
The functions reserved for the Municipality of Cariré, State of Ceará, in the Integrated Urban Development Plan for the Metropolitan Region of Sobral (PDUI/RMS)

As funções reservadas ao Município de Cariré/CE no Plano de Desenvolvimento Urbano Integrado da Região Metropolitana de Sobral (PDUI/RMS)

Las funciones reservadas al Municipio de Cariré, Estado de Ceará, en el Plan Integrado de Desarrollo Urbano de la Región Metropolitana de Sobral (PDUI / RMS)

Antonio Veiga Rodrigues¹ <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0061-6871>

Glauciana Alves Teles² <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6952-8837>

¹ State University Vale do Acaraú – UVA, Sobral, Ceará, Brazil. E-mail: antonio.veiga96@gmail.com

² State University Vale do Acaraú – UVA, Sobral, Ceará, Brazil. E-mail: glauciana_teles@uvanet.br

Received on: 09/17/2021

Accepted for publication: 12/20/2021

Abstract

The Metropolitan Region of Sobral (RMS) was the third institutionalized metropolitan region in the State of Ceará, in December 2016. In 2018, the final report of the Integrated Urban Development Plan (PDUI) was presented, providing guidelines for urban development and regional of the territorial unit. The RMS is made up of 18 municipalities, the city of Sobral being its metropolitan headquarters, in addition to being considered one of the main urban centers in Ceará. In this context, Cariré, one of the eighteen municipalities stands out, has particular territorial characteristics that make it extremely important in the territorial management of the RMS, having both logistical and commercial functions. The article presents an analysis of Cariré's functions in the context of the territorial restructuring of the RMS.

Keywords: Territorial planning; Metropolitan Region of Sobral; Territorial restructuring; Cariré.

Resumen

La Región Metropolitana de Sobral (RMS) fue la tercera región metropolitana institucionalizada en el Estado de Ceará, en diciembre de 2016. En 2018 se presentó el informe final del Plan Integrado de Desarrollo Urbano (PDUI), que brinda lineamientos para el desarrollo urbano y regional de la unidad territorial. La RMS está conformada por 18 municipios, siendo la ciudad de Sobral su sede metropolitana, además de ser considerada uno de los principales núcleos urbanos de Ceará. En este contexto, Cariré, uno de los dieciocho municipios que se destaca, tiene características territoriales particulares que lo hacen sumamente importante en la gestión territorial de la RMS, teniendo funciones tanto logísticas como comerciales. El artículo presenta un análisis de las funciones de Cariré en el contexto de la reestructuración territorial de la RMS.

Keywords: Planificación territorial; Región Metropolitana de Sobral; Reestructuración territorial; Cariré.

Resumo

A Região Metropolitana de Sobral (RMS) foi a terceira região metropolitana institucionalizada no Estado do Ceará, em dezembro de 2016. Em 2018, foi apresentado o relatório final do Plano de Desenvolvimento Urbano Integrado (PDUI), trazendo as diretrizes para o desenvolvimento urbano e regional da unidade territorial. A RMS é composta por 18 municípios, sendo a cidade de Sobral sua sede metropolitana, além de ser considerada um dos principais centros urbanos cearenses. Nesse contexto, Cariré, um dos dezoito municípios destaca-se possui características territoriais particulares que o evidenciam de suma importância na gestão territorial da RMS, possuindo as funções logística e comercial. O artigo apresenta uma análise das funções de Cariré no contexto da reestruturação territorial da RMS.

Palavras-chave: Planejamento territorial; Região Metropolitana de Sobral; Reestruturação territorial; Cariré.

Introdução

The roles and meanings of Brazilian metropolitan regions vary according to the approaches in studies on urbanization and regional development. In Geography, the researches are usually on the metropolization process of space in metropolises and metropolitan areas. However, there is a low incidence regarding studies on territorial planning as an object of socio-territorial modifications in zones that do not have a metropolis as a metropolitan headquarter. Therefore, the paper seeks to contribute to the second kind of study.

The Sobral Metropolitan Region, in northwestern Ceará, was the last metropolitan region to be institutionalized in Brazil until then. Its metropolitan headquarters is Sobral, a significant urban center in Ceará, which polarizes small towns in its surroundings and plays a central role in different scales. Its historical importance is because of the strategic position concerning the capital, being close to the Ibiabapa Mountains and Piauí. Currently, it represents a level C regional capital

(IBGE, 2020), having commerce, services, higher education, and the footwear industry as the principal economic requirements.

