goiás (as other Brazilian states) becomes solely responsible towards its regional policies. In 1992 a state department for planning and regional development is created with functions for urban and regional development, mining, energy and peripheral areas. Regional programs are executed by state government in order to attract industries through tax and credit incentives albeit detached from any national project. Specific programs encouraged agriculture for few products, mainly for exportation.

The first Plurianual Plan at state level, PPA 2000/2003 has guidelines which involves issues such as: define Goiás as a competitive state in world economic globalization and an regional economic development pole in national level; access to education, health and labor market; regional imbalances; sustainable management of the space in relation to environment and economy; administrative, participative and decentralized actions; promote stable relationships with civil society representatives. This PPA proposed programs for the region of the Federal District surrounding area, North Goiás region, Northeast Goiás region and Goiânia Metropolitan Area.

3.2.2 Territorial policies in Goiás during the neoliberal phase

Governmental actions incentivized new industrial productive processes of agro-industrial complexes and industrial poles concentrated in few municipalities. The fiscal war after 1990s, absorbed by the state's policy, changes the geo-economic configuration of the territory.

Goiânia Metropolitan Region, at the end of 1999, is institutionalized, having a development council and development funding within its area of jurisdiction.

3.3 Public policies and the territory in Goiás during the “neodevelopmental” phase (2003-2010)

3.3.1 Social and economic background in Goiás during the “neodevelopmental” phase

Social and economic aspects

This phase is marked by impacts of urbanization and industrialization processes on socio-environmental aspect. According to Moyses and Silva, the production of commodities replaced the natural vegetation with soy beans, maize, sorghum and pastures, which do not feed the ground waters of the Cerrado, affecting more than 300 watercourses (2008).

Urban, environmental, social and economic issues were brought up by the state government to discuss with civil society in format of conferences, workshops, forums and councils. A relationship started between government and civil society actors involving civil society organizations and citizens in public policy on an ongoing basis. As examples, Participatory Budgeting, Environmental Conference and Urban Conference are held in an annual basis and motions are forwarded to governmental agencies. The creation of watershed councils and sub-councils has provided an initial work towards a governance structure when public agencies, private businesses, land owners and interest groups negotiate solutions.

Planning

In Goiás Plurianual Plan 2004-2007 there is a strong integration with municipal and federal governments, private entities and organized civil society. One example is the legislation for the creation of Private Public Partnerships- PPPs in Goiás (Companhia de Investimentos e Parcerias do Estado de Goiás) which announced a legal company towards social and economic development in 2004. Other is public consortia where in Goiás municipalities have interacted for infrastructure development.

Regional development planning focused on less dynamized regions such as Federal District surrounding area, North Goias and Northeast Goias regions as priority areas. A program was announced in 2004, Local Productive Arrangement –APL (Arranjo Produtivo Local) which regards cooperation schemes between many agents (public, private, research, educational, non-governmental organizations) in order to promote social and economic development.

3.3.2 Territorial policies in Goias during the “neodevelopmental” phase

The distribution system of urban nucleus in the state is spatially concentrated in some cities that polarize an specific region, consisted by municipalities with low economic and population density. Consequently there are inter-regional inequalities. These inequalities are very clear on the geography of the state – the south, southeast, southwest and center regions of the state have been consolidating a social and economic development , while the north and northeast regions of the state and the federal capital surrounding area have lower levels of urbanization and infrastructure, population density and industrial investment.

The set of policy measures by the program “Produzir” (Industrial Developing Program of the State of Goias) during the last decade consolidated industrial poles. A few municipalities outstand at this phase where industrial districts are specialized on certain economic activities: a) at Goiania Metropolitan Region: Goiania –information flow; network systems for managing production; Aparecida de Goiania-industrial pole . b) at the Center region: Anápolis- industrial and pharmaceutical pole. c) at Southwest region: Rio Verde-production of grains and meat. d) at Southeast region: Catalao – mining industry, machine-car industry. e) at the South region: Caldas Novas – tourism infrastructure

Produzir program reached 125 municipalities in Goias establishing an industrial spatial distribution. This program had a high spatial concentration, leading to a fragmentation of the economic space and creation of the so-called islands of productivity (Moraes, 2008).

APL program developed in many sectors – dairy products, meat, clothing and footwear industries – which is changing the economic configuration in stagnant areas.

From 2004 to 2007 there was a growth on biodiesel projects and sugar-ethanol industrial plants, and the projection for next years in Goias is leadership on energy sector and mining industry as well.

4 Concluding remarks

It is clear that during the three periods presented in this work, that encompassed public policies and territorial development at national and state level, there were many similarities in social and economic aspects, planning, and social and economic development.

The discussion showed that, at first an incremental trend, after the mid twentieth century, the federal government implemented a number of regional development programs. Different governments have provided incentives for industrialization in backward states, as well as for agricultural projects and population settlements. Identified as top-down oriented or exogenous policies, as Helmsing describes, the national government was the central actor and “the provision of infrastructure was considered an important instrument to stimulate local demand and at the same time overcome regional disadvantage” (1999).

After a developmental period, a neoliberal phase followed, imprinted by bottom-up policies, where instead of the government acting at the centre stage of policy, endogenous development emphasizes the role of inter-firm cooperation (Helmsing, 1999).

At the “neo-developmental” phase, decision makers are adopting a combination of both. Thus, present-day trends include acknowledging the role of public investment and natural endowments, as well as social participation, institutional organization and political clout as key supports to economic development.

There have been significant shifts in government in the state of Goias over the past seven years, but there is much to advance for a path of governance where all the actors are protagonists and work collaboratively to the process of construction of citizenship.

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