

ANALYZING DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN FUNCTIONAL AGRIBUSINESS REGIONS: A METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL

ANÁLISE DE PROCESSOS DE DESENVOLVIMENTO EM REGIÕES FUNCIONAIS DO AGRONEGÓCIO: UMA PROPOSTA METODOLÓGICA

ANÁLISIS DE PROCESOS DE DESARROLLO EN REGIONES FUNCIONALES DEL AGRONEGOCIO: UNA PROPUESTA METODOLÓGICA

**Almir Arantes¹, Claudete Inês Sroczynski², Alcione Talaska³, Natalício Pereira Lacerda⁴,
Marion Machado Cunha⁵, Aumeri Carlos Bampi⁶**

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to present a methodological proposal that contributes to analyses of regional development processes occurring in regions considered functional, dependent on agribusiness, and linked to external, international logics. To this end, it adopts as its empirical reference the state planning region Centro-Norte–Sinop, comprising nine municipalities in the northern part of the state of Mato Grosso, within Brazil’s Legal Amazon. As a strategic analytical element, the study contends that state-driven public policies are decisive in this process. Accordingly, it examines four plans and programs that strongly affected the region: the Sustainable Amazon Plan (*Plano Amazônia Sustentável*, PAS); the Sustainable Regional Development Plan for the Area of Influence of Highway BR-163 between Cuiabá (MT) and Santarém (PA); the Growth Acceleration Program (*Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento*, PAC); and the Growth Acceleration Program, Phase 2 (PAC 2). The analysis also adopts the 2002–2014 timeframe, covering the administrations of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff, a period commonly characterized as new developmentalism.

Keywords: Agribusiness. Regional Development. Public Policies. Region. Legal Amazon.

¹ PhD in Regional Development, Universidade de Santa Cruz do Sul (UNISC), Sinop, Mato Grosso, Brazil. E-mail: almir@unemat.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4793-2908>

² PhD in in Education, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Sinop, Mato Grosso, Brazil. E-mail: claudete_ski@hotmail.com Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2522-4652>

³ PhD in Regional Development, Universidade de Santa Cruz do Sul (UNISC), Concórdia, Santa Catarina, Brazil. E-mail: talaska.alcione@gmail.com Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0761-3793>

⁴ PhD in Regional Development, Universidade de Santa Cruz do Sul (UNISC), Sinop, Mato Grosso, Brazil. E-mail: natalicio.lacerda@unemat.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6324-2159>

⁵ PhD in in Education, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Sinop, Mato Grosso, Brazil. E-mail: marion@unemat.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2305-6712>

⁶ PhD in Philosophy and Educational Sciences, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela (USC), Sinop, Mato Grosso, Brazil. E-mail: aumeri@unemat.br Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3410-9376>

RESUMO

Este estudo tem como objetivo apresentar uma proposta metodológica que contribua para análises de processos de desenvolvimento regional que ocorrem em regiões tidas como funcionais, dependentes do agronegócio e vinculadas a lógicas externas, internacionais. Para tanto, estabelece como referência empírica a região de planejamento estadual Centro-Norte-Sinop, composta por nove municípios, localizada no norte do Estado de Mato Grosso, em plena Amazônia Legal. Como elemento estratégico de análise, o estudo indica que políticas públicas dinamizadas pelo Estado são decisivas neste processo. Nesse sentido, toma como exemplo quatro planos e programas que impactaram sobremaneira a região: o Plano Amazônia Sustentável (PAS), o Plano de Desenvolvimento Regional Sustentável para a Área de Influência da Rodovia BR-163 no trecho Cuiabá/MT – Santarém/PA, o Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento (PAC), e o Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento (PAC 2). Como referência foi adotado, ainda, o recorte temporal 2002 a 2014, que compreende os governos de Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva e de Dilma Rousseff, período este também conhecido como neodesenvolvimentista.

Palavras-chave: Agronegócio. Desenvolvimento Regional. Políticas Públicas. Região. Amazônia Legal.

RESUMEN

El estudio tiene como objetivo presentar una propuesta metodológica que contribuya al análisis de los procesos de desarrollo regional que ocurren en regiones consideradas funcionales, dependientes del agronegocio y vinculadas a lógicas externas, de alcance internacional. Para ello, se establece como referencia empírica la región de planificación estatal Centro-Norte-Sinop, compuesta por nueve municipios, ubicada en el norte del estado de Mato Grosso, en plena Amazonía Legal. Como elemento estratégico de análisis, el estudio sostiene que las políticas públicas dinamizadas por el Estado son decisivas en este proceso. En este sentido, toma como ejemplo cuatro planes y programas que impactan de manera significativa en la región: el Plan Amazonía Sostenible (PAS), el Plan de Desarrollo Regional Sostenible para el Área de Influencia de la Carretera BR-163 en el tramo Cuiabá/MT–Santarém/PA), el Programa de Aceleración del Crecimiento (PAC) y el Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento 2 (PAC 2). Además, se adopta como referencia el recorte temporal 2002–2014, que comprende los gobiernos de Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva y Dilma Rousseff, período también conocido como neodesarrollista.