The SMR planning began in 2017 with the first steps to construct the Integrated Urban Development Plan (IUDP). The document is an urban and regional development instrument supported by the Metropolis Statute (2015). Released in 2018 to civil society through the final report, it proposes a series of initiatives that metropolitan management must take in the medium term. One of them is a proposal for territorial restructuring of the cities and municipalities that make up this territorial unit.

One of the municipalities in the aforementioned intra-metropolitan scenario is Cariré, in southwestern Sobral. This municipality is an important point of emphasis because it has a strategic position, the SMR central region. In this regard, the IUDP incorporated logistics and commercial functions into the municipality. Thus, the question that guided reflections were: what are the Cariré roles in the current configuration of the SMR, and what are the potential functions in its territorial restructuring that will provide subsidies for the integration of the IUDP?

Thus, the article proposes a critical analysis concerning the Cariré functions in the context of the SMR territorial planning to contribute to the discussion on the regional development of the territorial unit. It is part of the reflections from the master's research – Medium-sized cities in the Brazilian metropolis context: institutionalization and territorial planning of the Sobral Metropolitan Region – presented in 2020 in the Geography master course from Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú (Vale do Acaraú State University, UVA).

The first methodological procedure assisting the research was the literature review on the main themes of the Brazilian metropolitan issue, consulting authors such as Lencione (2006) and Firkowski (2013) on the SMR, based on state laws and the study of Rodrigues (2020). The second one was the critical analysis of the IUDP/SMR documents (2018) concerning the Cariré territorial restructuring from a geographic science view. As support, there were consultations on websites and

official documents from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, IBGE) (2018; 2020) and Institute for Research and Economic Strategy of Ceará (Instituto de Pesquisa e Estratégia Econômica do Ceará, IPECE) (2015) and fieldwork in the municipality.

For a better understanding, the first part of the article is the introduction, which discusses the creation of metropolitan regions in the country. Secondly, there is a discussion about the SMR territory, the proposal of territorial restructuring, and the municipal functions of Cariré in the context of territorial planning. At last, there are final considerations and references used in the research.

A brief history of the creation of metropolitan regions in Brazil

The fast Brazilian urbanization caused problems arising from the lack of urban planning and management to solve economic and socio-spatial issues. From 1980 on, the promulgation of the Federal Constitution of 1988 granted the states the autonomy to create metropolitan areas, which increased the number of units and became complex to deal with them.

According to Lencione (2006), the metropolitan region historically has an association with the metropolis and the process of metropolization, that is, of the complexity of higher urban functions, regional influence, physical extension, consumption, and culture, among others, that represent the complexity of the urban phenomenon.

In contemporary Brazil, such association does not follow the conception to the letter since there are metropolitan regions where there is no metropolis or metropolization process. It allows regional or sub-regional centers that do not have the complexity of higher functions and do not exert influence beyond the regional limits to become metropolitan centers. Thus, they can be true metropolitan nuclei despite the low urban dynamics.

Because of it, Firkowski (2013) points to a divorce between metropolitan regions and metropolises.

[...] not all units institutionalized as metropolitan region effectively result from the metropolization. Thus, in Brazil, part of these units are closer to a conventional regional cutout, without any evidence of metropolis characteristics, resulting in a divorce between metropolization and metropolitan regions, as well as in their respective constitutive processes (FIRKOWSKI, 2013, p. 35).

Regional politics decisively influence the creation of these units, for example, due to State incentives for the development of structural planning projects.

However, even if it is a topic for conceptual discussion, it is evident that metropolitan regions today are units of territorial planning in various scales and regional contexts. In other words, Soares (2015) says that even if a metropolitan region does not present a metropolis, it has a medium or small city that performs an urban and economic complexity, referring to the possibility of planning towards the socio-economic development.

According to official data from the IBGE (2018), in 2016, there were seventy-four institutionalized metropolitan regions in the national territory, being present in almost all federal units, except for Mato Grosso do Sul and Acre. Concerning the number of MR, the Northeast and South have 31 and 21, respectively; the Southeast, historically the most urbanized region, has 10; while the North and Midwest have 10 and 2, respectively.

