

# Territorial Formation of the Nordeste Semi-arid and Public Safety Policies

Anilton da Silva Estevam<sup>1</sup>, Sérgio Luiz Malta de Azevedo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Technology and Social Sciences at the University of the State of Bahia - UNEB, Juazeiro-BA. Post-Graduate Student in Human Ecology and Socio-Environmental Management/PPGEcoH, BRAZIL

<sup>2</sup> PhD in Geography, Federal University of Campina Grande- UFCG; Teacher of the Master's Degree in Human Ecology and Socio-Environmental Management /PPGEcoH / DTCS, UNEB, BRAZIL

**Abstract**— *This research aims to integrate the theoretical and academic debate into the landscape of the territorial formation of the northeastern semi-arid as well as discuss how it interferes in the public safety agenda for the sustainability of the traditional peoples and communities residing in the semi-arid region of Bahia. As a methodological proposal, a bibliographical review on the theme was used, which allowed the identification of the concepts necessary for the analysis under the Human Ecology of information and the construction of articulation links.*

**Keywords**— *Community Policing, Human Ecology, Human right, Social Participation, Traditional People.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The semi-arid region of Brazil is characterized by rainfall irregularities, high average temperatures and low humidity throughout most of the year, being a landscape where the vegetation of the caatinga predominates, presenting specimens of this very diverse environment (REIS, 2004). complements the Brazilian semiarid scenario with its traditional characterization as an area of economic backwardness, poverty and rural exodus (OLIVEIRA; SANTOS; SILVA, 2017).

Fortunately, with an increase in research in this region, carried out by institutions, public, private and third sector organizations, at least in the academic field, this characteristic has been deconstructed. We know that the Brazilian semiarid region has great potential for the implementation of sustainable activities, such as agroecological actions, sustainable tourism, agrosilvopastoris, sustainable solar energy, collection and processing of extractive products, potentialization of commercial and cultural activities, fairs free from this region, among many other synergies that can expand the repertoire of economic-sustainable coexistence in (e) with the semi-arid. As shown by Azevedo, (2008) when referring to the region of Paulo Afonso, a regional

enclave of expressive prominence in the northeastern semi-arid region.

In this perspective, the present article discusses the territorial formation of the northeastern semi-arid region, emphasizing the discussion about how the federal, state and municipal public authorities see the needs of this region; it is proposed to make a historical appraisal of the investment models adopted over the years, mostly actions to combat drought, and its influence on the formation of regional identity (DINIZ, LIMA, 2017); the objective is to contribute to the discussion about the consequences of the public policies adopted by the political managers on the current formation of the northeastern semi-arid territory.

In order to elaborate the theoretical-conceptual framework, a brief discussion of topics related to the understanding of the semi-arid region, the concept of public policies in Brazil, public security policies in the semi-arid state of Bahia and the social participation of traditional peoples and communities in elaboration, concepts that will be approached from the perspective of Human Ecology defended by Bomfim (2016, 2017).

As a geographic cut, the research focuses on the reality of the communities located in the semi-arid Bahia of Northeast Brazil. As a methodological proposal, the qualitative research was adopted, orienting the analyzes primarily to the historiographic interpretation (MALERBA, 2002), in a context in which the main methodology is articulated with the use of ethnographic and historical-dialectical methods. These methods, especially, will be used when analyzing and interpreting the data collected in the course of the research. To base the understanding of this research at this point will be the discussion under the Human Ecology of topics related to the understanding of the reality experienced in the northeastern semi-arid.

## II. HUMAN ECOLOGY

More than a century man has demonstrated sufficient knowledge to significantly influence terrestrial ecosystems, modifying existing ecological standards and transforming the biosphere and earth's crust. In this scenario, natural events and processes such as erosion and extinction of species were accelerated, compromising the very survival of ecological systems (Ávila-Pires, 1983).

Complementing this thinking Begossi (1993) states that for some to study the relation of man to the environment includes several factors; which complements Harari's (2017) by claiming that for many years Homo Sapiens was not conceived as part of the ecosystem and that reality does not confirm the constraints imposed by this thought. In this point, we emphasize that in order to achieve the objective of this article, we must resort to the interdisciplinary view on the human-environment interrelationships, a condition for which studies carried out by Human Ecology (MACHADO, 1984) are proposed; confirming that the methodologies adopted in research on human ecology will be used, without generalization, because they are presented as a more specific resource to understand the human behavior against the different environmental variables observed (BEGOSSO, 1993).