Palabras clave: Agronegocio. Desarrollo Regional. Políticas Públicas. Región. Amazonía Letgal.



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INTRODUCTION

Aiming to present a methodological proposal for analyzing regional development

processes in areas driven by agribusiness, this study takes as its reference the state planning region of Centro-Norte-Sinop (MT). Located in the Legal Amazon and strongly influenced by economic logics linked to the global grain market — especially soybeans —, the region represents a suitable case study. This suitability is reinforced by the fact that its socioeconomic and environmental dynamics are directly influenced by public policies devised by the State in coordination with major national and international capital.

In this sense, the investigation makes it possible to outline pathways for an analysis capable of identifying the assertions and contradictions, strengths and weaknesses of socio-historical dynamics that share characteristics similar to those of the Centro-Norte-Sinop region.

Thus, the proposal is to outline possible guidelines to verify whether regional socio-territorial and socio-environmental dynamics, embedded in the logics of global capitalism—such as those driven by agribusiness—can be identified as regional development and whether they result in benefits for the majority of the population.

To this end, a brief historical and geographical contextualization of the region identified as the reference for analysis is first presented. In the second stage, elements deemed appropriate—both theoretical and methodological—are identified to support an analysis of regional development processes.

Finally, the concluding remarks set out and reaffirm the position that researchers should make explicit the reasons behind their theoretical and methodological choices in studies addressing socio-historical phenomena.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE RESEARCH OBJECT

Although Brazil had already begun a debate on regional development in the 1940s and 1950s—focusing mainly on regions considered “backward” by the central government, such as the Northeast, the Center-West, and the Amazon—it was during the military dictatorship, between 1964 and 1985, that effective policies were linked to a regional perspective and truly took shape.

Through public policies devised by the State, development came to be understood as dependent on the creation of regional hubs—agro-industrial in the South and Northeast, and agro-mineral in the Central Plateau (Center-West) and the Amazon. In this way, the major hub of the “São Paulo–Rio–Belo Horizonte” core would be complemented (Tavares, 2001, p. 238).

In this context, the Legal Amazon was incorporated into the national-developmental project, serving both as a locus for capital investment—originating from major national and international corporations in agricultural and mineral ventures—and as a destination for population contingents coming from regions strained by land conflicts resulting from authoritarian and exclusionary agricultural modernization.

Thus, the State financed economic groups for the exploitation of Amazonian land, and private colonization companies were established to attract migrants to settle in this part of the country through the intensive commercialization of land. In addition, official projects linked to the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA) were implemented to settle smallholders and landless peasants.

In this way, the Legal Amazon, in the State's plans—particularly under the military dictatorship—served a dual purpose: the territorialization of capital in a land regarded as inhospitable and as a demographic and economic void, and as a settlement region intended to absorb a large mass of peasants and urban workers excluded from economic activities in the South and Southeast of the country.

However, in many of the areas where colonization projects were implemented, some Indigenous people were dispossessed of their territories and suffered from severe health issues. This situation led to numerous socio-territorial conflicts, many of which persist to this day and remain pending resolution before the Federal Judiciary (Federal Prosecution Service, Superior Court of Justice, and Federal Supreme Court), the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA), the National Foundation of Indigenous Peoples (FUNAI), the Federal Government (Union), and the National Congress.

In the context of contemporary capitalist occupation, marked by the intensive commercialization of urban and rural land, thousands of families migrated to the North and Center-West of Brazil over a twenty-year period (the 1970s and 1980s) in search of land, work, and income. They formed settlements, agrovillages, and small towns under extremely harsh conditions, which later evolved into various urban centers and were eventually established as municipalities. These settlements served as tools for territorial appropriation, leading to the opening of roads, the establishment of agricultural and livestock farms, and the development of wood-processing industries.

However, the national-developmental project conceived during the military dictatorship (1964–1985) came to an end by the mid-1980s, leading to an economic and employment crisis.

This resulted from a set of internal inconsistencies compounded by the international crisis of capitalism, leaving the country engulfed in a deep social and economic downturn.

With the return to democracy and the decline of national-developmentalism—under a civilian president elected indirectly, José Sarney (1985–1990)—the State virtually abandoned the ideals of regional development projects. Instead, it prioritized actions aimed at curbing the extremely high inflation of the period, reducing the heavy external debt, boosting employment and stabilizing average income, addressing the housing crisis, tackling the struggle for agrarian reform, and achieving fiscal balance in public accounts, among other challenges.