The data become relevant because they demonstrate the strength of regional policies – which is more evident when considering the number per state – on the metropolitan issue, where, for example, the Northeast has the highest amount of institutionalized MR. Paraíba and Santa Catarina have the most regional units of this kind, 12 and 10, respectively. As highlighted in the discussion, most of the relevant regional and subregional centers are metropolitan region nuclei.

Rodrigues (2020) says, based on the City Influence Regions (Regiões de Influência das Cidades, REGIC) (2008), the hierarchy of Brazilian metropolitan

headquarters³ are as follow: twelve metropolises (fifteen, according to the new IBGE data in 2020), thirty-seven regional capitals, and eighteen sub-regional, ten zone and five local centers. Therefore, the regional capitals – state capitals and medium-sized cities – make up most of the metros surrounding fifteen metropolises. Besides, small towns having up to fifty thousand inhabitants are the nucleus of their metros. It is worth mentioning that some metropolitan headquarters are true local centers that do not impact beyond the boundaries.

According to Firkowski (2013), Brazilian metropolitan regions are more regional cutouts for planning and land management than metropolitan regions. However, one must be careful with such a statement when discussing metropolises, considering their functionalities within the state and national urban network.

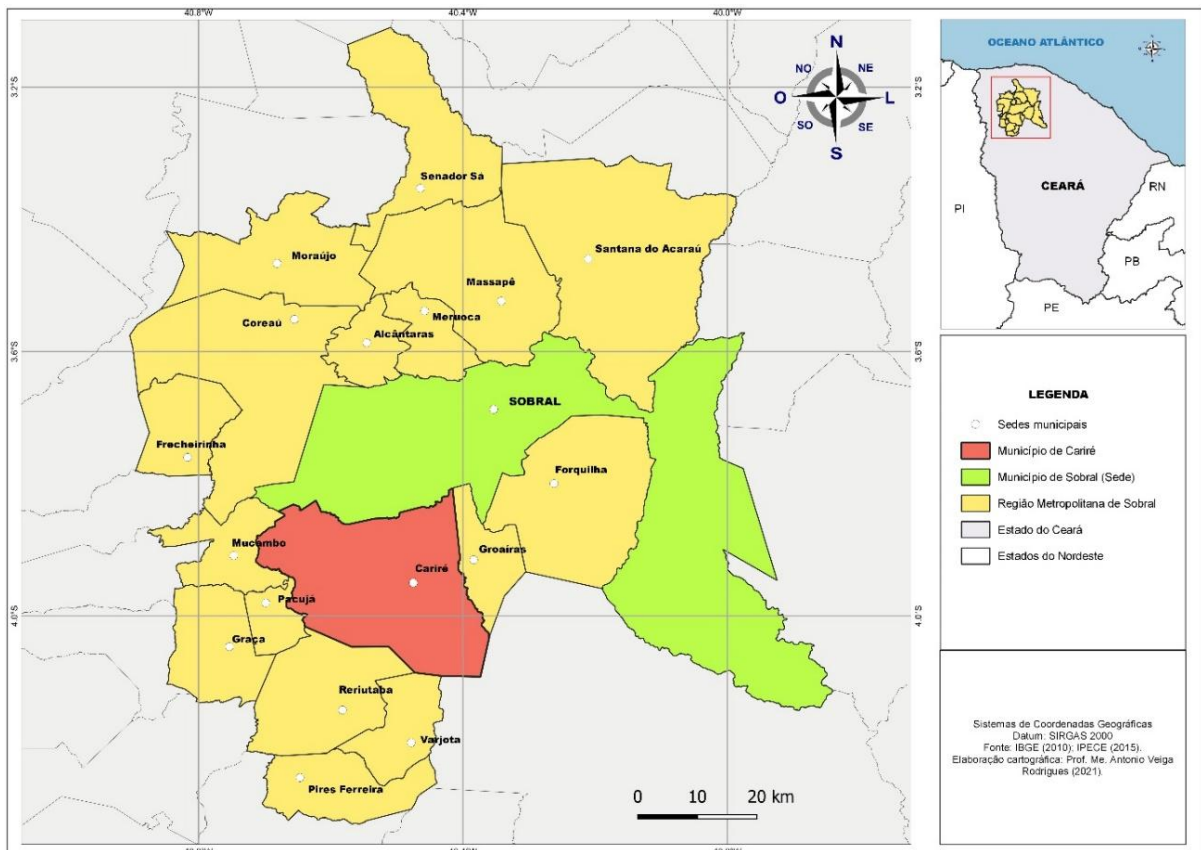
The Sobral Metropolitan Region is inside such a context, with a medium-sized city as its metropolitan headquarters, presenting an Integrated Urban Development Plan (IUDP) with a proposal to elaborate socio-territorial changes that aim at integrated development of the component municipalities.