Based on this view and based on knowledge originated in disciplines such as Geography and Anthropology among many other disciplines that for Begossi (1993) have characteristic development of human ecology, we will make a brief analysis on the territorial formation and public policies created and implemented in the northeastern semi-arid region.

## III. PUBLIC POLICIES IN BRAZIL

For Campos, (2014) in a broad public policy is the dynamic and practical process based on a legal framework through which the public manager seeks to solve social issues, constituting in this way a tool designed to provide well-being to people and their families when solving a problem that reaches the basic needs of society.

Nunes (2011) when referring to Esping-Andersen (1993) teaches us that public policies have three possibilities: a) universalist; b) corporatist and c) residualist; and in Brazil the characteristics of universalism (extremely linked to state action) and residualism (aimed at specific layers of the population) stand out.

In this passage, for Street (2012) the policy is the result of political activities; affirmed by Campos (2014) when he affirms that in what concerns the reality observed in the northeastern semi-arid only in the late nineteenth century the government started to admit the prolonged droughts as a national problem that has already reached

hundreds of thousands of people in the past and currently still continue to flagellate sensitive portion of this population.

From Uderman's (2008) exposition, it can be deduced that until the middle of the regional themes did not, to the satisfaction of the Brazilian Northeast; national policies in a broader context, with development policies focused on the Center-South region of the country, excepting to this rule the policies to combat drought in the Northeast and the effort for the construction and other Brazilian urban centers.

The policies to combat drought in the Northeast had the purpose of confronting the economic damages caused to the population due to the prolonged droughts that occurred between the years of 1850 and 1900, which produced several scientific analyzes, to order of the public power, researches that served the implementation of policies to combat drought, but without unity because it was the result of the partial vision of each researcher (SILVA, 2007).

Uderman (2008) also notes that the creation of the Banco do Nordeste, the promotion of the oil industry in the state of Bahia, the expansion of the road network, integrating the major national centers and the creation of the SUDENE, ; an undertaking that emerges in importance for the development of regional development policies in this region.

Silva (2007), in criticizing the consequences and structural causes of the misery to which part of the pollution in the semi-arid region is submitted, affirms that only at the beginning of the 20th century new judgments on the subject appeared, as can be observed both in scientific production and in literature Typical local. These contributions exposed under the sociological gaze the form of occupation and exploitation of the sertanejo people and the riches of the territory by the colonizer and his descendants; where public policies to combat drought are limited to reproducing the existing cycle of domination.

Complementing the public policies to combat drought in the Northeast, we can now point to actions aimed at food security based on family agriculture (GRISA, SCHNEIDER, 2014) and income distribution, materialized by the federal government's Family Grant Program (COTTA, MACHADO, 2013); however, these actions do not fully cover the reality to which the sertanejos of the Brazilian Northeast are subjected, and mitigating actions are taken to be the situation of extreme poverty that prevails in much of the region. Thus, we briefly examined the processes of public policy formation, we will make some reverberations of this process in the elaboration of public policies of national

security and in it as it presents the agenda of public security in the country.

#### IV. PUBLIC SECURITY POLICIES IN BRAZIL

The problem of public security in the country is a discussion that requires the participation of all; presenting as a characteristic the fact that they can be presented as independent (repressive) actions or subordinated to the social (preventive) macro policies used by the government (OLIVEIRA, 2002).

Thus, it is necessary to resort to the conceptual differentiation between the political terms of public security and public security policies, which for Oliveira (2002) can be thus conceptualized:

Public security policies is an expression referring to typically police activities, it is the police action "*strictusensu*". Public security policy is an expression that encompasses the various governmental and non-governmental actions that have an impact or impact on the problem of crime and violence (p. 48).

Broadly one can infer that the public security policies in Brazil had their initial phase were initiated after the arrival of the Portuguese in the country with the Ordinance Services subordinate to the landlords; at this time the performance of existing organs reflected the social, political and economic interests of the dominant classes, acting in a subsidiary way to maintain security. This model coexisted with the militias served in the mining phase, and this coexistence continued until the end of the 17th century when the organization of the official military structure in Brazil began, an opportunity to formally predict internal policing sponsored by the public power (ARANHA, 1997).