After the reinstatement of direct elections, from 1990 to 2002, the country was governed by Presidents Fernando Collor de Mello (March 15, 1990 – December 29, 1992), Itamar Franco (December 29, 1992 – January 1, 1995), and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) (January 1, 1995 – January 1, 2003). These presidents directed their policies under the influence of neoliberalism, prioritizing the fight against inflation, the payment of international creditors, the balance of payments, the opening of the country to foreign products and services, and the implementation of state reforms involving the privatization of public services and enterprises, as well as the elimination of public sector jobs.

Thus, regional development projects only gained significance when linked to export corridors, particularly those related to mineral and agricultural products. Thus, the Federal Government forcefully directed the economic agenda to align closely with the international market for primary-sector products—particularly soybeans and iron ore, the so-called commodities—within the context of the international division of labor established by global economic groups.

In this context, Brazilian agribusiness was favored by a set of policies—particularly state financial subsidies—and, from the 1990s onward, followed a trajectory that consolidated it as a decisive element of the Brazilian economy. According to the perspective of the country's leaders and its economic and political elite, this would be the path to ensuring Brazil's competitiveness in the globalized market.

However, from this perspective, social problems worsened, the country's debt increased, and its dependence on foreign capital—particularly speculative capital—became more pronounced. Moreover, the only sector that experienced real strengthening was that of primary goods production.

Agribusiness, in turn—despite this adverse scenario and having become politically

stronger than the industrial sector—began to dictate the national agenda in political, economic, and social spheres, effectively capturing the agenda of the Brazilian State.

The unified consciousness of values upheld by the far-right wing of agribusiness is based on the following premises: (1) the reinforcement of political and ideological polarization; (2) the defense of a harmful anthropocentrism that rejects socio-environmental conservation policies; (3) the denial of class struggles, especially regarding opposition to agrarian reform and labor rights; (4) the rhetoric of positivist-developmental religious nationalism; (5) the contradiction between convenient global climate science denialism and heavy investment in large-scale agriculture; (6) the advocacy of militarized security in rural areas against the political actions of left-wing social movements in the countryside; (7) the rejection of progressive agendas concerning human rights, particularly those of Indigenous peoples, squatters, and landless workers; (8) the dehumanization of social groups through slave labor and the denial of ancestral rights over the land–environment of Indigenous populations; (9) the sponsorship of fake news concerning the socio-environmental policies of left-wing governments; and (10) the organization of territorial political networks aimed at attacking constitutional provisions that guarantee the social function of land and seek to reduce the use of pesticides in agriculture (Silva & Bampi, 2024, p. 267).

In the 2000s, however, there emerged strong social criticism of the economic crisis and the high level of inequality, given that the State favored only a single productive sector. Thus, given the lack of attention to urban and rural workers who were excluded from and disregarded by the logic of agribusiness's large-scale capital, a political phenomenon emerged as a resonance chamber for society. This situation led to a confrontation with neoliberal-oriented policies, and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was elected president in 2002. Coming from the working class and a leader of labor movements, he proposed a new phase of national development, with the State playing a decisive role in the economy (a developmental State), particularly through the implementation of social programs and the inclusion of social issues on the country's political agenda.

Thus, the Lula administration (2003–2006) established that, although it would continue to honor existing contracts, its priority would be to make the country less poor and more socially just, while also aiming to make Brazil more competitive within the framework of globalized capitalism. From this political context, regional development once again became part of the public agenda, proposing:

- a) the promotion and integration/coordination of government institutions to reduce regional inequalities; b) the adoption of action strategies across multiple geographical

scales (as opposed to the traditional model focused on the country's macro-regions, especially the North, Northeast, and Center-West); and c) the consolidation of the PNDR [National Policy for Regional Development] as a state policy (rather than merely a government policy, which does not ensure the sustainability of the process) (Brasil, Ministério da Integração Nacional, 2010, p. 11).

Regarding economic policies, it is important to note that the economic direction maintained the macroeconomic tripod (inflation targets, floating exchange rate, and primary surplus), and the country risk declined; growth resumed between 2004 and 2006 (GDP: 5.8% in 2004; 3.2% in 2005; 4.0% in 2006). As for social and inclusion programs, the highlights include Fome Zero (Zero Hunger, 2003) as the initial umbrella initiative; Bolsa Família (Provisional Measure No. 132/2003; Law No. 10,836/2004), which unified programs such as Bolsa Escola, Bolsa Alimentação, and Auxílio-Gás; and Luz para Todos (Light for All, Decree No. 4,873/2003), aimed at rural electrification. In general terms, there was a decline in inequality and extreme poverty.

In the educational sphere, the ProUni program (Law No. 11,096/2005) was established, offering scholarships in private higher education institutions, and in 2007, the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals (FUNDEB) was created. FUNDEB extended coverage to the entire basic education system (from preschool to high school), replacing its predecessor, the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Elementary Education and the Valorization of Teaching (FUNDEF), which had covered only elementary education.

