TERRITORIALITY OF TRADITIONAL SITIANTES IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO

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ABSTRACT

Traditional farmers appropriate land and manage their territories through knowledge adapted to local ecosystems, adopting communal practices and customary rules linked to values common to the traditional way of life. The material and cultural reproduction of these groups is based on a strong condition of territorial autonomy on various scales, in a complex network of reciprocity and on the availability of land. From this perspective, through a case study, this work analyzes the process of transformation of the territoriality of a group facing the emergence of contemporary society. Several adaptive strategies were found in economic, political, ecological, demographic and religious contexts. Values play a decisive role in the definition of all these. It was observed that the economic strategy is the first to be triggered, with significant losses to the traditional technological stock, including knowledge about the use and management of biodiversity.

Keywords: Caipira culture; Conservation units; Cultural adaptation; Territorial conflict.

RESUMO / RESUMEN

TERRITORIALIDADE DE SITIANTES TRADICIONAIS NO ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO

Sitiantes tradicionais apropriam-se da terra e gerem seus territórios por meio de saberes adaptados aos ecossistemas locais, adotando práticas comunais e regras consuetudinárias vinculadas a valores comuns ao modo de vida tradicional. A reprodução material e cultural desses grupos está calcada em uma forte condição de autonomia territorial em diversas escalas, em uma complexa rede de reciprocidade e ainda na disponibilidade de terra. Dessa perspectiva, por meio de um estudo de caso, o trabalho analisa o processo de transformação da territorialidade de um grupo frente à emergência da sociedade contemporânea. Foram constatadas diversas estratégias adaptativas nos contextos econômico, político, ecológico, demográfico e religioso. E no delineamento dessas, os valores assumem um papel decisivo. Observou-se que a estratégia econômica é a primeira a ser acionada, com perdas significativas para o acervo tecnológico tradicional, incluindo o saber sobre o uso e o manejo da biodiversidade.

Palavras chaves: Cultura caipira; Unidades de conservação; Adaptação cultural; Conflito territorial.

TERRITORIALIDAD DE GRANJEROS TRADICIONALES EN EL ESTADO DE SÃO PAULO

Granjeros tradicionales se apropian de la tierra y administran sus territorios a través del conocimiento adaptado a los ecosistemas locales, adoptando prácticas comunales y las normas consuetudinarias vinculadas a valores comunes a la forma de vida tradicional. La reproducción material y cultural de estos grupos se basa en una fuerte condición para la autonomía territorial en varias escalas, a una compleja red de reciprocidad y también a la disponibilidad de tierras. Desde esta perspectiva, a través de un estudio de caso, este trabajo analiza el proceso de transformación de la territorialidad de un grupo frente a la emergencia de la sociedad contemporánea. Fueron constatadas varias estrategias de adaptación en el contexto económico, político, ecológico, demográfico y religioso. En el desarrollo de estas, los valores asumen un papel decisivo. Se observó que la estrategia económica es el primero en ser lanzado, con pérdidas significativas para los acervos tecnológicos tradicionales, incluido el conocimiento sobre el uso y manejo de la biodiversidad.

Palabras clave: Cultura caipira; Unidades de conservación; Adaptación cultural; Conflicto territorial.

INTRODUCTION

Farmhands and traditional farmers (known as sitiantes) played an important role in Brazilian cities (QUEIROZ, 1973a; RIBEIRO, 1995). With an economy established primarily for large-scale agricultural exploitation, focused on the export of a few genera, in Brazil the cities relied primarily on the surplus produced by the small sitiante for their food supply (PRADO JÚNIOR, 1976). In this way, two types of economy coexisted in the country supporting two different lifestyles: the economy of the large estates, dedicated to monocultural production, destined for the international market, and the other complementary to the country's economy and urbanization (QUEIROZ, FUKUI, 1968), characterized by a domestic or surplus economy, according to Martins (1997).

Like the other Brazilian states, in São Paulo, for a long time, the traditional sitiantes, in this case, linked to the caipira (backwoods) culture , fulfilled the function of supplying the cities (QUEIROZ, 1973b), thus establishing a relationship of commercialization of the surplus of agricultural production that was its social reproduction strategy. The lifestyle of the traditional sitiante was shaped by the city, in a balanced relationship of complementarity, the sitiante with their semi-closed domestic economy supplied the city with victuals, in exchange for what they did not produce (QUEIROZ and FUKUI, 1968; QUEIROZ, 1973b).

After the policies established in the governments of Getúlio Vargas and Juscelino Kubtschek, there was a clear transition in the Brazilian political and economic scenario, from an agrarian--exporting country to an urban-industrial country (SILVA, 2006). Thus, between the 1930s and 1960s, the capital of São Paulo state underwent major transformations, intensifying the process of urbanization and consolidating the Metropolitan Region.

This process of urbanization and industrialization reflected a new developmental logic that, in turn, established profound changes in the social values and relationships prevailing in Brazilian society, there were structural changes in the country's society and economy (LOPES, 2008; MARTINS,1975; MONBEIG, 2004; SANTOS,1993; SILVA, 2006) marking the emergence of contemporary urban-industrial society.

Shanin (2008) recalls that during the nineteenth century rural communities were discussed intensely, including the direction in which they were moving as a result of the major changes triggered by the development of capitalism. Some predictions made in that debate have been fulfilled, such as the forecast that, in some countries, most rural communities would need to find alternative work, possibly in a context of "rural devolution", which refers to a situation where poverty does not resolve itself, tending to become increasingly deeper, driving people out of the countryside.

In addition to their knowledge of the use and management of the natural ecosystems in which they live, nowadays those who work the land with a traditional way of life are recognized as guardians of locally developed varieties, their production systems of adapted and improved animal and plant life are important bodies of knowledge   (CLEMENT et al., 2007; MMA, 2006; PELWING et al., 2008; TOLEDO; SANTILLI; MAGALHÃES, 2008), and therefore play a prominent role in the protection of biodiversity, including agrobiodiversity.

This work proposes to construct a rationale that can contribute to the reflection on the aspects related to the transformations in the society-nature relationship of the traditional communities in the state of São Paulo facing the emergence of contemporary urban-industrial society. Considering the historical persistence of the study area as a typical traditional smallholding or rural neighborhood, the research was guided by the following questions: what transformations occurred in the caipira territoriality in a historical process of exogenous dynamics and pressures? What are the specificities of this neighborhood thatcause it to have remained more preserved than the other few remaining neighborhoods until the present day?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The present study is defined by a territorial approach. As a product of the society-nature relationship, from this perspective the territory is multiple, diverse and complex (HAESBAERT, 2007); always and simultaneously involving time,

> a symbolic, cultural dimension, through a territorial identity attributed by social groups, as a form of 'symbolic control' over the space where they live (it is therefore also a form of appropriation), and a more concrete, political- disciplinary dimension: the appropriation and ordering of space as a form of domination and disciplinarization of individuals (HAESBAERT, 1997, p. 42).

Each territory has a territoriality that "besides incorporating a more strictly political dimension, also concerns economic and cultural relationships" (HAESBAERT, 2007, p. 22).