According to Aranha (1997), official forces in the period between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had permanent and regular characteristics and coexisted with the private factions of an occasional and irregular character, a condition that persisted until the arrival of the Portuguese Crown in 1808, responsible for the installation of the Corps of the Royal Brigade in Brazil. During this period public security policies and public security policies maintained the characteristic of defending the interests of the ruling classes and of protecting national borders and resources, becoming a mixture of military and police force.

Aranha (1997) still affirms that the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century were

marked by numerous popular revolts, at which time official and private forces worked together to maintain the status quo, a reality that lasted until the return of D John VI to Portugal and the proclamation of independence, when official forces were employed to maintain Portuguese interests in Brazil, a fact only modified with the independence and the nomination of Brazilians to the positions of leadership of the corporations.

After the independence of Brazil the Constitution of 1824 carries out the restructuring of the military forces in the country, starting to predict the existence of the Army, regular and paid troops; of militias, auxiliary and free troops with the purpose of assisting the Judiciary and maintaining order in the Comarcas, and of police guards, auxiliary forces responsible for the persecution and arrest of criminals and for individual security (ARANHA, 1997).

As Aranha (1997) teaches in the second half of the nineteenth century, ratifying their origins is observed the use of permanent and temporary security forces in confrontations such as the Paraguayan War and Canudos. With regard to Brazilian public security policies, no significant changes were observed in the beginning of the 20th century, continuing the focus to be maintained in the interests of the State and the elites, as can be seen in the Campaign Against Lampião, a period known as Cangaço. that innovation is perceived in the public security policy through the conclusion of an agreement between the states of Bahia, Pernambuco, Sergipe and Alagoas (Queiroz, 1997).

According to Paiva (2004), the cangaço in the first four decades of the 20th century emerged and expanded in the semi-arid lands of the northeastern states, finding fertile ground in the reality suffered by the sertanejo people as a result of the long droughts and fights of kinship and / or politics existing among the dominant elites.

In the second half of the twentieth century, especially during the Military Regime, as shown by Oliveira (2018), the direction of public security policies in Brazil is observed to play a role in containing crimes, violence and existing social manifestations, a performance marked by acts of violence and serious violations of human rights, when the state's eyes were almost political police.

This brief historical account of the organization of the security forces in the country makes clear the link between security institutions and military institutions, a situation that has been foreseen in the constitution until now, and even foresees its regular use as an auxiliary force in national defense cases (BRAZIL, 1988) and to establish the linkage of institutions to the maintenance of the dominant elites.

In contrast, Kahn (2002) argues that public security policies in Brazil should be based on a medium- and long-

term preventive agenda, since traditional strategies, usually implemented by crime-fighting agencies, are ineffective in respect to the goal of reducing the growth of criminal activities. The same author affirms that the traditional model proposes a new model of coping with crime, which emphasizes the multi-agency service and the interdisciplinarity in which the participation of diverse social agents and sectors of the public power in the elaboration of solutions for the security problems increasingly complex.

In the wake of this, with the redemocratization of the Brazilian state in the late 1980s, there was a need to renew public security policies for the country, with the adoption of models such as community policing or what is now called "policing citizen", which advocates the approximation of public safety organs of the community, advocating social participation in the elaboration of the public security agenda (BAHIA-PMBA, 2003).

#### V. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATION OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AGENDA

Brazil; Rodrigues (2015) tells us that the theme of social participation presents itself as a difficulty that afflicts the various sectors responsible for the management of public policies in Brazil; and there are a number of empirical experiences in the country that provoke debates and efforts by public authorities and civil society to broaden the debate on the subject, which is so dear to the full exercise of contemporary democracy.

In academic terms, the analysis of public policy themes took off from the 1990s; emphasizing that this impulse was only possible thanks to the maturity of the presuppositions foreseen in the Constitution of 1988 and of the later legislations that consolidated the importance of the social participation in the elaboration of the public policies, a reality that requires the closer relations between the State and the social agents (BRAZIL; RODRIGUES, 2015).