Concerning the Legal Amazon—a region comprising the states of Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima, and Tocantins, covering an area of 5,016,136.3 km²—the Brazilian State, since Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's first term, signaled its intention to implement a project that would make possible a development model based on

[...] social inclusion, the reduction of socioeconomic inequalities, respect for cultural diversity, the promotion of competitive economic activities that generate employment and income, and the sustainable use of natural resources, with an emphasis on valuing biodiversity and maintaining the ecological balance of this important Brazilian heritage. (Brasil, Casa Civil da Presidência da República, 2006, p. 10).

In this context, the State of Mato Grosso was also involved, from economic, social, cultural, and environmental perspectives. With 141 municipalities in 2010 (and 142 in 2024), an area of 903,378.29 km², and approximately 3,033,991 inhabitants in 2010 (3,836,399 in 2024)

(IBGE, 2024), as one of the country's largest soybean producers, this state stood out as one of those responsible for maintaining the balance of national payments, particularly through soybean production and export.

However, it also ranked among the leading contributors to deforestation and environmental degradation observed in the Amazon and Cerrado biomes. It is also worth noting that Mato Grosso is socially and regionally unequal. There were, and still are, regions with high economic and social indicators linked to agribusiness, as well as socioeconomically vulnerable regions.

In this regard, among the regions of Mato Grosso defined by the IBGE (North, Northeast, Southwest, South-Central, and Southeast), it is in the northern portion of the state, among others, that agribusiness exerts its greatest influence—and where the highest GDP, GDP per capita, and HDI-M are found. However, recognizing that this division is insufficient for planning and policy purposes, the state government subdivided the territory of Mato Grosso into 12 regions: Noroeste-Juína, Norte-Alta Floresta, Nordeste-Vila Rica, Leste-Barra do Garças, Sudeste-Rondonópolis, Sul-Cuiabá-Várzea Grande, Sudoeste-Cáceres, Oeste Tangará da Serra, Centro-Oeste-Diamantino, Centro-Sorriso, Noroeste-Juara and Centro-Norte-Sinop.

Within this state configuration, the Centro-Norte–Sinop region—comprising nine municipalities (see Table 1 and Figure 1) and currently home to 285,119 inhabitants (IBGE, 2024)—warrants a more in-depth analysis, as it can be viewed as a synthesis of several projects arising from regional development processes induced by the State in conjunction with capital-driven initiatives.

Table 1

Municipalities of the State Planning Region Centro-Norte–Sinop (MT) and Territorial Area (km²), 2024

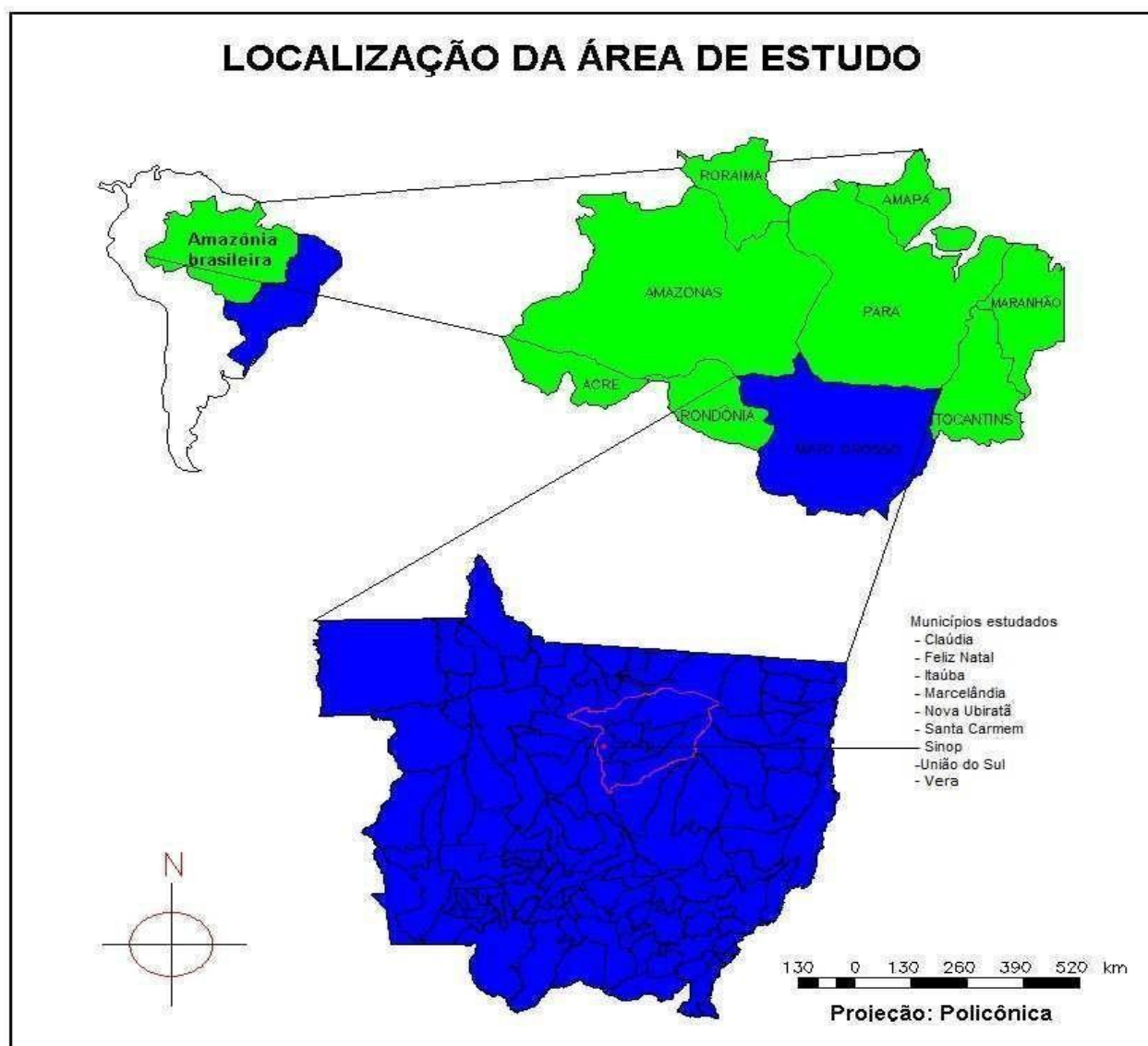
City	Total Area (km ²)	Year of Emancipation	Population in 2024	Biome
Cláudia	3.849,99	1988	9.346	Amazon
Feliz Natal	11.462,46	1995	10.523	Amazon
Itaúba	4.529,58	1986	5.201	Amazon
Marcelândia	12.281,25	1986	11.355	Amazon
Nova Santa Helena	2.359,82	1998	4.502	Amazon
Santa Carmem	3.855,36	1991	5.677	Amazon