Territory and territoriality are thus multidimensional, inherent to life in nature and in society (SAQUET, 2009). "Territoriality is effectuated on different spatial scales, it varies in time through power relationships, circulation and communication networks, domination, identities, among other social relationships between subjects and between them with their place of life, both economic as well as political and cultural "(SAQUET, 2009, p. 87).

From an analytical point of view, in this research, based on Haesbaert and Limonad (2007), the following relevant aspects in understanding territories and territoriality are highlighted, 1) the composition in the interaction between the material and immaterial dimension, linked respectively to the political-economic sphere and the sphere of culture; 2) temporality, considering that territories are a historical construction, undergoing transformations throughout history and that territorialities also conform to each other over time; 3) identity, which at the same time shapes and is shaped by territory; 4) the level of accessibility and / or control of access to borders; 5) the continuity and discontinuity of the territory, that is, its greater or lesser degree of fragmentation; 6) the greater or lesser territorial instability, either because of the ease with which the frontiers can be recomposed, or because it is easy to reduce and increase the degree of access linked to greater or lesser territorial fragmentation; the duration of a territoriality over time and also the greater or lesser superimposition to which a territory is subjected.

For a better interpretation of cultural aspects, Claval's (1999) perspective has been adopted, according to which culture is composed of environmental knowledge, techniques and know-how, by social knowledge, techniques and know-how, and by the sphere of values that have the function of integrating the two other components, defining the environmental and social options, whether accepted or rejected.

From the case study, we sought to deepen the reflection on how the territorial conflicts arising from different rationalities and ways of life are processed: traditional rural and urban-industrial contemporary, as well as unraveling the singularities of a traditional caipira neighborhood.

According to Lüdke and André (1986), the case may be similar to others, but it also distinct because it has a particular interest. According to the authors, this interest is due to its unique, particular nature; the object studied must be treated as a singular representation of reality, which is multidimensional and historically situated.

For Milton Santos, it is through the case study that the complexity of the variables is understood in the analysis, remembering that "the smaller the place examined, the greater the number of levels and the external determinations that affect it. Hence the complexity of the study of the smallest." (SANTOS, 1985, p. 3).

The semi-structured interview (TRIVIÑOS, 1995) was adopted as an instrument for data collection in the field and the material analysis was performed using the discursive textual analysis method (MORAES, 2003).

STUDY AREA

Located in the Mata Atlântica region, in the municipality of Ibiúna - SP, approximately 120 km from the city of São Paulo, the neighborhood of the Paulo, is a rare testimony, in the state of São Paulo, of the rural social organization of Colonial Brazil. In the past it was part of a group formed by several other neighborhoods, which interacted for centuries, forming a great caipira territory, marked by an endogamy of both kinship and territory, whose inhabitants call themselves nativos (SANTIAGO, 2013). These fell into the category of "independent sitiantes," legal or de facto landowners, in autonomous, family-based work regimes, living in symbiosis with the city (QUEIROZ, 1973a). Many neighborhoods, including dos Paulo, were affected by the creation of the State Reserve of the 2nd Perimeter of São Roque in 1978, later transformed into Jurupará State Park, covering an area equivalent to 23,950.47 ha.

Among the few remaining traditional rural districts of what was known at the time as the Ibiúna sertão, the dos Paulo neighborhood is the one that has the best preserved organizational characteristics; its current occupation is linked to a historical (and cyclical) process of land use and property transfer, within the same family, whose residents form an extended family, descending from a nuclear family consisting of father, mother and five children (four men and one woman), totaling eight families.

In order to develop the understanding of the logic of the society-nature relationship in the traditional way of life, in his research in the dos Paulo neighborhood Santiago (2013) revealed the group's striking characteristics until 1960. According to the author, the Neighborhood was set up under a territorial logic that associated functionality and identity, in equal proportions. Territorial patrimony was defined by land (passing from one generation to another) and by know-how, an autonomous knowledge including understanding of the use and management of natural resources and the values and rules of social life, such as reciprocity, respect for each family's autonomy, established hierarchies of command and norms for the use and transfer of land. Like all groups from traditional ways of life, they adopted earth-work-family nucleant cultural categories, according to Woortmann (1990).

Material detachment and social egalitarianism were prominent among nativos. Local know-how and strong reciprocal relationships gave the group a high degree of autonomy, marked by a great capacity for self-management, the almost complete independence from the city and the restricted use of money (SANTIAGO, 2013).

Reciprocity consisted of mutual aid relationships within the neighborhood and between neighborhoods, and especially commercial relationships between the neighborhoods and the city. It also manifested itself in the relationship between man and nature, based on the God-man-earth triad, so that the supernatural played a central role in the definition of rules / knowledge on the use and exploitation of natural resources.

In the past, Ibiúna and Juquitiba, adjoining municipalities, integrated the sertão know at the time as Itapecerica, widely studied in the 1960s (FUKUI, 1972; QUEIROZ, 1973a; QUEIROZ, 1973b; QUEIROZ; FUKUI, 1968) and considered at the time to be the most conserved caipira territory in the State (PETRONE, 1995; QUEIROZ, 1973b).

TRANSFORMATIONS IN CAIPIRA TERRITORIALITY

In spite of the profound socioeconomic transformations that the state of São Paulo had been experiencing, even after the 1950s some caipira farmworkers were able to maintain the sale of agricultural surpluses in the city of São Paulo. With the majority of the caipiras (backwoodsmen) abandoning their activities (PETRONE 1995, QUEIROZ, 1973b, SEABRA, 1971), over the years gaps probably opened in the market that favored the permanence of those who lived in the areas still less impacted by urban and industrial development and, consequently, with greater difficulties finding the economic alternatives that favored them as much as farming had in the past. This was the case of the traditional sitiantes from the sertão of Ibiúna, who managed to maintain the trade of crop surpluses until 1960, a practice carried out in the city of São Paulo, in the markets of Santo Amaro and Pinheiros, shrinking over time to closer locations: Itapecerica da Serra, Ibiúna and Juquitiba.

However, as of the mid-1950s, some local events established a milestone in the socioeconomic changes that began to take place in the neighborhood of dos Paulo, namely: the opening of roads by the Companhia Brasileira de Alumínio (CBA), one of which crossed the Neighborhood, due to the implantation of two hydroelectric plants, allowing greater internal circulation and ease of external access to the Sertão, and the opening of the Régis Bittencourt Highway (BR 116), in 1957, near the study area.

Also in the middle of the 1950s, the State Attorney General (PGE) began to characterize the tenures of the "2nd Perimeter of São Roque" (encompassing the entire Jurupará State Park and some other lands), with the objective of demarcating the occupied lands, identifying the occupants and the legitimacy of ownership for subsequent titles; work that lasted several years and had ramifications that are of particular interest to the research herein.

Therefore, it was at the end of the 1950s that factors came together to start the local process of transformation in the territoriality of the caipira families. In this process, it is possible to clearly distinguish three major milestones: the extraction and trade of wood products from the forest, the creation of the State Reserve and Jurupari State Park.