The Metropolitan Region of Sobral and the proposed territorial restructuring

Institutionalized on December 27, 2016, through State Complementary Law No. 168/2016, the Sobral Metropolitan Region is in the northern Sobral (Map 01), being Sobral the metropolitan headquarter, which has 18 municipalities in its immediate region. It is composed of the following municipalities: Alcântaras, Cariré, Coreaú, Forquilha, Frecheirinha, Graça, Groaíras, Massapê, Meruoca, Moraújo, Mucambo, Pacujá, Pires Ferreira, Reriutaba, Santana do Acaraú, Senador Sá, Sobral and Varjota.

³ Still in 2020, the IBGE elevated the cities of Campinas (SP), Vitória (ES) and Florianópolis (SC) to the category of metropolis. Thus, the new configuration would be as follows: fifteen metropolises, thirty-four regional capitals, eighteen sub-regional centers, ten zone centers, and five local centers.

Map 1 – Sobral Metropolitan Region (SMR) location.



Source: IBGE (2010); IPECE (2015). Designed by Rodrigues (2021).

The Sobral MR has a level C regional capital as metropolitan headquarters, which means that despite the formal existence of a metro region, it does not yet have dynamics nor integration relations. According to Rodrigues (2020), what exists is a situation of dependence among the other municipalities on Sobral.

Out of the 18 cities that make up the SMR, 17 can be considered small cities, all of which have populations of less than 20,000 inhabitants, according to the population estimate for 2018 (IBGE, 2018). It means that they have urban dynamics with little complexity, presenting themselves as local centers, exerting influence only to the municipal territory and rural areas of neighboring municipalities.

Such a characteristic is relevant for the Integrated Urban Development Plan (IUDP) of the Sobral MR concerning the territorial restructuring, envisioning changes for the construction of a metropolitan region and the integrated regional development. According to the Metropolis Statute, the IUDP is

An instrument that establishes, based on a process of planning, economic-financial feasibility, and management, guidelines for strategic territorial development and structuring projects of the metropolitan region and urban agglomeration (LAW No. 13.683/2018).

The IUDP of the Sobral MR was one of the first to put into practice the orientations from the Metropolis Statute⁴ in Ceará, being the documents of the other metropolitan regions of Ceará are under construction.

Concerning territorial planning and development, the municipalities were sub-regionalized based on common characteristics for better management and organization. In 2018, the consortium responsible for preparing the IUDP proposed the creation of five sub-regions, namely Northwest, North, Central, Southwest, and South.

The Northwest sub-region is composed by the municipalities of Frecheirinha, Coreaú and Moraújo; the North by the municipalities of Senador Sá, Massapê and Santana do Acaraú; the Central by Sobral and Forquilha; the Southwest by Graça, Mucambo and Pacujá; and the South by Cariré, Groaíras, Reriutaba, Varjota and Pires Ferreira. Given the complexity of situations regarding the territorial restructuring, the municipalities were grouped according to economic potential, considering activities that already have some development and structure in place.

Thus, the cities and municipalities of the Sobral Metropolitan Region were presented based on their centrality capacity and by the main economic activity to be developed, namely centralities of industry, trade, and services, tourism, logistics, and local centralities⁵.

Sobral, the only metropolitan regional centrality and headquarters of the unit, presents a relevant economy, strong industry, commercial activities, and educational and health services, and whose classification is of management, industry, commerce

⁴ For more information about the IUDP/SMR construction process, see Rodrigues (2020); or access the documents at: <http://www.pduisobral.com.br/>

⁵ The secondary potentialities, which are those linked to activities such as agribusiness, tourism, among others, which are located in non-urbanized areas, are taken into consideration.

and services, and tourism centrality. In the regional scenario, Massapê – the second most important SMR urban center – has subregional centrality capacity too.

Regarding the sub-regional centralities of industry, besides Sobral, Forquilha, Frecheirinha, and Massapê are classified as such. Out of them, Frecheirinha stands out because of the network of small and medium-sized industries, constituting a Local Productive Arrangement (LPA) of undergarment manufacturing. The other cities have some industries but without great expression in the composition of their municipal economies.