Sinop	3.942,23	1979	223.780	Amazon and Cerrado
União do Sul	4.581,91	1995	3.904	Amazon
Vera	2.962,69	1986	10.758	Amazon
Total Area – 49.825,29 km ²				

As a relevant aspect, it is worth emphasizing that all the municipalities in this region emerged as a result of the national agricultural modernization process planned by the military governments, which displaced thousands of small farmers—mainly from southern Brazil—who were forced to give way to intensive and commercial farming. It can also be noted that all the municipalities in the study region were established through colonization projects carried out by private enterprises.

Figure 1

Location of the Municipalities in the Centro-Norte–Sinop Region



In summary, with this brief contextualization, it is possible to affirm that the Centro-Norte–Sinop region serves as a strong research reference regarding the construction of regional development processes based on agribusiness, in which the State acts as a fostering agent.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL INDICATORS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Given the specified temporal and spatial framework, it is possible to advance the analysis

of development processes by indicating that defining the concept of region is necessary; however, this must be done from a historical perspective. It is important to clarify that this concept reflects a social dynamic and therefore indicates that the regional framework carries within its construction a contradictory, dynamic, and often tense process oriented toward a specific societal project.

In this sense, as Santos (2008) points out, the region initially takes shape through organic processes, in which characteristics such as identity, uniqueness, boundaries, and local arrangements prevail. From the 20th century onward, with the advent of economic globalization, it becomes imperative to recognize that regional divisions are, in most cases, shaped by their politically established and constructed functional coherences, involving distinct actors across “multiple articulated scales that, in a certain way, find correspondence in historically and geographically situated socio-spatial practices and processes” (Limonad, 2004, p. 58). The author further notes that regionalization may also

[...] serve as the basis for theoretical reflection or meet the needs imposed by a sectoral policy, a planning practice, or regional development proposals. The possible regionalizations for the same territory or social space may vary according to the intended purpose and may be based on different models. (Limonad, 2004, p. 59).

This implies that, in an analysis that takes the region as a reference, it must be considered that regions linked to agribusiness do not require defined timeframes for their existence. In regions linked to agribusiness, movement and interaction occur under the influence of two antagonistic forces: on the one hand, they persist within the logic of so-called capitalist globality, incorporating values associated with regional competition—both nationally and globally—thus reinforcing the international division of labor. On the other hand, dialectically, the regional framework also carries within it identities and collective, community-based, and territorially rooted projects, which make it possible to envisage the emergence of a new historical perspective.

Moreover, it must be kept in mind that regional development processes and projects based in agribusiness regions are primarily grounded in global functionality—in regional competitiveness subject to market fluctuations, land use and occupation patterns, climatic variations, exchange rate shifts, government subsidies, technical and technological applications, logistical integration, and the availability of qualified human resources.

According to Santos (2008), it can also be observed that capitalist rationality does not necessarily invalidate historical and social counterproposals, although their implementation is

often difficult. Such alternatives are frequently relegated to the background or to marginal situations, since the notion of regional development becomes hegemonic through the power and capillarity of capital.