THE FOREST EXPLOITATION

In 1960, with the gradual loss of the surplus trade in São Paulo city and the opening of the roads, the replacement of agriculture by extraction from the forest aimed at the trade of logs and charcoal began in the sertão of Ibiúna.

Until the late 1950s, this was a territory that had only known the marks of its residents, of the mule trails, with the intense movement of the inhabitants, usually on foot (barefoot), carrying the crops from distant fields on their backs, pulling their few or many mules carrying the agricultural products or merchandise acquired in the city, when they returned from there, or, even, on feast days, going from one neighborhood to another. "After the CBA opened the road, a logger arrived, a Paulo Forete, from Itapecerica, and the other Dito Costa, the first loggers who came here at that time." (Interviewee 1, Apr (2009).

Logging was not an illegal activity and became widespread across all the neighborhoods. In dos Paulo, it almost totally replaced the surplus, but, at first, it did not drastically affect the life of the residents. The subsistence farms continued to be established, but were more restricted, taking advantage of some of the areas where the forest had been cleared.

Over time, fields were abandoned by most of the residents and there was also a sharp drop in the domestic industry; extractivism, especially charcoal, became the main activity.

Charcoal represented difficult work and "easy" money, with a rapid financial return, either because of the time it took to extract the product compared to farming, or because of the high market demand, also compared to agriculture at that time. At first, it was a good business; it was no longer necessary to go to the city to sell the product, to leave the farm, the interested party came to the Sertão personally to get it.

Social relationships within the neighborhood and between neighborhoods changed. The first indicator was the extinction of the collective work groups (mutirões), representing a significant de-structuring of the prior social organization, because to a large extent, it was through them that

work-family relationships that went beyond the family nucleus were established. It was mainly through the mutirão that the relationships of reciprocity took place. That is to say, the new activity reduced and simplified the network of solidarity.

The dos Paulo kinship groups, who were deprived of land and lived in the help system, departed, only the direct relatives remained: father, mother and children, some singles and others who were starting their families. This exodus was due to the reduction in the commercialization of the crop surplus and animals, to be substituted by an economic activity that, besides no longer requiring the permanent help of relatives, when it occurred payment was in cash and not in agricultural products, as in the past. The trade in logs and charcoal replaced the economic function of the crop surplus, thereby extinguishing an important mechanism of reciprocity and the maintenance of social equality. Another relevant aspect is that any payment would certainly not be sufficient provide relatives with the same food abundance as before.

As Woortmann (1990) elucidates, the traditional farm is a territory of reciprocity, a territory of kinship, thus a place of exchange, so there are no wages. Not that the circulation of money did not previously exist between nativos, because there were items of primary necessity that were not produced on the farm, but this was done in the form of small loans, paid later in work by the borrower. Thus, it was not an employment relationship, but instead an exchange of favors between equals, difficult to arrange in the new situation.

If a talent for trade and an ability to establish relationships with the outside had already been an important factor in the time of farming, in the charcoal business, it was crucial. Accordingly, this aptitude began to receive a differentiated weight in the group, henceforth establishing itself as a factor of social prestige and in the disputes between the older brothers of the new generation for the succession in the command of the land.

It was the abilities of the second son that permitted the middleman to be removed from the sale of charcoal in the neighborhood. This figure exploited the people of the Sertão, and is also identified in studies carried out in Juquitiba (QUEIROZ and FUKUI, 1968), stipulating the price to be paid and selling groceries to those who did not produce anymore; thus retaining a significant part of the money he had paid to the charcoal workers. However, direct sales did not benefit all the families in the neighborhood.

The virtual absence of memory, of details about social relationships, about daily activities, unlike the old days (often associated with the union of the people, the parties, the wealth and the abundance of food) reflects a time of "emptiness of life". With charcoal, festivity and work were no longer confused, as in the past, at the time of the mixirão.[1] The levels of territorial autonomy and reciprocity became restricted in the neighborhood, in the Sertão and in the city, imposing a high degree of isolation and material and social impoverishment on the great majority of the residents, unlike the situation during the time of farming.

From this perspective, corroborating with Souza (2009), when thinking about collective autonomy on several scales, it is verified that nothing is further from the idea of closure or isolation. The exchanges and interactions between territories of similar or distinct scale levels are a factor of material and cultural enrichment, a consequence of the principles of solidarity and mutual aid, according to the author.

With logging the caipira's rhythm of life changed. Previously commanded entirely by the cycles of nature and agriculture, it came to be dominated by the arduous work that was done with simple tree-cutting techniques, with an axe and handsaw, as well as by the manufacture of charcoal, an activity both fatiguing and extremely unhealthy.

However, it is important to emphasize that logging cannot be perceived merely as an imposition of the market, but also, and mainly, as a form of resistance by the caipiras to maintain their autonomy. When they broke with farming, they ceased to be exploited within an economic system

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(1) Translator's note: a local variant of mutirão (collective work groups)

in which they no longer governed their relationships, subordinating themselves to the prices and demands of the merchants in São Paulo and other cities. In the contemporary context, the caipira's techniques and products were devalued ; the old production of surpluses in its former form escaped the new established economic logic .

At least initially, charcoal broke the imbalance of the commercial relationships with the city; in addition, the new activity was profitable enough so that the sitiantes were not hostages of modern agricultural techniques and the consequent consumption of the whole apparatus that Brazilian agriculture was already submitted to.

It was through extractivism and the production of charcoal that the sitiante immediately found a way to survive the profound changes that were making it increasingly difficult to sell their surplus; to continue maintaining their commercial relationship with the city and, as it seemed at the outset, to guarantee their autonomy. Ultimately, the production of charcoal was the way in which the caipira could resist the significant changes imposed by the social and economic reality of the country and the city with which they had interacted for more than a century on an equal footing.

As much as charcoal has modified the daily lives of families in the neighborhood, the land-work-family triad persisted as a value, as a logic of life. The territory maintained the same functions, the same meanings: it was the land of the ancestors and the means of physical and social reproduction of the family. It was still nature, the sitiante's traditional abilities and their autonomous knowledge provided what was necessary for survival, it was the sitiante who established and enforced the rules in the ancestral territory under their government.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE DISCRIMINATION OF THE LAND AND THE CREATION OF CONSERVATION UNITS

Parallel to the transformations resulting from charcoal and logging activities, the impasse regarding the characterization of the land holdings and ownership by PGE continued into the 1970s. In this process, in addition to the aforementioned Companhia Brasileira de Alumínio, companies from the furniture industry, vacationers and also Japanese farmers , acquired land in the area. Over time, there was the dissolution of some traditional rural districts and the emptying of those that remained, leaving the remaining neighborhoods scattered in the Sertão.

In 1973, the Forest Institute (IF, 1973) recommended the creation of a State Park or Reserve in the area. However, the declaration of the Reserve only occurred in 1978 and was never effectively implemented, the State's action was restricted to sporadic inspection by the then Forest Police.

Only fifteen years later, in 1992, with the creation of the State Park, the area began to be administered. The decree of the new category of unit of conservation (uc), replacing the former one, established the total legal restriction of the use and the occupation of the lands.

