LUMEN ET VIRTUS

The concept of territory from the perspective of agrarian studies on traditional peoples and communities: Dialogues and reflections

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ABSTRACT

The paths taken by the concept of territory in the field of the history of geography are marked by social, political and theoretical-methodological influences that affected the ways of thinking about geography and the role played by territory in social dynamics. In this sense, authors such as Haesbaert (2019), Saquet (2020), Gottmann (2012), Claval (1999), Andrade (2004), among others, discuss in depth the paths taken by the concept of territory in geography, bringing elements that help us understand the approaches that the concept has obtained throughout the history of geography, which are influenced by more structural conjunctures, such as the epistemological changes and transformations generated in the scope of social reality, as Claval (1999) points out. That said, the objective of the present research is to analyze the approaches to the concept of territory in research that discusses indigenous peoples and quilombola communities in selected texts. In the methodological scope, we highlight that the research is based on the content analysis, according to Bardin (2022), of works published in the annals of the International Symposium on Agrarian Geography (SINGA), between the years 2003 and 2019, totaling nine editions analyzed. In the field of research results, we identified the presence of different approaches to the concept of territory in the research, notably from multidimensional, relational and integrative conceptions of the concept of territory proposed by different geographers, such as Rogério Haesbaert, Claude Raffestin, Marcos Aurélio Saquet, Milton Santos, Ariovaldo Umbelino de Oliveira, Bernardo Mançano Fernandes, Joël Bonnemaison, Maria Geralda de Almeida and Carlos Walter Porto-Gonçalves, among others. Finally, in the framework of the conclusions of the research, we detected that within the research framework adopted, there is a centrality of the concept of territory as an important element in the study of indigenous peoples and quilombola communities, a fact that, in a way, reflects the importance that the concept has been gaining in the field of agrarian studies.

Keywords: Territory, Geography, Traditional peoples.

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INTRODUCTION

The paths traced by the concept of *territory* in geographical science are marked by the presence of different strands, and it is important to highlight that these debates around the concept are articulated with the social, political and cultural contexts of each era in association with the paradigms that subsidized the horizons of research in the field of geography.

In this sense, the work we are developing has the following problem: what are the main theoretical perspectives that have supported the discussion around the concept of territory in research that discusses traditional peoples and communities? Thus, this problem is articulated with the objective of the research, which is to analyze the approaches to the concept of territory in studies related to the discussion of traditional peoples and communities.

One of the justifications for the construction of this research is related to the continuity of studies on the subject, started at the Federal University of Campina Grande, when I developed a monographic work that dealt with the concept of territory in the context of agrarian studies. It is also important to emphasize that this research constitutes a deepening of some reflections presented in a work submitted at an important event in agrarian geography, ENGA.

In addition, the project is justified by the intention to understand the recent territorial transformations underway in the Brazilian countryside, especially the struggles of traditional peoples and communities in defense of their territories in a country that historically, according to Schwarcz (2019), is marked by authoritarian practices and ideas, such as bossism, racism, corruption, violence, intolerance, and social inequality.

In addition, the justification is also related to the social relevance of the research, which can contribute to the understanding of the theoretical basis of the territorial demands claimed by these peoples in the countryside, such as the territories of traditional use and occupation and ethnic identity as a factor of alterity and guarantee of the rights of these groups.

OBJECTIVE

Within the scope of the objectives, our research has as its general objective to analyze the approaches to the concept of territory in studies related to the discussion of traditional peoples and communities from the annals of the International Symposium on Agrarian Geography from 2003 to 2019. The specific objectives are: to systematize the bibliographic production on the concept of territory in geography from its theoretical matrices; to discuss, from an interdisciplinary perspective, the contribution of other areas of knowledge around the concept of territory and to analyze the approaches to the concept of territory used in works linked to the discussion of traditional peoples and communities in the annals of the SINGA.

METHODOLOGY

Regarding the research methodology, we are building from two stages, the first consisting of a literature review based on authors who discuss the concept of territory in depth in the field of geography, such as Claval (1999), Haesbaert (2019), Saquet (2020), Oliveira (2016) and Almeida (2005), in order to theoretically substantiate the main strands in which the concept of territory has been discussed in geography.