Subregional centralities of commerce and services have a great potentiality in the sector and can exert their centrality beyond the municipal territories: Massapê, Forquilha, Frecheirinha, and Cariré. These cities have commercial activities in full development and other services such as professional education and banking.

Sub-regional centralities of tourism are municipalities that have natural and cultural characteristics that are worth highlighting. For instance, Alcântaras and Meruoca in the mountains, Mucambo, Graça, Reriutaba in the Ibiapaba foothill, Pacujá with historical/cultural tourism, Santana do Acaraú and Varjota with the Acaraú River, and Massapê with parts in the Meruoca Mountain. Besides Sobral, which counts with protected architectural sites, Meruoca also has a structure for tourism.

The only subregional centrality of logistics is Cariré. It is, in this paper, the object of analysis for presenting a sub-network of highways and roads that connect it with several cities of the SMR and northern Ceará. The two State highways and one federal highway serve as alternative ways to Sobral from the road interconnections.

Some municipalities have no activities standing out enough to receive classification as above, so-called local centralities, which are cities that have restricted centrality, often losing basic activities to surrounding municipalities. There are four municipalities in such a classification, namely Moraújo, Senador Sá, Groaíras and Pires Ferreira.

According to Rodrigues (2020), although the IUDP/SMR (2018) presents a restructuring proposal, what is necessary, in some cases, is to have a structuring of economic activities and the very physical structure of cities and municipalities to perform functions in a regional context. He discusses the minimization of issues such as the Varjota commerce centrality, the development possibilities for tourism in Pires Ferreira, the industry beyond the operative municipalities, and the natural and economic fragilities of the tourism centralities.

Among the 18 municipalities that make up the Sobral Metropolitan Region, Cariré deserves distinction as the only sub-regional centrality of logistics, being a potential feature for development, not only of the municipality but also in the issue of regional integration.

Cariré territorial characteristics

In northwestern Ceará, Cariré is located in the so-called Ceará hinterland plain and has a predominantly semi-arid climate with temperatures ranging between 25 °C and 28 °C (IPECE, 2017). With a land area of 756.9 km², it is significant in the regional context because of rivers that integrate the watersheds of the Acaraú and Jaibaras Rivers and the Taquara Dam, relevant water resources in the northwestern portion.

Cariré, which has around 18.4 thousand inhabitants (IBGE, 2021), orbits Sobral in intermediate and immediate zones (IBGE, 2020), causing daily displacement to services such as education, health, and commerce. Opposed to the Brazilian urbanization trend, most people in Cariré live in the countryside, which is particular to the intra-regional context. According to IBGE (2010), concerning the municipal population, 45.24% is urban, living downtown and suburbs, whereas 54.76% is rural.

At first, Cariré produced cotton, which was the primary economic activity that reached its peak from 1950 to 1980, causing an increase in the population, urban development, and construction of railroads to link Sobral to Ipu (MEDEIROS, 2000).

Such factors were essential to make the municipality play a relevant role in the railroad logistics in northwestern Ceará.

Cotton production reached its climax from 1950 to 1980, when the city became a relevant urban center, having about 19 thousand inhabitants, its population until present days. Filinto (2009), in his book about the history of Cariré, reflects on the changes in the physical structure and urban equipment such as the first commercial point, the construction of the public market, the first church, and the first residences.

However, when a breakdown hit the production system in the semi-arid region, many municipalities suffered socio-economic problems and crises because they counted on cotton manufacturing. For instance, Cariré, in the following decades, saw its population decrease and the migration to large cities around the country increase (MEDEIROS, 2000).

Nowadays, the municipality performs commercial and service functions, centralizing only parts of the area of its territory. The commerce, which despite diversifying in the last decade, is still strongly influenced by Sobral, given the distance and means of transportation, impacts, directly and indirectly, the configuration of local economic sectors.

According to IPECE data (2017), the municipal gross domestic product (GDP) comes 81.85% from the service sector, 14.18% from agriculture and livestock, and only 3.97% from industry. Concerning formal employment, public administration is still the largest employer (635), followed by the service sector (157), manufacturing industry (71), and others that represent low numbers of formal employment.

According to the municipal GDP data above, industrial activity is modest, being mostly factories with few formal employees. The largest local industry is a ceramics factory that formally employs a few dozen people.

Cariré has socio-economic problems like other municipalities in Ceará and is still hostage to the jobs generated by public administration and Federal Government's social programs.