It is also necessary to clarify that, when analyzing regional development processes shaped by realities linked to agribusiness, regional dynamics are strongly driven by the actions of the State through public policies—that is, a set of actions, rules, and procedures that establish concrete links between public authorities and social actors. In this way, the State—depending on strategic interests or the pressure exerted by economic, political, and social groups—becomes a decisive factor in either stimulating or stagnating entire regions.

Thus, considering that the Centro-Norte–Sinop region is part of a planning framework linked to the Legal Amazon, it is believed that four State actions can currently be identified as key reference points for the transformations that have taken place in the studied region. They are:

a) Plano Amazônia Sustentável [Sustainable Amazon Plan](PAS)

The main objective established by this plan was to promote the sustainable development of the Brazilian Amazon through the implementation of a new model based on valuing its vast natural heritage and investing in technology and infrastructure. The goal was to enable dynamic and innovative economic activities that generate employment and income, in a manner compatible with the sustainable use of natural resources and the preservation of biomes, thereby improving the population's standard of living.

(Brasil, Casa Civil da Presidência da República, 2006).

b) Sustainable Development Plan for the Area of Influence of the BR-163 Highway in the Cuiabá/MT – Santarém/PA Section (BR-163 Plan)

This plan had the general objective of implementing a new model of local and regional development and organizing government action based on the appreciation of sociocultural and natural heritage, the promotion of dynamic and innovative economic activities, and the sustainable use of natural resources, to improve the overall well-being of the population. (Brasil, Casa Civil da Presidência da República, 2006).

c) Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento [Growth Acceleration Program] (PAC)

The policies established under this program, launched in 2007, aimed to restore the State's guiding role in the country's economic growth by increasing public and private investment rates in areas considered strategic (Brasil, Ministério do Planejamento, 2013).

d) Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento 2 [Growth Acceleration Program 2] (PAC 2)

In addition to reaffirming the State's restored guiding role in the country's economic growth—through increased public and private investment in strategic areas—this program also aimed to implement social and urban infrastructure actions (Brasil, Casa civil da Presidência da República, 2013).

Based on the aforementioned references, it is important to emphasize, however, that the very political framework of the governments of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2006 and 2007–2011) and Dilma Rousseff (2011–2014 and 2015–2016)—marked by an attempt to balance antagonistic social forces, the economic and political elite, to the detriment of the poorer majority—leads us to understand that this context proves to be

[...] extremely contradictory, where conflicting interests and worldviews intersect and where the boundaries between the public and the private are difficult to delineate [thus encompassing] the formation of an agenda that may or may not reflect the interests of the majority sectors of the population. (Teixeira, 2012, p. 02-05).

It should also be emphasized that the aforementioned public policies are strategic, as they are closely linked to the economic model. However, it can also be said that, concerning their socio-environmental impacts, they are characterized as both redistributive—since they provide access to resources for more vulnerable social groups—and regulatory, as they establish rules and procedures, given that through them several legal norms are materialized.

Thus, it can be stated that they involve multiple actors and levels of decision-making. They are broad in scope, producing short-, medium-, and long-term impacts, and they involve processes that follow their initial decisions and proposals, as they also entail implementation, execution, and evaluation (Souza, 2006, pp. 20–45). Given these elements, it is essential to emphasize that, as a theoretical foundation, one must take into account the dialectical nature of society, in which “[...] definite individuals, who are productively active in a definite way, enter into definite social and political relations” (Marx, Engels, 2001, p. 18).

Still following this theoretical framework, it is essential to clarify that, in this context, the concept of “used territory” becomes necessary. That is, it must be clearly understood that it refers to “[...] objects and actions, synonymous with inhabited space” (Santos, 1994, p. 16). In other words, “It is the use of the territory, and not the territory itself, that makes it an object of social analysis.” (Santos, 1994, p. 19). This implies that in research on regional development, it is necessary to emphasize that the construction of a region takes place upon a “used territory,” which is “[...] both the result of the historical process and the material and social basis for new human

actions” (Bernardes *et al.*, 2001, p. 1).

Thus, the territory is a tense and contradictory construct, marked by assertions and negations, and without a defined timeframe. It is a dialectical process that synthesizes both unity and diversity, encompassing a set of systems, objects, and actions (Santos & Silveira, 2010).

Based on these references, it is possible to establish an analytical framework that may lead to answers to the following question: How are regional development processes constructed in functional regions linked to the logic of agribusiness? Restating the question: Is it possible for development to occur in regions under the hegemony of agribusiness?

To obtain possible answers to these questions, it is first necessary to historicize the territorialization process of the municipalities that make up the Centro-Norte–Sinop region, contextualizing the spatial and temporal dynamics on regional, national, and international scales.