The second stage will consist of the analysis of the annals of SINGA, which is the bibliographic excerpt used for the construction of the research, in which the selection and reading of works on traditional peoples and communities that discuss the concept of territory will be carried out. To build this stage, we will use content analysis, according to Bardin (2022), using two specific techniques, the *presence or absence* (qualitative) of the concept of territory in works that discuss traditional peoples and communities, in order to define the *corpus (*universe of works) that will serve as the basis for the construction of the research and the *frequency of appearance* of the concept in the works in order to measure the importance that the territory has in the selected researches.

For the preparation of this document, we searched for models of complete articles. Next, some researchers debated the creation of a model. (Describe, objectively, how the work was carried out).

DEVELOPMENT

In the context of the research results, it is essential to highlight initially that, given that the research is still in the construction phase within the scope of the master's research, we will present partial results achieved up to the current phase that the research is going. Thus, of the nine editions held by SINGA, we analyzed four editions of the event (2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009). In the table below, we seek to synthetically illustrate the history of the event, both in relation to its temporality and the places that have hosted SINGA in its more than 20 years of history.

Table 1 – The history of the SINGA

Event	Year	Local	Host Institution
S. N. de G. Agrária	1998	São Paulo – SP	USP
I SINGA	2003	São Paulo – SP	USP
II SINGA	2005	Presidente Prudente -SP	UNESP
III LION	2007	Londrina – PR	UEL
IV SINGA	2009	Niterói – RJ	UFF
V SINGA	2011	Belém - PA	UFPA
VI SINGA	2013	João Pessoa	UFPB
VII LION	2015	Goiânia	UFG
VIII LION	2017	Curitiba	UFPR
IX LION	2019	Reef	UFPE

Source: Annals of SINGA. Org. Author

In this scenario, it can be seen that SINGA was born from the idealization and organization of the event by the agrarian geography of USP and later ended up consolidating itself nationally, with the holding of events in all the major regions of Brazil, four in the Southeast, two editions in the South, two in the Northeast, one in the Midwest and one edition held in the North Region.

In addition, we sought to count the number of studies published in the annals of the nine editions of the event. The results of this survey are shown in the table below:

Table 1 – Number of papers published per issue

Year of the event	Number of articles published
2003	129
2005	242
2007	305[2]
2009	395
2011	683
2013	1063
2015	499
2017	758
2019	932

Source: Annals of Singa and Vinha (2017)

In total, the nine editions of SINGA published a total of more than 5 thousand papers in their annals (including full papers and expanded abstracts), with the edition held in João Pessoa being the one that presented the most papers in its annals, surpassing the mark of one thousand published papers. The edition with the lowest number of published studies was the pioneering edition held at USP in 2003.

After the presentation of these general and historical aspects of SINGA's trajectory, we will enter into the demonstration of how research that discusses traditional peoples and communities presents the discussion around the concept of territory. From this perspective, the table below brings information that helps to think about this issue from the thematic outline of the WGs organized by the editions of SINGA.

Chart 2 – Working Groups with themes related to Traditional Peoples and Communities

No.	Title of the Working Group	Anus
1	Conservation Units and Traditional Populations	2003
2	Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Populations	2003
3	Ethnodevelopment	2005
4	Quilombola Communities	2009
5	Traditional Peoples and Communities	2009
6	Traditional Populations and Communities	2011
7	Traditional communities, resistance, peasant recreation and agroecology	2013
8	Peasantry, traditional communities and resistance	2015
9	Traditional communities in the struggle for territories	2017
10	Practices and conflicts in the territories of indigenous peoples	2017
11	Traditional Communities in the struggle for territories	2019

[2] The numbers referring to the number of works published in the annals of Singas 2007 and 2009 were obtained indirectly, through a count made by Vinha (2017).