The dos Paulo neighborhood and other affected areas thus became part of an area dedicated to nature conservation as a "territory of exclusion" in the words of Haesbaert (2006). The nativos' power of command over their territories, was drastically diminished by the authority of the State that overrode, or rather was in opposition, a context in which a process of deterritorialization is clearly recognized. However, deterritorialization is never complete or unrelated to processes of (re) territorialization (HAESBAERT, 2004), as will be seen later.

CONFLICTS AND TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES RESULTING FROM THE CREATION OF CONSERVATION UNITS

As products of contemporary modernity, natural reserves are specific types of territories with both symbolic and concrete value and their conservationist role appears at first to contradict the changing spirit of modern society (HAESBAERT, LIMONAD, 2007).

Meeting exclusively the needs of urban-industrial society, throughout their history protected natural areas have overlapped with many ancestral territories and, undeniably, have generated great

conflicts and losses to traditional indigenous and non-indigenous communities. In this context, the neighborhood of dos Paulo is another case among many, where public nature conservation policies have acted as an important vector of transformation.

After the creation of the Reserve, logging and charcoal were totally repressed and resisted for some time as illegal activities. Apart from the fact that charcoal could no longer be exploited, the residents were not really sure of the reason for the creation of the Reserve. It was believed that the lands would continue to belong to the family and that one day they would be partially released.

The legal restrictions mean less land available and less access to natural resources, which is why the existing territorial dispute between the older brothers intensified and began to involve all the brothers. The family had grown and with it the demand for more farm land, in addition to the five brothers and their respective spouses there were also 24 grandchildren.

Conflicts are taboo in a group that shares strong values of unity, which are essential to maintain the traditional way of life. Thus, the testimonies about the differences in the family by the permanence on the land and by the succession in the leadership were not always objective and coincident, and an additional effort was necessary in the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data.

The land was and is of communal use, each nuclear family has a well-defined stretch under its command which includes the arable area and housing. The norms of land use, occupation and transfer are customary, each generation elects one of the sons to act as head, with more rights and duties and with power of command, of government. These conditions reflect a particular process among traditional sitiantes of asset-sharing and successor-choice that consolidate unequal relationships between individuals within the group and differentiated positions between genders (CARNEIRO, 2001). The main objective is to maintain the integrity of the ancestral territorial patrimony and guarantee the material and sociocultural reproduction of the family (CARNEIRO, 2001; MOURA, 1986; WOORTMANN, 1995).

In this inheritance system, a part of the ancestral property is granted to members of the new generation, however, keeping the family lands intact by means of some strategies (WOLF, 1976), such as the departure of some members (MOURA, 1986, SHANIN, 2008, WOORTMANN, 1995).

Thus, the process of passing on land can generate great tensions, so when necessary the exit of the "evicted" is usually done in a less traumatic way, inculcating their exit from an early age, and giving material structure to the moment when the land is abandoned (MOURA 1978; WOORTMANN, 1995). In general, the process is also facilitated by an ideology that manifests itself by vetoing the exteriorization of conflicts, as stated by Moura (1978).

The criterion of "expulsion" of the heirs may be related to a specific talent that ensures a successful performance in the city (GODOI, 1999; SHANIN, 2008), to gender: the women do not inherit land (CARNEIRO, 2001; MOURA, 1978; WOORTMANN,1995); and to a character of great autonomy and entrepreneurship, which guarantees their capacity to explore new lands and to establish a new nucleus (CANDIDO, 2003).

However, in the neighborhood of dos Paulo there was enough land for all the sons. In an equal allocation, there would be approximately 75 ha. for each one, enough for everyone to live well, according to local references: "Five bushels [12 ha.] of land, planned with planting is enough for a family to live their whole life and be happy, owning five bushels of planted land provides for large family." (Interviewee 2, June 2007).

That is to say, the area was large enough to guarantee farmland, with the respective fallow areas, and a common reserve of ancient forest . Thus, the process of "expulsion" was certainly not expected in that generation, not even in relation to the daughter; local tradition foresaw that on getting married the wife would follow her husband to his neighborhood of origin. It seems that the successor would inherit the power of command and privileges in relation to land use, without the need for the other brothers to leave.

Practices were identified that distinguish the father's treatment his children: the firstborn, the woman and younger men, evidencing that the old rules of inheritance preferentially benefited the

firstborn. The daughter and the younger sons received favors and donations that suggest a possible material compensation for the loss of land use privileges, as described by Moura (1978) in her study in the south of Minas Gerais, although, in that case, the donations were given to those leaving the land.

With regard to the daughter, probably the one who would be the least favored, a cash payment was granted for her work in the fields, and before her marriage she was granted areas for cultivation, as well as batches of charcoal, whose production, in both cases, was carried out with the help of paternal labor and sold and reverted exclusively for her benefit.

With the exception of the eldest, when they got married the sons received as a gift a year living in the paternal house with all necessary expenses paid. In addition, they also received the money from the sale of the products resulting from the couple's work in the field during that year, allowing the formation of a small financial asset so that the spouses could then start life in their own homes. All the youngest children, including the daughter, were given a place for their own cultivation and to build a dwelling in the lands that integrate the Neighborhood; However, when the oldest son got married, he went to live in the big house as it was called by the family, the oldest and largest in the neighborhood. He also headed the farm work together with the father.

As a typical rural neighborhood, it was thus a testament to the way in which the settlement units of Brazilian colonization were organized (QUEIROZ, 1973b), it is presumed that it was equally strongly influenced by the legislation governing inheritance in the Brazilian Colony, inherited from Portugal, which established the birthright, especially if the local context of an important Portuguese contribution is taken into consideration, as verified by Santiago (2013).

However, the great transformations that began with logging required their own strategies and abilities, especially a high capacity for involvement and confrontation with new subjects, who imposed themselves on the caipiras' daily life; a more enterprising, aggressive temperamment that, with some degree of ease, could perceive and put into practice alternatives to give continuity to the family patrimony and to the dos Paulo community, not only to survive but to continue as strong, as capable as they always had been.

> [...] my father died almost 80 years ago and never had a fine, because I signed in his place, anything that came for him I signed. [...] I'll tell you something, if there's a son that the father likes best, my father, to tell you the truth, it was me. Do you know why? I mean, we do not have ng or reason, a community forms where we are. So I joked with him, here we can do everything, build a pharmacy, a strong market, a strong planting [...] (Interviewee 2, June 2007).

As a result of the State intervention a process of material impoverishment and intensified territorial dispute was clear, leading to significant structural transformations and traumatic adaptation strategies, involving increasing clashes between the oldest sons, the "submission" of some and the departure of others: the youngest (also a skilled trader) and some grandchildren. The son-in-law and remaining grandchildren began working outside the neighborhood.

In the mid-1980s, the family adopted the Pentecostal religion of the Assemblies of God. With the exception of the second son, who only converted after many years, all the inhabitants, including the father, left Catholicism.