Regarding public security, NEV / USP (2009) tells us that in the period between the late 1960s and the mid-1970s developed countries found that the traditional model of policing was not effective in combating urban violence verified; a condition that added to the erosion of the image of the police corporations due to the criticisms in their way of acting in front of the collective movements and the criminal violence fomented the adoption of the community policing.

Whether it is internationally or in Brazil, community policing emerges as a way of approaching public security agencies, especially the police and society. However, this type of policing requires the efforts of the social agents and the authorities involved, especially regarding changes

in the organizational culture of police institutions (NEV / USP, 2009), which provokes institutional resistance.

In this sense, we can affirm that the philosophy of community policing is based on the syllogism of the harmonious work between the community and the police in order to identify and solve the salient social problems (crimes, drugs, disorders, etc.) providing a better quality of life for the community (GT / PORT. SENASP N°002 / 2007, 2008).

In Brazil, social participation in the elaboration of the public security agenda began only in the 1990s, when in an embryonic way community policing was applied in some states of the federation, like São Paulo and Bahia. However, this change in the policing model did not occur due to the demands of the society or the decision of the police institutions. This was done by political decision of the government, which entails years of waiting for police corporations to integrate their institutional values (NEV / USP, 2009).

In this way, the use of community policing can provide the participants with an environment of speech, listening and negotiation based on communication and subjectivity, in which different social actors freely present their opinions on the observed social and criminal problems and participate in the decisions about the ways of coping (BRASIL, RODRIGUES, 2015), contributing to the construction of a public security agenda more adequate to the social demands of the communities involved.

#### VI. THE BRAZILIAN SEMIÁRID

For Reis (2004) the records about the Northeast originated at the end of the sixteenth century with the Portuguese colonization, deriving from the expansion of livestock, which was moved from the coast to the interior due to the damages caused by sugarcane plantations and the need to expand the areas of Portuguese domination (AZEVEDO; BARROS, 2017).

However, the imagery of the Northeast expression is confused with the image constructed when we refer to the semiárid; however, Clement (2013) clarifies in his dialogue with the contributions made by Gilberto Freyre and DjacirMeneses in 1937, that contrary to the disfigurement in this image, the semi-arid region does not comprehend the totality of the Brazilian Northeast, since there is a zone of Coast. In this context, we added the agreste region and the swamps as typically northeastern areas.

In this way, Clemente, when interacting with Durval Muniz Albuquerque Júnior (1999), clarifies that:

The term Northeast was "used initially to designate the area of activity of the Federal Inspection of works

against the droughts (IFOCS), created in 1919". This event was not only seen as the creation of another body to combat the devastating phenomenon of droughts, but the affirmation of a region and the subsequent constitution of a regional identity. (CLEMENT, 2013, p.103)

As Clemente (2013) reports, at the beginning of the twentieth century the administrative, cultural and political reality of the present Northeast was confused with the interpretation given to the *cangaço*, especially the description of the *cangaço* headed by Lampião, a description made from a regional historical perspective with a strong influence of identity factors of the *sertanejo* people such as drought, *coronelismo* and the mysticism of the *sertanejo*.

In this context, Silva, (2007) reveals that the Northeastern semi-arid environment has historically been suffering from social injustices, being the worst Brazilian social indicators in fundamental areas such as health, education and income; a condition that erroneously over the years is linked to the droughts that occur in the region, constituting this justification in a simplistic analysis of reality, since it disregards factors existing structures among the social actors that live there.

## VII. STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE SEMIARID REGARDING REGIONAL ECOLOGY

Azevedo and Barros (2017) teach that the occupation of the northeastern semi-arid region after the discovery, especially the lower São Francisco area, occurred in a dispersed manner, mainly due to the extensive livestock production as a regional productive activity, which included the cultivation of crops for subsistence, culminating in the emergence of human groups of little expression.

This reality lasted for a long period of time, and from time to time the visits and technical studies commissioned by the public authorities, such as those carried out by Hafeld between 1852 and 1854 at the request of Dom Pedro II (AZEVEDO; BARROS, 2017), technical studies, as a rule, aimed at knowing the potential of natural resources available.