From 2016 on, Cariré became part of the Sobral Metropolitan Region, acquiring importance in the intra-metropolitan configuration. It appears as the only sub-regional centrality of logistics and is one of the cities that orbit the metropolitan headquarters with possibilities of future investments.

According to Rodrigues (2020), the municipality can form a group of locations for deconcentration and expansion of industrial activity in the metropolitan region beyond Sobral. Such a group would have Massapê, Forquilha, and Groaíras as members.

By observing the characteristics so far, Cariré received attention from the technicians in the IUDP elaboration. The geographical position and potential for economic development are strong indications of functions within the intra-regional context.

Cariré and its functions in the IUDP context of the Sobral Metropolitan Region

Logistic Function

The municipality has a significant role within the intra-regional context, being considered the only sub-regional centrality of logistics, also playing a sub-regional centrality of trade and services (IUDP/SMR, 2018). Although in some aspects, Cariré still does not perform such duties nor has the structure to take on such responsibility, it is relevant because of its urban functions, notably in services.

Cariré, historically, has a strong connection with the city of Sobral, sometimes presenting economic dependence concerning trade and more complex services, as do most of the municipalities that make up the metropolitan region.

Having around 18,000 inhabitants, being 6,000 in downtown (IBGE, 2010), Cariré is a small town with a characteristic lifestyle that mixes rural and urban practices⁶.

⁶ Rodrigues (2020) mentions cattle raising and corn plantations in peripheral peri-urban areas, for example.

The urbanization process in Cariré requalified some areas, enabling the installation of local businesses. Also, small businessmen initiatives took commercial activities beyond downtown and brought equipment such as a vocational school, state traffic department, bank, and social security services.

The development impulse culminated in the city's classification as a logistics centrality within the IUDP/SMR (2018). In an interview conducted in 2019 with the representative of the deliberative instance of the municipality in the construction of the IUDP documents, Rodrigues (2020) says it was clear that the function still generates doubts of the municipal management regarding what in fact may change this conception of a logistics centrality.

Concerning logistics, according to the IUDP, it does not explain in detail why but it is because they think that Cariré is halfway to the Ibiapaba Mountains out of the BR-222 corridor, being a second option. To the Ibiapaba Mountains, you can take the BR-222 highway going through Aprazível (Sobral), Mucambo, Graça (Lapa Hillside), in addition to Cariré, passing through Reriutaba towards Guaraciaba do Norte. Leaving Cariré and going to Sobral, it is closer through Groaíras. It means that you leave the BR-222 corridor, which has heavy traffic. From what we have seen of the IUDP work and workshops that have already taken place, they have the idea of decentralizing the BR-222 corridor. So Cariré is at a strategic point so that when you go to Forquilha, you do not have to go through Sobral. You have three more options besides the BR-222. If you want to go to Fortaleza and do not want to take the 222, you go through Varjota and take the CE-366 that goes through Canindé, take the 020 and go to Fortaleza. The logistic part, which is not clearly defined, gave a palliative of Cariré location. (VERBAL INFORMATION)⁷.

The objective of the logistic function of Cariré is in its sub-network of highways that connect it with other municipalities and states, with the possibility of a second access route that is an alternative to BR-222. As in the interview, Cariré has two state highways and one federal highway, as observed in the following table.

⁷ Interview given by Adauto Eleotério Araújo, Interview N° 1. Interview given to Antonio Veiga Rodrigues. Cariré/CE, 06/07/2019. Source: RODRIGUES, 2020.

Table 1 – Cariré's road connections to the SMR cities.

HIGHWAYS/ROADS	PATH
CE-183/BR-403	Sobral (to the North) towards the coast. Varjota and Pires Ferreira (to the South) towards Ipu and Crateús.
CE-329	Reriutaba towards Guaraciaba do Norte and other municipalities in the Ibiapaba Mountains.
CE-253	Mucambo towards Ibiapaba (to the West) and Groaíras (to the East).
CARIRÉ/TAPUIO ROAD	Tapuio District.

Source: Research.

The two State highways are relevant: the CE-329 connects Cariré and Reriutaba, as well as to the other municipalities of the Ibiapaba Mountains, and the CE-253 recently linked Cariré to Mucambo, Cacimbas District, and Rafael Arruda (Sobral), as well as to Groaíras in the West-East direction. Besides being federal, the CE 183/BR-403 connects Crateús to the Ceará Coast in Acaraú, which passes through Cariré, connecting it to Varjota and Pires Ferreira in the direction of Ipu, being the principal connection with Sobral.