The dispersion and reduction in the number of traditional rural districts, the unavailability of land and the breakdown of solidarity among the neighborhoods were factors that established changes in matrimonial rules. Some men and women married outsiders, compulsorily leaving the land in the women's case. Among the few who remained, the number of children was drastically reduced to one or two.

With the creation of the Park, the rules were clear, everyone would have to leave. The assiduous presence of the State and the concurrent lack of inspection capacity were elements that gave rise to the emergence of a new subject: the "palmiteiro". According to the residents, the illegal exploi-

tation of the palm heart was the first and most important change that occurred with the creation of the Conservation Unit.

It is clear that the theft of palm hearts in themselves is not the central issue, but what it represented: another element of territorial conflict, another threat to the authority of the traditional residents over their territories. "You could see palm hearts here, now it's hard to find a plant. When it was not the Park everyone respected the boundary, now a lot of people say: the park is the state's so it has no owner." (Interviewee 3, June 2007).

In the Neighborhood, through clashes, the extraction of palm hearts was conditioned to the authorization of the second son, the so-called "toll". This was a clandestine, illegal activity and placed the residents in a condition of marginality, but, at the same time and paradoxically, of dignity, because what was at stake was a matter of honor: to defend the currencies of the ancestral territory and to establish the rules of access to the resources that integrate the family patrimony. It was also a way of challenging the State's authority and demonstrating its lack of power of inspection.

Involvement with palm heart extraction also represented the possibility of overcoming the poverty in which many nativos found themselves, despite the poor financial return. In the case of the second son, it was a way of demarcating his authority within the Neighborhood, and maintaining or increasing an economic differentiation in relation to the others, adding an income beyond his existing small trade and the subsistence farming that maintained him.

Once again, an entrepreneurial ability to negotiate and deal with the people of the city made all the difference, but this time it was necessary to deal with a situation of strong territorial dispute between natives, "palmiteiros" and the State, a circumstance, we agree with Sahlins (1970), of extreme negative reciprocity, whose notion involves a high degree of cunning, theft and violence.

The creation of the Park triggered other events that intensified internal disputes. Many occupants who bought land from nativos were embargoed, generating unemployment and the exit of many descendants to other localities. A few were able to establish themselves closer, working and living in the residential village of the CBA plants, within the limits of the Park.

The State employed three family members, which aggravated the internal conflict, not only because they became Park officials, thus representing the authority superimposed on the Neighborhood's, but also because they were families that were being "evicted." Real employment gave them the material stability necessary to continue living and coexisting in the ancestral home and, if they wished, to repudiate the instituted power - which did not happen.

All these changes stirred up the values of the old caipira sitiante. The transformation of the economy, the attempt to maintain, at all costs, the autonomy and survival of each family in the face of the new reality, the emptying of the surrounding neighborhoods, the arrival of outsiders, the threat of losing land, the restriction of access to natural resources, together were slowly breaking down the forms of solidarity and positive reciprocity formerly present in their daily routine, intertwining land-work-family relationships on different scales. Equality gave way to an economic differentiation that added to the almost inactive mechanisms to maintain egalitarianism (in particular the mutirão), established previously irrelevant inequalities.

Based on research carried out in the sertão of Itapecerica, at the height of the charcoal activity, Queiroz (1973b) explicated that it is not outsiders who form the social hierarchy but rather those who belong to the neighborhood group itself. However, a position of pre-eminence within the neighborhood is only possible when the mechanisms that protect egalitarianism no longer function and the traditional leadership system is no longer in control, in which the economic factor did not find much expression.

At first, it seems difficult to assess whether, as a consequence of the income from forest production, traditional values were compromised as regards "enrichment" as an end in itself, and thus a dissolution of the traditional system of leadership as identified in the sertão of Itapecerica, where the transformation of the economy may generate, within the neighborhoods themselves, individuals

who exert oppression over the others. Or whether, on the contrary, extreme traditional mechanisms to maintain the integrity of the patrimony were activated. Most likely, all these elements took place in a context of an avalanche of transformations that affected the sitiantes and which required the solution of a problem: how to maintain the integrity of the ancestral family patrimony and the reproduction of the Paulo in the condition of strong ones.

It is true that the conflict triggered forms of solidarity and resistance on the land among most of the relatives / neighbors, who felt compelled to leave or abandon farming. Explaining the values of unity of the family as a whole, the statement about the brother who took the helm, in a spontaneous "justification" is that "he is the only different one in the family".

> One thing I do not like is confusion, I like to live in peace. [...] The worst thing is that you see a neighborhood all disunited, with fights everywhere. God defend me (Interviewee 4, Aug. (2009).

With the new strategies of survival and adaptation, conflicts have subsided, with the exception of the youngest son, all the children remained on the land. In addition to farming, with sizes proportional to each one's right (and within the limits established by the State), animal husbandry and wages and trade (including palm heart for a few years), the economic life of the Neighborhood as a whole has stabilized, overcoming the period of near poverty. None of the children are working in elsewhere, only the son-in-law and the grandchildren.

Thus, the new solutions found for each family tended to accommodate a situation of sharing territory. The relative economic balance, or rather, overcoming the difficulties of survival, meant reestablishing each family's autonomy, despite the legal conflict in relation to the Park.

Although other factors may have been influential, attempts of domination and expulsion and the limits that each family established for them, were predominantly driven by traditional rules and values. It cannot be said settling the conflict situation occurred without a consensus, from which new rules were established for the sharing and continuity of the territory: the territory of dos Paulo.

> [...] to be a good neighbor, not a troublemaking neighbor, who stirs things up, then he has to go there, and reach agreement with the neighbor what they are going to do, he will not rise up against the neighbor. (Interviewee 5, May 2009).

It is because of this consensus that residents of the Neighborhood, agents of the State, even acting in the supervision of the Park, did not go against the existing authority.

As discussed by Souza (2009), if a group deliberates in conditions of full freedom, on establishing the rules, such as land and resource use, power is shared under conditions of strong equality regarding the chances to influence the formation of norms. In such circumstances, individuals are influenced by each other on the basis of persuasion but do not dominate each other, each participant is morally obliged to respect the rules in whose construction they participated freely, even if their positions have not been successful. Each participant is subject to a power that legitimately emanates from the collective, however, such submission should never occur in a way that stifles individual freedom.

In this context, it is important to note that in the Neighborhood there was a majority and not a minority being "expelled", which reacted and admitted as a rule only what was consistent with the principles and conduct traditionally accepted by the group, even if there were other world references and full awareness of the equal right among all heirs, according to the Civil Code.

The new rules being stipulated, a more expensive value was put into practice in the traditional territory: the autonomy of the group, that is, its capacity for self-government (DEMATTEIS, 2007; SOUZA, 2009).

With the death of the firstborn and widowhood of the second eldest brother, who has married an outsider and established his home in the city, another cycle should begin in the succession that

seems to be between the sons of these two brothers, since there remains a lack of definition regarding the situation of the traditional communities in the Park area.