Among the environmental factors of the Brazilian semi-arid region are droughts, which in a chronic way plague the lives of the human beings who live there. Silva (2007) states that public power only came to have drought as a problem of interest in the eighteenth century, however,

the present scenario only underwent significant changes in the period between the end of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century when the implantation occurred of hydroelectric projects, irrigated agriculture and public investments in combating the droughts afflicting the semi-arid region (Campos, 2014, SANDES, 2014, AZEVEDO and BARROS, 2017).

It is evident that the investment in large projects for the semi-arid region, even fragmented, including those linked to combat the afflictions caused by the long and recurrent droughts began to begin in the second half of the nineteenth century, only to be analyzed critically in the century XX. This discussion culminated in the creation of the Hydroelectric Company of São Francisco (CHESF) in 1945, in the Superintendency of Development of the Northeast (SUDENE) in 1959 (SILVA, 2007) and in the Development Company of the São Francisco Valley (CODEVASF) in 1974, the investments made did little to improve the quality of life of the poorest population (SANDES, 2014).

According to Silva (2007), with the re-democratization of the country in the 1980s, the rulers, due to the inefficiency presented in public policies to combat drought, began to adopt the discourse of sustainability and to seek effective alternatives for the development and coexistence with the semi-arid, encouraging research by public and private institutions.

Even though the environmental and social vulnerabilities of the Northeast, which nowadays surpass the semi-arid region (MEDEIROS et al., 2013), in the last decades of the twentieth century, there are significant changes in the structure of this society, based on a process of regional industrialization, scarce in its social character and of difficult prospection as to the results that will be reached in the medium and long term, perceived in some regions, like the capitals and big cities existing in the Brazilian semi-arid (BUAINAIN, GARCIA, 2013).

## VIII. PUBLIC SECURITY POLICIES IN THE BRAZILIAN SEMI-ARID - HISTORICAL APPROACH

As discussed earlier, public security activities in the region that we now call semi-arid began to be initiated by the Ordinance Services led by the landlords, and their actions were confused with the defense of their political, social and economic interests; having in the seventeenth century begun its structuring based on military organizations; in this model, the financing of internal policing activities with public funds (ARANHA, 1997) already occurred.

This was the reality observed during the period of existence of the Hereditary Captaincies and *sesmarias*, where official troops and armed groups coexisted with the

regional political leaders; a scenario that came to undergo some modifications with the arrival of the Royal family to Brazil, an opportunity where greater rigging of the public organs and consequent reduction of the influence of the landlords were established (ARANHA, 1997).

However, it is observed that the basic structure (contingent) of security institutions were directed to meeting the needs of the Capital, in general coastal cities, markedly slavery and, as a rule, sugar cane producers, mainly coffee. Thus, virtue of the inexistence and / or low public investment in this service; once the most remote areas of colonial Brazil remained the maintenance of the model mentioned by Aranha (1997).

Thus, occupation of the interior lands by livestock and goat farming, which had the objective of supplying meat and other products to coastal cities, was not peaceful, resulting from the struggles of the large grantees and sesmeiros with the indigenous peoples. Paiva (2004) states that:

Violence has always been endemic in the backlands of northeastern Brazil, as a result of struggles with the Indians, during the clearing and occupation of the vast interior spaces; also, of the ties between family members and large landowners. It consolidated itself with the lides in the management of the cattle and groups of jagunços, for the defense of the colonelssertanejos, in the isolation of their farms, where the Law did not arrive. (P.1)

The fragility of the public security policies for the semi-arid region can also be observed in the aftermath of the Canudos War, a community located on the banks of the Vaza-Barris River that developed under the influence of Antônio Conselheiro and because of the existing social scenario came to be understood by the Government of the Republic as a group of insurgent defenders of imperialism (CUNHA, 1979; REIS, 2004).

This reality presented itself as a fertile ground for the empowerment of the large regional families, who replaced the landlords and who used the same practices previously adopted (large bands of armed jagunfos), the precursors of the bands of cangaceiros, that adapted the intempéries natural activities in all Northeastern states often illegally (QUEIROZ, 1997; PAIVA, 2004), depending on the circumstances supporting or confronting the Rulers and relatives.