A second necessary step in the analysis of regional development processes is to identify and clarify the original appropriation of natural resources—whether it occurs in a cooperative, commercialized, contentious manner, granted by the State, or through a combination of all these forms simultaneously. It should also be remembered that processes of primitive capital accumulation may occur in relation to the appropriation of nature (land, forests, minerals, water, etc.). It is also necessary to consider the processes of environmental degradation and the conflicts with pre-existing populations generated within this socio-territorial movement, which is also a socio-environmental process that has produced immense liabilities.

Following the construction of an analytical framework, it is also necessary to recognize the forms of power that are built within the territory and to explain both how this construction and its manifestation occur in social relations, as well as how they are appropriated by historical actors. The next step, in turn, consists of examining how the State has historically materialized its presence in the territory, identifying which norms and actions—direct or indirect—have contributed and continue to contribute to the construction of the region’s identity.

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a detailed study of the content of the plans and programs identified as relevant to the research—such as, in this case, the Sustainable Amazon Plan (PAS), the Sustainable Development Plan for the Area of Influence of the BR-163 Highway in the Cuiabá/MT – Santarém/PA Section (BR-163 Plan), the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), and the Growth Acceleration Program 2 (PAC 2).

It is also necessary to examine the territorial scope of such measures, identify the social forces involved and how they contributed to their formulation, the budget allocated to promote

the planned actions, and the regulations that institutionalized them.

It is also necessary to highlight which actions from these measures were actually implemented during the study period, the quality of their execution, and which sectors of society were directly affected.

From these procedures, it becomes possible to systematize qualitative and quantitative references that can reveal the effects on the territory (socio-territorial and socio-environmental changes and dynamics) and how various social groups had their lives transformed as a result of the implementation of the aforementioned public policies.

Thus, through data collection, it is necessary to obtain the following information:

- a) During the period studied, were there processes of income concentration or distribution?
 - Indicators: Gini coefficient, 10%/40% income ratio, average/median income, wage mass by decile, poverty/extreme poverty.
- b) How was the land—the region's main source of wealth during the analyzed period—occupied or used among small, medium, and large landowners/producers? How is access to urban land achieved?
 - Indicators: average property size; percentage of land area by stratum (≤ 50 ha, 50–200 ha, 200–2,500 ha, $> 2,500$ ha); land regularization; land price; subdivision developments; housing deficit; home-to-work commuting time.
- c) How did the employment and unemployment rates behave in the region under analysis? What is the availability of qualified labor?
 - Indicators: employment and unemployment rates; formal employment (RAIS/CAGED); average salary; availability of technical and higher education positions; dropout rates in technical courses; labor-related migration.
- d) What were the main changes observed in the areas of health, education, income, housing, transportation, access to electricity, sanitation (water supply and sewage), communication, culture, and other essential goods and services?
 - Indicators: Family Health Strategy (ESF) coverage per 10,000 inhabitants; hospital beds per 10,000 inhabitants; IDEB/school flow; per capita household income; housing materials; access to electricity, treated water, and sewage systems; waste collection; 4G/5G and fixed internet coverage; cultural facilities.
- e) How do diverse population groups access public policies?
 - Indicators: program coverage (health, social assistance, housing, development, credit,

inclusion); disaggregation by gender, race/color, age, and territory; access barriers (distance, cost, documentation).

- f) Regarding the productive sector: did agribusiness advance or decline? Which products had the greatest impact? What spatial extent did it occupy? Which sectors of society or social groups were mobilized or demobilized, disadvantaged or benefited?
 - Indicators: planted and livestock area; productivity; gross production value (GPV)/value added; share of GDP; associated logistical infrastructure; social conflicts and (de)mobilization; local linkages (inputs, services).
- g) Regarding the diversity of economic sectors, what is the situation of industry, agribusiness, commerce, and tourism in the region?
 - Indicators: number of establishments and jobs by CNAE classification; revenue; exports by sector; tourist flow; lodging capacity/beds; events and attractions.
- h) And what about family farming: was it stimulated, diversified, or stifled in the process? How did this occur? Which products and population groups were mobilized in the process? What resources or initiatives contributed to its strengthening and organization?
 - Indicators: active DAP/CAF registrations; access to PAA/PNAE/Pronaf programs; crop diversity; cooperativism; agro-industrialization; average family farming income; participation of women and rural youth.
- i) It is also necessary to examine aspects of the demographic dynamics during the evaluated period: did the region attract or expel inhabitants? Within the territory, did the rural population increase or decrease in relation to the urban population? Regarding traditional populations (Indigenous, quilombola, riverside, among others), how are they involved or considered in the process?
 - Indicators: population growth; migration balance; urbanization rate; median age; dependency ratio; demographics and territorial rights of traditional peoples and communities (TPCs).
- j) Which projects related to productive logistics or population mobility were carried out, and what were their socio-environmental impacts? How many public works aimed at the population's daily lives were carried out, and what social effects did they have, whether in urban or rural spaces?
 - Indicators: portfolio of works (highways, bridges, warehouses, energy, sanitation, schools, UBS), EIA/RIMA, expropriations, accidents, travel time, and associated

emissions.