RELIGION: A STRATEGY TO MAINTAIN TRADITIONAL VALUES AND THE BALANCE OF POWER

In the dos Paulo neighborhood, religious practice was characterized by rustic Catholicism, an adaptation of Roman Catholicism to the rural reality of Colonial Brazil, organized as a basic system formed by rites, beliefs and cult of the saints, in which the main "religious agents" are the feast day sponsor and the chaplain, through whom independence from the official Catholic hierarchy is maintained (QUEIROZ, 1973a).

From the understanding that religions are symbolic representations of the social structures in which they are generated, an analysis made by Berlinck (1972) suggests that rustic Catholicism arose from the Brazilian social structure, one of its elements of origin being subsistence agriculture , which acts as a mechanism of community integration and a mediator of the relationships between the sitiante and nature. As the author explains, by means of religious practices added to Roman Catholicism, the caboclo created a new dimension to the vision of the sacred and gave objective expression, perceptible to his senses, to the relationships between himself and the environment, mediated by agriculture.

In this sense, Müller (1956) demonstrates how the caipiras (in this case, caboclos from São Paulo) adapted the liturgical calendar inherited from the Northern Hemisphere to the local climatic conditions, establishing correlative modifications to dates and times of real ritual value.

In the Brazilian rustic religion, morality and spirituality do not represent a value in themselves, their value is in their utility in asserting a quieter and more pleasant existence to the neighborhood group; the worship of the saints, the feast, the novena and the prayers aim at securing the goodwill of supernatural beings (Queiroz 1973a).

The festive-religious calendar was extensive and the feast of the local patron saint was of the highest importance, the worship intended to please the saint, otherwise he could take revenge (QUEIROZ, 1973a). Catholicism brought from Portugal was also merged with elements brought by indigenous and blacks, showing variations in the different Brazilian localities (QUEIROZ, 1973a), an aspect that configured itself in the caipira territory as a supernatural world of its own, populated by enchanted beings.

With the exploitation of the forest, religious practices and beliefs gradually lost meaning in the face of change. Many sertão families experienced privation, the bonds of reciprocity between people had to be recreated with other bases, like the God-man-earth relationship. The forest was disturbed by nativos, some animals disappeared and, according to ancient beliefs, current practices deserved punishment. Thus, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in other neighborhoods the Catholic religion was replaced by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God, which is taking time to come about in the neighborhood of dos Paulo. In spite of the conflicts, for many years the family managed to remain united, with conditions of survival and practicing the Catholic religion.

But, just as in other districts, the Assemblies of God entered the dos Paulo neighborhood at a time when poverty was far-reaching for most families, when external relationships were greatly loosened or broken, when reciprocity within the Neighborhood, from a material and non-material point of view, had become very limited. A moment in which the values involved in the society-nature relationship in the caipira culture was put to the test, either by the conflict over land within the family, or by the practices regarding the use of nature, which focused on intensive logging and were considered illegal after the creation of the Forest Reserve.

The Catholic Church, in the figure of the priest, had always been distant, a typical condition of rustic Brazilian Catholicism (LOPES, 2008, MUSSOLINI, 1970, QUEIROZ, 1973a), but the frequent occasions of saints' feast days in the neighborhoods, christenings and marriages; the pil-

grimages; the wide possibility of mutual help; the teaching of the Bible and Catholic rituals by the group itself, since the father was the Chaplain, favored, in times of wealth, the "presence" of the Church among them and, thus, the harmony and unity of the group.

However, with all the aforementioned difficulties, the group's ability to exercise the teachings of religion was shaken. Socioeconomic transformations no longer provided conditions for religious rites, they could not fulfill the comprehensive calendar of feasts and devotion to the saints (among them, the cult of St. Benedict, the patron of the neighborhood), as well as the pilgrimages to the great religious centers.

It was a time when, unlike the past, the presence of the priest as the envoy of God, a greater authority, a legitimate representative of the Church, made all the difference to advise, encourage, mediate conflicts and forgive sins. A time when the rite of Mass became more necessary than ever. In addition, amalgamated to the Catholic religion were enchanted beings, including the Curupira, the Big Foot (father of the bush), Saci Pererê and the Enchanted Vine, whose function was especially the control of transgressions. At that time, these entities represented the threat of punishment, they explained the contradictions between the current conduct and the old customs and beliefs.

As Sahlins (1970) reminds us, it is through the divine and religion that men realize for themselves the moral authority of society, establish a discipline beyond themselves, to which they submit, rewarding submission. It is in the rituals of religious worship that the power of society is embodied in the collective, affirming the authority of the constituted society. Religion can integrate society, provide cohesion, promote solidarity and maintain its continuity; in economic uncertainty, it can assume the function of diminishing the contradictions and conflicts of interest in existing social relationships (SAHLINS, 1970).

Thus, faced with the transformations imposed by urban-industrial society, faced with the decline of traditional agriculture and all the contradictions and conflicts experienced, rustic Catholicism loses meaning, its rationale ceases to have meaning when a group faces a complex normative and value structure, in which there are rules of behavior and affective conceptions that counterpose the desirable ones (BERLINCK, 1972). "Under these conditions, one must seek ethical guidelines and explanations for a highly complex and contradictory world from other sources" (BERLINCK, 1972, p. 148).

The Assemblies of God fully met not only the needs of social reintegration and adjustment and internal balance of the group in the face of the new reality, but also safeguarded cherished values and traditional principles. Among the main characteristics and functions of the Presbyterian churches are: mutual help in crisis situations; the administration of tensions through group cohesion, expressive ceremonies and a sense of participation; asceticism for personal progress; access to power through the election of church representatives; both therapeutic and communication channels and a source of information (BERLINCK, 1972).

It can be said that the change of religion strengthened the autonomy of the group, decentralized power, reestablished reciprocal ties in the neighborhood and strengthened them among the relatives / neighbors within the neighborhood, enabling the recovery of social life and overcoming difficult times of material and social crisis.

In the new religion, the pastor is an authority and, like the chaplain, is from inside the community itself. Services take place routinely, rigid obedience of God's commandments and vigilance in their fulfillment are far greater than in Catholicism, meeting the needs of that moment of crisis. The pastor is the representative of the superior deity who, as a father, uses all his authority to restore order, integration, and the obligation of solidarity. The new religion supports the group in resuming command and restoring order by itself, as it always had been, which includes fulfilling religious rites that no longer require any material resources to be accomplished.

For many years, religious leadership in the neighborhood has been exercised by the oldest brother's son, as if it were the right of his family: "The oldest had the right of responsibility, but the other was the smartest." (Interviewee 5, Oct (2009).

The notion of brotherhood among believers of the same religion broadens the network of sociability and thus the obligation of reciprocal help. In this context, the familial relations expanded and were no longer formed only by the descendants of the Paulo, or by the nativos of the sertão, but by all the brethren of the Church. Now there is the family of the Church. Services are held three times a week, bringing together all the families from the neighborhood. The second Sunday of the month is the day of the Lord's Supper (communion day), when the members of a church visit other churches nearby. There is also the Congress, which takes place in the neighborhood once a year, when many churches from several distant locations are invited and, finally, the end-of-year celebrations that also bring together various churches.