Corroborating with Sandes (2014) when he affirms that today a scenario of public insecurity occurs, in which drug trafficking is the face of crime that develops most, especially in urban centers, presenting a striking feature of criminal organization with tentacles that throughout the national territory.

It should be noted that the Brazilian semi-arid region does not differ from the Brazilian reality, presenting regions with a high crime rate, such as the "Maconha Polygon" located in the São Francisco Valley, which stands out nationally for drug trafficking (Cannabis Sativa Lineu / marijuana), territory where this criminal practice presents itself with a structure similar to that of an agribusiness (SANDES, 2014, p.16).

The modern reality of the semi-arid area is reinforced by the increase in the number of crimes against financial institutions, popularly known as "robbery of the bank", a criminal procedure that has been called by the specialists as "Novo Cangaço". the cases recorded between the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (SOUSA, 2017); being notable the weakness observed in the current actions of the public power to confront the currently registered cases.

#### **IX. PUBLIC SECURITY POLICIES IN THE BRAZILIAN SEMI-ARID - CURRENT APPROACH**

Contrary to institutional discourses, as observed in the state of Bahia, in Brazil the adoption of professional policing as a model, in which policies are implemented from top to bottom, presents extremely hierarchical structures and rigorous regulation. The main function of the most senior police officers is to check if the lower-ranking police officers are complying with corporate regulations, a theoretical framework that in several studies has not presented effective results in terms of social pacification (MOORE, 2003).

Corroborating with the above, it is now peaceful that the public security organs in the country claim to adopt as alternatives to the traditional policing model the philosophy of Community Police; policing philosophy based on the assertion that effective joint work between the police and the community can play an important role in reducing crime and promoting safety, and the citizen is the first line of defense in the fight against crime (MOORE, 2003).

It complements this controversial scenario, the prediction of the development of actions by the state public power, which presents as lines of action the confrontation with drug trafficking, crimes against financial institutions (Novo Cangaço) and organized crime in general; as well as investments in technological resources, organizational management and production of evidence (BAHIA, 2017).

From this exhibition it can be observed that the reality of the Northeastern semi-arid territory is not seen in its fullness, since it disregards local anthropic factors, Human Ecology is so important, becoming an intervention of the public power for the solution of crimes of interest, in a model that approaches the one used to combat banditry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In this context, the real adoption of community policing as an organizational strategy, in which public security agencies are not only agents in the fight against crime, but also as public actors for solving social problems (MOORE, 2003), contributing, as a partner, mainly for the development of the community through the creation and active action of community safety councils (GT / PORT SENASP N°002 / 2007, 2008).

#### X. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

When we analyze the issue under the perspective of a Democratic State of Law, in the light of the citizens' constitution, we observe that public security policies and public security policies designed to meet the needs of the peoples and communities of the Northeastern semi-arid region are not effective; it is evident that the problems that afflict the Brazilian Northeast are not linked to the drought, but in part were built over time, due to the adoption of an inadequate model the reality of the semiarid (MEDEIROS et al., 2013), more appropriate to maintenance of the privileges and power project of certain strata of society (SILVA, 2007).

However, in this scenario, actions that seek to meet, even if not in full, the needs of this territory, such as Operation District of the Military Police of Bahia (BAHIA, 2017) or the intervention project for the implementation of the Rural Patrol of Military Police of Pernambuco (PEREIRA, SERAFIM, 2011).

On the subject, we can also highlight actions that are not specifically aimed at the semi-arid, but which, because of their importance, contribute to improving the quality of life of the sertanejos and sertanejas, as demonstrated by Anjos, Estevam e Souza (2018). data regarding the attendance of occurrences of the Maria da Penha Round of PMBA in the municipality of Paulo Afonso from May 2016 to June 2017.

It remains evident that the discussions culminate in the understanding that public security institutions should approach society as a whole, and of the peoples of the semiarid in particular, seeking to understand their problems and contribute to the development of solutions; in this scenario the adoption of community policing philosophy and community policing are fruitful fields for the launching of new, more efficient and effective public policies.

This concept also changes the focus of police activity, from the fight against crime to low cost for the preservation of basic constitutional rights and satisfaction and harmony with the community (MOORE, 2003), placing dialogue and meeting the needs of citizens as the main focus of the activities carried out by institutions linked to public security.

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