There is still a paved path that connects Cariré to the Tapuio District, the second most populous of its kind. It is a great producer of fruits such as papaya and banana, with farms along the Acaraú Riverbank, a significant municipal water resource.

These are the connections of paved highways, but other alternatives are also meaningful such as the Alto dos Honório/Cariré Road that connects downtown to the homonymous locality and Pacujá and Reriutaba. The Tapuio/Anil Road connects two fruit-producing localities, Anil and Jucá, which is the connection with the most isolated district of Carireense⁸.

There are also plans related to the desires of the municipality, already thinking about regional integration, which is about the expansion of road sections that would give a greater possibility of connection to Sobral through a highway in Boa

⁸ In many cases, the more distant localities such as Anil, Jucá, Tapuio, among others, use private transportation such as cars and motorcycles, or even the "D20s" and "topiques" as alternative transportation to Cariré or to go to the municipal headquarters to get transportation to other cities. To get to Sobral, the inhabitants need to get to bus stops.

Esperança, in the northeastern Cariré, a possibility in the IUDP/SMR (2018). Other possibilities, such as a road to connect Cariré to Pacujá and Reriutaba, would also be an alternative connection among distant locations.

What stands out in the territory of Cariré is that many of the districts and localities are far from downtown, which leads not only to the loss of the urban centrality but also to socio-economic issues since the residents consume in neighboring cities. For instance, Cacimbas has more intrinsic daily relations with Mucambo than with Cariré or even the centrality of Varjota, which is in localities in the South-Southeast of the municipality.

The logistic potentiality of Cariré goes through two situations: the integration of the municipality demands rethought, planning, and articulation, and the regional integration that from the SMR plans. Both are inherent challenges for municipal management, as well as for the territorial metropolitan lidar management.

Commercial and service function

In addition to the logistical potential, Cariré also stands out for being a centrality of trade and services within the Southern SMR sub-region since it is near Sobral and the structure and urban equipment the city has.

Rodrigues (2020) says that the commercial centrality of Cariré remains in virtuality, it means that despite what is present in the proposal for territorial restructuring contained in the IUDP/SMR (2018), the city constantly loses and shares its centrality to other neighboring towns such as Varjota⁹ and Mucambo.

Even losing centrality to other cities because of distance and management, Cariré has demonstrated a growth of its commercial and service supply in the last decade¹⁰, mainly because of local investments and entrepreneurs from other municipalities.

The traditional commercial center (Figure 01) has a variety of establishments such as the municipal public market, grocery stores, bars, snack bars, bakeries,

⁹ In the case of Varjota, see Rodrigues, Sales, and Teles (2018).

¹⁰ In the case of Varjota, see Rodrigues, Sales, and Teles (2018).

clothing and shoe stores, furniture, banking services. They offer products for the local inhabitants and others from the neighboring districts and localities.

Photo1 – Partial view of the municipal public market and stores downtown.



Source: Antonio Veiga Rodrigues (2019).

Such establishments, which have small physical spaces, usually belong to local merchants and entrepreneurs and have a limited area of influence. Generally, those who consume the products and services are the civil servants of the local city hall, retirees, and beneficiaries of social programs of the Federal Government such as the Family Allowance Program, emphasizing that there is also the outflow of consumers to other cities like Sobral.

The dependence common in small Brazilian cities makes Cariré keep the traditional retail trade with products that only supply downtown and nearby locations.

According to Gomes and Assis (2008), the proximity between Cariré and Sobral, the principal urban center of Northwest Ceará, is one of the possible causes for the lack of economic development of the sector in the municipality. The authors also mention that this makes it possible to have more frequent intercity relations

through alternative transportation that operate in time intervals between twenty and thirty minutes daily.

However, other cities with smaller distances have a more accentuated commercial development, such as Massapê, Forquilha, and even Groaíras. The first hypothesis refers to the breakdown of the cotton productive system in 1970-1980, causing an exodus and suppling the establishments and factories. The second hypothesis concerns the lack of private investments, being that the commercial points and services usually belong to public employees or retired people who live in the city. However, there is a constant closing because of the lack of consumers.