Therefore, religious cultural heritage, in this case, should not be understood in its essence by manifestations such as festivals, pilgrimages, etc., but rather by the concretization of practices that express the maintenance of traditional values: unity, autonomy and reciprocity.

> As for religion it is only this that that changes: you used to eat these things [chorizo], now you can't, no more drinking, no more smoking, that's all that is involved. But the rest, the basis of religion is just that, to say that is everything, it's not that. The love each other part is even more than it was. (Interviewee 5, Aug (2009).

> [...] one neighbor is serving the other, there is no animosity. [...] There is no discussion. It has to be all united between the family (Interviewee 6, Aug (2009).

However, certain beliefs that, although forbidden in the new religious order, link to facts from the past, histories experienced in the family and which refer to beliefs and values related to the caipira identity, the man of the bush, such as those of the Saci, the Caipora and the Big Foot. "This story he's telling is true, really [about Saci]. (Interviewee 7., abr.2009). The caipora is an aggressive animal, now no one says anything, after the evangelical religion has advanced, it's been hidden [...]". "After the evangelicals moved in, these things got left behind, but they exist. Only people can't believe in them." (Interviewee 8, Oct (2009).

For Teixeira (2006), it is obvious that there is a degree of religious syncretism in Pentecostalism, but it differs qualitatively from the syncretism present in popular Catholicism, since there are no ambiguities, sacred and profane remain separate, for example, the pai de santo who converts does not stop believing in the old practices, but they become demonic and forbidden.

However, the cultural / territorial resistance observed among the caipiras indicates the ambiguity. The new belief does not seem to override respect for ancestral authority and certain practices of rustic Catholicism. The community maintains the old chapel, a sacred space where the patron saint was worshiped: St. Benedict, the name of the founder of the neighborhood and also the first Portuguese ancestor to reach the Sertão, around the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth century. In the same way, planting only occurs until November 25th, day of Saint Catarina.

THE PERSISTENCE OF THE PAULOS IN THE SERTÃO

All the changes that have taken place in the sertão of Ibiúna in the last six decades have affected the various neighborhoods and their families in different ways, compelling each of them with their history and their possibilities, to try to adapt as best they can.

The families that remained within the limits of the Park, more or less successful in the process of adaptation, are distinguished by their territorial resistance and the strong identity bonds with the place their ancestors have lived in for about four centuries: the sertão of Ibiúna.

However, the integrity of the neighborhood of dos Paulo, with regard to the maintenance of historical-cultural, material and immaterial patrimony and the permanence of families in the ancestral

land is very particular when compared to the remaining traditional rural neighborhoods. The entire set of solutions found, which has eventually distinguished it, seems to be related to an earlier situation of great socioeconomic stability, following the pattern of the caipira's cultural arrangement, which has lasted for consecutive generations.

Taken together, local peculiarities, not common to other neighborhoods, probably account for the differentiated character of the family's personality and its strong resistance amid so many transformations. In addition to successful sitiantes and traders, as holders of a lot of land, the Paulos were respected and influential in the Sertão: the head of the neighborhood - the father, was literate (certainly his ancestors would also have been), which gave him access to knowledge related to the world of bureaucracy and religion; he was the chaplain and block inspector.[2] His wife was one of the rare midwives in the Sertão, with specific knowledge about bush remedies, diet and also about health and care for babies, much sought after in other neighborhoods.

These qualities conferred great social prestige upon the family and certainly strengthened the territorial identity and the values of union and autonomy in the family. The denomination of the neighborhood provides more evidence. "Paulo" is the family that occupies the neighborhood: the "Paulo Domingues", differentiating them from other native relatives, such as the "Anselmo Domingues", the "José Domingues", besides those whose surnames were simply combined, for example, Domingues da Silva.

This same nominal pattern was found in the Laranjeiras neighborhood, in the municipality of Juquitiba, near the study area, alluding to the father's name. Thus, the sons of Roque de Moraes were called "João Roque and Antonio Roque" (FUKUI, 1972, p. 172). According to Woortmann (1995) it is a technonymic that indicates the son's affiliation and the rights and duties to the father, unifying the group of brothers. Such nominal differentiation designates the sitiantes as strong, that is, a successful family (WOORTMANN, 1995), which makes sense to the Paulo family.

Thus, we agree with Hermann (1970) when the author states: the resistance imposed by each group to the transformative forces seems to be conditioned by the degree of integration of the group with the culture, the degree of prestige and mastery that this pattern conferred on it; the degree of segregation that the group may have in relation to renewing forces; to the period of time during which the group submitted itself to action of the traditional pattern.

Analyzing the elements that configure the group's structure and social dynamics in the course of the transformations, it was verified, as previously described, that several resistance / adaptation strategies were developed: economic - forest exploitation and, later, the sale of labor; politics - the dispute for leadership; ecological - the departure of several members of the group; population - reducing the number of children; religious - the transition to Pentecostalism.

In this process, we identify with the findings of Hermann (1970). The historical-social forces that bring change do not act equally on the different structures, the degree of resistance of each one seems to be conditioned to the social and moral values attached to them or to the degree of their spiritualization. The various phenomena that condition the structures behave in the same way. Thus, the author concludes that because it has less associated values, the economic structure changes more easily than the family does; the techniques and forms of land exploitation that make up the economic structure change more easily than economic regimes and social classes.

In this way, the transformation of a structure (or one of its elements) aims to protect the one which involves more expensive values. This perspective corroborates the position of Claval (1999), the values that integrate and define (accept or reject) environmental and social practices.

It can be said that among the sitiantes studied, the transformations that took place were aimed at securing the maximum within the neighborhood, within the extended family, the triad of land-

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2   Local residents clothed with power by the state, it was they who they commanded the Sertaõ, represented the maximun authority to solve all issues, from a simple summons for maintenance or opening of roads to question of posture and/or police (SANTIAGO, 2013).

-work-family and other values and principles linked to each of the components of this triad, that is, linked to the identity of the group.

The ancestral bond with the land in the areas of the Sertão and Neighborhood, have a territoriality and an identity that is defined, on different scales, by kinship, by belonging to the place and by a way of being: native, bush person, bush dweller (SANTIAGO, 2013); but also a sitiante, a traditional sitiante, from the neighborhood of dos Paulo: "We stay on the farm [...], since I was ten years old I would stay months in this forest, there. At that time [in July] we [the family] were clearing, preparing to plant at the end of the year." (Interviewee 5, July (2009).

Territorial identity is a social identity strongly mediated by a territory or by territories embedded in other scales, and like any social identity it promotes a certain classification of individuals as a group (HAESBAERT, 1997). Therefore the category nativo designates the sitiante of the sertão of Ibiúna who producing as a family, lives in the forest and from the forest , so that the earth-work-family triad is established with greater value. In turn, the classification Paulo designates a family of successful sitiantes, strong nativos, of the district of dos Paulo and of prestige in the Sertão.

