

Preface

Abstract The central idea of the text is that a system of conservative actions is reproduced in front of the modernization process of the territory of Barcarena. The innovations that the territory of the city knows, either in its territorial configuration or in public administration, are reproduced according to the system of conservative actions, bulwark of the political and economic hegemony of a small decider group. These are deployed according to conservative political practices, reaffirming “the power of delay.”

Keywords Modernization • Conservative political actions • Territory used • Amazon

I am happy to present this book, the result of a Ph.D. thesis on the use of the territory in Barcarena, held in May 2006 at the Postgraduate program of Geography at the Institute of Geosciences and Exact Sciences, State University Júlio de Mesquita Filho (UNESP), Campus of Rio Claro, Sao Paulo. The thesis was done under the guidance of Prof. Samira Peduti Kahil, to whom I was the first doctorate advisee and whom Death took so early.

Ten years later is strong the desire to rewrite my thesis, updating and comparing data, interviews, literature, and cartography. I resisted. Allowing myself to only improve the text, clarifying ideas I deem too synthetic to have autonomy of thought and to be self-explanatory. The structuring core of reflection remains intact, *the power of the delay*. For a moment I doubted that I could do the job because the obstacles brought me indignation and paralyzing fears. The conversations with Prof. Samira were always very severe, harsh, and blunt, but there was mutual respect, professional admiration. The last word was hers: *Courage!*

In that tone, texts and research reports and research were built, whose contributions of Prof. Márcio Cataia and Prof. Bernadette Oliveira, in the qualification examination, enriched the reflection so that I could have more clarity about the core of the thesis. Until then, this core was the implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility Law in the territory of Barcarena and the research aimed to show the

changes in the management of this territory, which would go through a traditional pattern of planning and public administration to a level of an effective participation of civil society.

The qualification examination, the banking submission concerning showed me that the implementation of this Law is just the tip of the iceberg, *which is the arrival of modernizations in the Amazon region*. These are deployed according to conservative political practices, reaffirming “the power of delay.”

After the qualifying examination, I stress the idea that a system of conservative actions is reproduced in front of the modernization process of the territory of Barcarena. The innovations that the territory of the city knows, either in its territorial configuration or in public administration, is reproduced according to the system of conservative actions, bulwark of the political and economic hegemony of a small decider group.

Since then, the task has been to work—boldly—on the fundamentals of the method of analysis and interpretation of geographical space to facilitate, renew my purpose of working the totalizations processes in a part of the national territory. A place: Barcarena. Then, boldly, to choose the variables that best demonstrate my main thesis. All this took me a dose of courage, patience and perseverance. How many versions prior to that I write now! Sometimes I slept in love with the latest version, just to send it to the computer’s Recycle Bin the next day. In the process of enfranchisement of this text, myself, geographer, and citizen, when lapidating the text, I was lapidating myself. In a few years, probably, this text and I will not recognize ourselves, therefore, time is king and space its kingdom, but I identify with it now.

Estrangement came after the defense on May 9, 2006. I realized the fool’s gold is contained in the thesis. A geographic denunciation having as the main character the uses and abuses of the territory by a traditional management that insisted on upgrading itself to enable more of *the same power of the delay*. I remembered the many reports of people with tanned skin, coarse wrinkles, many toothless and homeless, with nothing beyond the territorial body and sacred temple, so ravished by determined management to make the political bias of fake capital accumulation and, by taking advantage of their naivety, ignorance, and needs of others, reaps goods and expands the patrimony. And we can do nothing! As if we were subjected to the punishment of the vote! As if between the voter and the candidate there was a single and transparent way! As if there were no legal system and production process of political marketing engineering that makes candidates for public office as disposable and recyclable!

At this time we live the Absurd, because the territory used, as affirms Milton Santos, is our picture of life. His understanding is therefore essential to avoid the risk of alienation, the risk of loss of the sense of individual and collective existence, the risk of renunciation of the future. *Indignation is breathed! Because after more than ten years the absurd power of delay reproduces, presiding, supporting and structuring the spatial management and uses of the territory—markedly uneven*. Managers are changed, businesses and enterprises also, but the conservative modernization is the way for the political patronage of Pará to reproduce itself. In

my conversations with wistful Samira I said: *Professor, Pará is feudal! Those who can, command, and those who are wise, obey!* She smiled at me. But it is true. This is because politics and space are twin brothers. Every policy has a spatial base and every space has its forms, functions, structures, and processes devised in the field of politics, as well as it is a prerequisite for achieving this.

Understanding the uses of the territory and abuse of it is essential to building a space where citizenship is reinvented, not summarizing the choice to every election of representatives.

In Chap. 1, I start with the reorder of the territory of Barcarena, due to the implementation of the engineering system producer of primary aluminum from Albras/Alunorte. Considering this event (SANTOS 2006), I demarcate two geographical periods in the territorial dynamics of Barcarena. One before and another after the implementation of Albras/Alunorte project. I focus on the second, in which modernization takes the form of territorial reorganization imposed by entrepreneurs and the federal government. As if such modernization project took into account the interests of the entire population of Barcarena!

The reordering actions are propagandized as essential and inevitable progress and local development policies. As if all citizens were benefited! As if this was the only way to modernize the territory of Barcarena!

The territorial reorganization, I will explain in the next chapter, is the foundation of the welfare practice of political coercion on civil society, the centralization of power and the use of the territory as a resort of political domination by the elite city ruler.

In Chap. 2, I reveal that, with the exception of the industrial complex area, the rest of the territory of Barcarena, including the village of Cabanos, is controlled by a system of conservative actions, administrative centralization promoter, lack of transparency and absence of participation of civil society in the preparation of administrative planning. In sum, old production practices of territorial inequality. Also, before upgrading vectors, especially those who come to regulate the processes of decentralization and administrative democratization, the mayor, councilors, and secretaries decide how to implement them in a way that suits their particular interests. Reaffirming that what happens in all of Brazil happens in Barcarena.

In Chap. 3, I examine the reproduction of conservative actions system in each process of modernization of the territory of Barcarena, focusing on the process at the time of implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility Law in management (2001–2004) of Laurival Magno Cunha. This government did not use the law as a fiscal adjustment instrument, as conceived by the global reason. Suited to his interests are the planning, public participation, and transparency established by Law, to show up modern and hide his conservative style, anti-democratic and elitist land management.

During the final considerations I conclude with a summary. The time of completion—and at the same time an insight and foresight—allows me to dispel the belief that it would accomplish much, but at the same time shows me how small is the size of what I have done. Recognizing it motivates me to think about issues that I come across, such as the need to build a map of the power of the elites in the state

of Pará, which subsidize the development of geographic analysis to elucidate the influence of traditional political culture in territorial management, even before the administrative modernization imperatives posed by global order.

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