- k) Regarding GDP and GDP per capita, have there been any changes? Has the HDI advanced or declined? What was the import and export volume presented? What products are evident in this process? How do the region's public revenues and expenditures behave?
- Indicators: Total/sectoral GDP, GDP per capita, HDI and components, export/import ratio (value/volume), own revenues versus transfers, social/environmental spending, public investment.
- l) Is the region dependent or does it have food sovereignty, energy, technological and human qualification capacity?
- Indicators: food balance (production x local consumption), energy matrix and self-sufficiency, technological base (Federal Institutes, universities, technical schools, patents, startups), quality of basic education, and technical and higher education.
- m) How was the territory-environment affected? What socio-environmental impacts occurred, and what were the medium and long-term effects, or did they not occur as a result of the actions taken? Which processes were improved, and which new products/processes/methodologies were created and/or incorporated into the territory?
- Indicators: land use and occupation, land use and cover, deforestation/degradation, erosion/siltation, water/air quality, liabilities and licenses, innovation practices, Integrated Crop-Livestock-Forest (ILPF), agroecology, restoration, and socio-environmental projects.
- n) Is there conservation of biodiversity and the territory's natural commons (land, fauna and flora, water resources, soil and air) that results in quality of life in the different regional spaces? How are issues related to the environmental crisis, global warming, climate change, and the vulnerabilities of different populations addressed in the region?
- Indicators: protected areas/territories of Traditional Peoples and Communities (PCTs), connectivity, endangered species, water flows/quality indices, water security, ecosystem services, fair access to common goods.

It is worth highlighting here that the information obtained, among others, whenever possible, should be compared with that of other regions, the state or country, both those that present similar profiles and those that differ from the Central-North-Sinop region.

As an indication for researching regional development processes, the need for field research is also highlighted. It is necessary to record the changes that have occurred in the territory

through images, speeches and testimonies of specific people and groups. It is necessary to identify what impressions the different sectors of society and the populations in their diversity have about the period analyzed, and what perspectives do they have? It is also necessary to verify whether the daily lives of social groups were impacted and how this process occurred.

Thus, based on the information and data collected, it is possible to analyze the region socioeconomically and whether it has become more dynamic or not, whether it is attracting or expelling inhabitants, how the wealth generated is distributed socially, how the means of production are distributed in society, whether the territory-environment is being degraded or managed sustainably, whether services and consumer goods are within the reach of the majority of the population, how property is distributed and whether it is accessible to the majority of the population. In this process, it is also necessary to clarify which social groups are being included and which sectors of society or groups are excluded from the possible benefits generated by the process, during the period.

With the constructed responses in hand, it is possible to assess the socio-environmental weaknesses of the engendered process and what potential they present. What are the internal and external threats, and, if they exist, what strength does the region have in the face of them? How natural commons are perceived and preserved, and what environmental, social and economic impacts this causes. Finally, assess the historical longevity of the socioeconomic dynamics undertaken.

Despite this, it is still necessary to evaluate whether the public policies implemented by the various state entities generate dependence on public power or facilitate the construction of more autonomous social projects. It is also necessary to highlight how the relationship with the national and international market works and whether there is a balance between import and export, and what defenses are in place against possible external economic, environmental, political and military crises.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

When proposing to identify and analyze regional development processes in territories linked to agribusiness committed to a globalized capitalist dynamic, despite the necessary care in applying data collection, construction, and analysis techniques, it is understood that methodological aspects must go hand in hand with theoretical questions, recognizing the

provisional and relative nature of the knowledge generated.

In this sense, it is necessary to point out the possibility of working together with the concepts, understanding and explaining, which indicates that in the provisionality of the results obtained, there is a degree of subjectivity inherent in the relationship between the subject who knows and the object that is known. Thus, influenced by historical issues, hence the importance of the provisional comprehensive character is emphasized. As regards the explanatory claim, it is based on the possibility of demonstrating regularities in the social and historical world, based on a dialectical relationship between subjects and structures on a general interdependent plane.

Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that when recognizing the dynamic, contradictory, tense, with constructions and deconstructions, provisional, dialectical character of the process of construction of regional development, and that the population of a region is not homogeneous nor does it have unique historical perspectives, which indicates determined social behaviors, it is also recognized that the construction of knowledge about this process is also dynamic and contradictory, but it is never neutral.

Therefore, even when using quantitative resources, which are necessary and useful indicators, it is stated that regional development analyses must have a qualitative character, and that when aiming to identify the procedural character of the phenomenon studied, the researcher also positions himself as an analytical-interpretative historical subject. The results of the analyses may also support the development of future public policies by providing opportunities for debate and new studies.

Based on such references, it is possible to evaluate regional dynamics from a procedural perspective, as well as to indicate whether or not this phenomenon can be considered as a consistent process of regional development from a socio-environmental point of view.

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