It was also verified that it is not only the structures and the elements that compose it that resist differently to the transformations, the members of the group are also affected differently. With the aim of maintaining the family's territorial patrimony, some sacrificed themselves so that most suited could give continuity to the family's legacy: leaving the neighborhood, selling their labor, reducing subsistence farming (to a greater or lesser extent) and reducing or completely abandoning the production of agricultural surplus. In this context, the predominance of the symbolic dimension is evident, the identity of the territory in relation to the material dimension.

Given the complete impossibility of maintaining land-labor-family in an inseparable way within the ambit of the nuclear family, ultimately work acted as a mechanism for obtaining the financial resources, previously earned by selling the crop surplus, to maintain the economic balance of the neighborhood as a whole, ensuring that as many heirs as possible remained without compromising the integrity of the ancestral land.

> Remember, when you first came here? [...] I said: I depend on getting a job for us to live here, that I did not want to leave here, from the inheritance that my father left, even if I just stay in the place of my house, but that I would be the heir of the place where I was born and raised. [...] if we get a job here, we can live here for the rest of our lives and take care of the inheritance that our father left [...]. (Interviewee 5, Aug 2007).

In all circumstances, despite the conflicts, contradictions and adaptations inherent to the transformations, the persistence of ancestral rules of conduct and the costly principles related to family / community organization, such as respect for the autonomy of each family, reciprocity, hierarchies of command and land use and the inheritance code are clear.

From this perspective, it is also possible to understand the move of the inhabitants from one religion to another. When the economy shifted, much of the meaning of rustic Catholicism was lost and conflicts rushed in to threaten the union and balance of power within the family, the integrity of the ancestral land and the authority and autonomy of each father in his family's stretch of land; the religious strategy was used as a resource.

Regarding the capacity of resistance and adaptation in each neighborhood, it makes sense to consider the hypothesis formulated by Queiroz: sitiantes who are submitted to several centers of attraction may be better able to adapt to social transformation, adopting new ways of acting or seeking solutions to preserve their old way of life, since they have the possibility of extending knowledge to other realities and so enrich their perspectives (QUEIROZ, 1973b).

Based on this understanding, the broad mobility and consequent social interactions that defined the form of territoriality and the exercise of group autonomy on different scales are elements

that in all likelihood favored the development of the various strategies of adaptation and resistance identified herein. In fact, it can be said that it is the knowledge and the degree of information that the group as a whole has that influences their capacity to adapt to the transformations, favoring not only the construction of new potentialities and competences to face the problems presented, but also facilitating the articulation with other territories, an aspect in which the group studied has distinguished itself in a remarkable way in the past.

However, it is important to emphasize the significant territorial transformations that have taken place. In short, as block inspectors, the sitiantes' territorial control was legitimized by the State and expanded on a scale that surpassed the neighborhood. As farmers and traders, they had control of external affairs, their (domestic) economy was inserted in the dominant economy in a balanced way; they played a prominent role in supplying the city. Their social and environmental knowledge enabled them to obtain resources for a dignified life, from a material and social point of view. The territory was autonomous and interactive - from different perspectives and on different scales.

With the emergence of transformations from contemporary society, the territory became less interactive, closing in on itself, it fragmented (within the Sertão) and gradually weakened over the decades and with each new restriction imposed on the traditional way of life. It became socially unstable to the extent that the sitiantes lost authority and control when facing the State. In other words, the power to rule and command, to access natural resources within the limits of their territory; as the other districts dissolved, depopulating the Sertão; as their commercial relationships with the city ruptured; that their practices are abandoned and that their knowledge is lost with each new generation.

The reproduction of the traditional way of life has been compromised as new laws governing society have come to be applied indistinctly. Parents lost the autonomy to teach their children the wide range of knowledge needed to become a native sitiante: there is no distinction between learning-doing in child labor; midwifery became impractical in the face of restrictions, as well as in the training of apprentices.

The changes have boosted the decline of the domestic industry (which included the production of troughs, wooden spoons and forks, water powered hammers, pestles, tools, mats, different types of baskets for various purposes, wattle and daub buildings, medicines, etc.). Knowledge of the cultural heritage associated with biodiversity has been lost over time; not only manufacturing techniques, but also all the management techniques, the knowledge about the properties and use of the most varied forest resources, and even a proper mastery of plant and animal taxonomy, as well as the particularities of the ecology of species. With the reduction in cultivation, agricultural systems and creole varieties cultivated and improved in caipira territory, a legacy of the ancestors, have also been lost.

In this context, with the passage of the decades and the socio-political and economic changes in the country the clear transformation of the territoriality of the traditional sitiantes is evident. Despite the various forms of resistance and adaptation developed, in an authoritarian, coercive and discriminatory posture the State and its policies have imposed a passive territoriality on the community, following the reasoning of Dematteis and Governa (2005) ; inhibiting their autonomous development strategies.

However, the strong territorial / social identity linked to the traditional way of life and the knowledge still held in the memory, especially of the elders, are relevant aspects when considering appropriate policies / actions of territorial development and cultural valorization, with the perspective of reversing the loss of the social and environmental knowledge important for the community's autonomy and well-being. In this sense, it is worth noting the possible contributions of the SloT model - Local Territorial Systems, as presented by Dematteis; Governa (2005).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the singularities of a traditional rural neighborhood it was possible to obtain empirical elements to deepen the understanding of how the social conflicts arising from two types of rationale and way of life were processed in a historical context: a traditional rural and a contemporary urban one which imposes itself on the former as a transforming force.

The emergence of contemporary society and its development model are responsible for the progressive loss of autonomy and the weakening of reciprocal relationships typical of traditional sitiantes. Over the decades, this has affected the configuration of the territoriality that was peculiar to them, involving articulated levels of territory.

Autonomy and reciprocity are interdependent elements, exercised in different territorial spheres: the nuclear family, the rural (extended family), the sertão (between the various rural districts) and the city, have been restricted over the decades, impoverishing the material, social and environmental aspects of the sitiante and, consequently, their know-do in the social and environmental aspects defined by the culture.

It was possible to observe that the territorial / social identity of the groups, their values and the amount of information and knowledge they hold, are elements that decisively influence their ability to readjust to the new conditions, postponing the process of cultural transformation.

Thus, the capacity of resistance / adaptation of caipira sitiantes is linked to a territorial / family identity, built on solid bases of values and principles that define the traditional way of life (especially grounded in the land-family-work triad), of strong historical links with the place and a long period of economic stability and social prestige. Likewise, the greater the level of information and knowledge, the greater the ability of the group to articulate in the different territorial spheres, that is, to establish and manage relationships on different scales and, consequently, to resist the vectors of pressure and adapt to the changes.

In turn, values are decisive in the definition of adaptation and resistance strategies, they seek to safeguard the integrity of the ancestral territorial patrimony. Among the various strategies, the first one to be triggered is economic, land use and techniques are modified more quickly in this type of structure. As a consequence, the know-how directly linked to this structure falls into disuse.

In this way, the economy is the most fragile but also the most significant element in terms of knowledge about the use and management of biodiversity, and it is imperative to deepen the reflection and the technical and scientific debate on the economic perspectives that currently favor the restoration of the traditional technological heritage and the territorial development according to standards that are in harmony with traditional values.

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