12	Practices and conflicts in the territories of indigenous peoples	2019

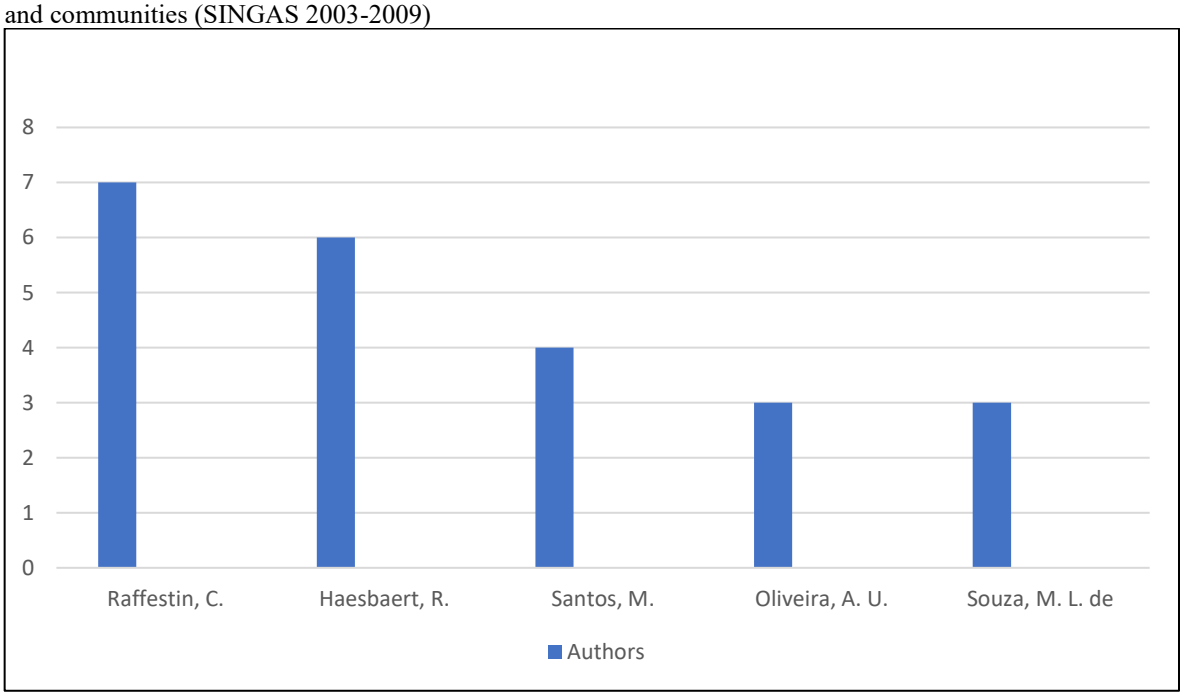
Source: annals of SINGA, org. Author

In view of this, we found that only 12 Working Groups were dedicated to thematic areas related to traditional peoples and communities, since in the nine editions, sometimes two Working Groups linked to the aforementioned themes appear, sometimes only one Working Group dedicated to the theme of traditional peoples and communities.

In the investigation of the annals of the four editions analyzed so far, we verified the existence of 41 complete works that discussed dynamics related to traditional peoples and communities (indigenous and quilombolas), within a set of 924 works published in the annals of the 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009 editions. It should be noted that the thematic focus that guided the selection of the articles revolved around texts that discussed the concept of territory together with quilombola and indigenous communities, that is, texts that addressed issues related to other communities and traditional peoples were not considered in the present research.

In this context, we found the presence of 22 definitions of territory, a fact that reveals a wide variety of understanding of the concept to support research linked to indigenous and quilombola communities. In this context, the table below illustrates the main results obtained so far:

Graph 1 - Most referenced authors in the context of the discussion of territory in works that discuss traditional peoples and communities (SINGAS 2003-2009)



Source: annals of SINGA, org. Author

From this perspective, we verified the prevalence of theoretical discussions based on several authors, however, when we analyzed the individual data by author, we found that the main theoretical influence was Claude Raffestin, who in addition to having greater representation in the researched

review, is also an author who influenced the discussion of the concept of territory in some Brazilian authors who debate the aforementioned concept in their works. In addition, other authors who appeared prominently influencing and being theoretical references around the territory were Rogério Haesbaert, Milton Santos, Ariovaldo Umbelino de Oliveira and Marcelo Lopes de Souza.

In addition to these authors, other thinkers who also appeared in research in the thematic section analyzed, such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Manuel Correia de Andrade, Michel Foucault, Bernardo Mançano Fernandes, Robert Sack, Joel Bonnemaison, Paul Little, among others, deserve to be highlighted, a fact that reveals the plurality of theoretical perspectives that the concept of territory has been worked on in agrarian studies that turn their gaze to traditional peoples and communities.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the field of research conclusions, we highlight some points whose investigation on the concept of territory has been pointing out, the first of which is the plural approach to the concept in the research analyzed in the bibliographic clipping, ranging from relational perspectives to approaches that emphasize certain aspects of the concept of territory, such as the economic, political and cultural dimensions.

Another relevant point is the insertion of the debate about the concept of territory in research that turns its gaze to the reflection on traditional peoples and communities, a field of research that has gained strength in recent years in studies on agrarian issues in the Brazilian countryside, outlining that there is indeed a centrality of the concept of territory as an analytical element that has helped researchers of geography in the study of traditional communities.

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