Silva and Holanda (2009) mention that the local commerce has marks of traditional commercial activities such as the street market, which is still the commercial form that most attracts consumers from all parts of the municipality. It is still possible to see street vendors selling popsicles, fruit, and vegetable under the municipal public market.

Photo 2 – Municipal public market in Cariré.



Source: Antonio Veiga Rodrigues (2019).

The surroundings of the Raimundo Martins de Araújo Municipal Public Market (Figure 02), a piece of robust commercial equipment with modern architecture renovated in 2013-2014, is where the city fair happens. As Santana (2011) says, it is on the days of fairs that small towns come alive, just like in Cariré. Parents,

children, grandparents, uncles come from the countryside towards the city to buy groceries and various products such as fruits, vegetables, greens, clothing, shoes, and jewelry.

Recently, the city has been standing out concerning education and health services. In the educational area, the installation of the Guiomar Belchior Aguiar Vocational School gave new spatial dynamics. Teenagers from neighboring cities come to study, and teachers have come to live. Located on the BR-403 highway, in the Cariré Velho Neighborhood, it has become a relevant piece of urban equipment in the municipality.

Concerning health, there are medical clinics that offer services previously non-existent. Examinations such as blood, ultrasound, endoscopy, and DNA are available in the city. According to Holland (2018), diversification is the role of higher education, which sees small towns as a locus for new projects.

Therefore, small towns like Cariré become spaces of transformations that lead to the insertion of new types of commercial activities, services, and local enterprises previously found only in medium and large cities.

It is worth mentioning the industrial potential of the municipality. Cariré is one of the five municipalities that the IUDP/SMR (2018) proposes the institution of Strategic Areas of Industrial and Logistics Development (Áreas Estratégicas de Desenvolvimento Industrial e Logístico, AEDIL). According to the territorial planning, the propitious area for installation is along the BR-403 highway in the direction of Sobral.

To Rodrigues (2020), Cariré, along with other municipalities that orbit the city of Sobral, are favorable locations for a decentralization process of industrial activity from the urban center to surrounding cities.

Final considerations

Concerning territorial planning at a metropolitan level, the socio-economic potentialities and vulnerabilities of the municipality contribute to the conceptions of urban and regional development of the territorial unit.

In the case of the Sobral Metropolitan Region (SMR), more precisely of Cariré, some considerations are a must because the virtuality of some functions is evident. The logistics function is powerful in the intra-regional context, being the only centrality of this type. Regarding commercial activity and services, one can observe the commercial traditionality of the city despite some advances in recent years.

However, the municipality has a unique potential within the Sobral MR for having a vast territory near Sobral and a junction node of relevant highways that are the basis for a regional logistics centrality.

Therefore, the issues for the implementation of structuring projects to affirm such potentialities will be a real challenge for the SMR territorial management since the lack of infrastructure to meet the IUDP proposals hinders the regional development of the unit.

This paper serves local and intra-regional authorities as a subsidy to the discussions of territorial planning in the conception of a development that contemplates everyone directly and indirectly.

Referências

BRASIL. **Lei nº 13.089, 12 de jan. de 2015 - Estatuto da Metr pole**. Bras lia-DF, jan. 2015.

BRASIL LEI N  13.683, DE 19 DE JUNHO DE 2018. **Altera as Leis n   13.089, de 12 de janeiro de 2015 (Estatuto da Metr pole), e 12.587, de 3 de janeiro de 2012, que institui as diretrizes da Pol tica Nacional de Mobilidade Urbana**. Dispon vel em: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2015-2018/2018/Lei/L13683.htm Acesso: 07/2019.

CEAR . **Lei Complementar N 168, 27 de dez. de 2016. Cria o da Regi o Metropolitana de Sobral**. Fortaleza-CE, dez. 2016.

FIRKOWSKI, O. L. C. F. Metrôpoles e Regiões metropolitanas no Brasil: conciliação ou divórcio? In: FURTADO, Bernardo Alves; KRAUSE, Cleandro; FRANÇA, Karla Christina Batista de (Orgs.). **Território Metropolitano, políticas municipais: por soluções conjuntas de problemas urbanos no âmbito metropolitano**. Brasília: IPEA, 2013, p. 21-51.

HOLANDA, V. C. C. A expressão regional das universidades públicas nas cidades médias de Sobral-CE e Parnaíba-PI. **Sociedade e Território**, v. 30, p. 94-112, 2018.

IBGE – Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. **Regiões de Influência de Cidades 2007 – REGIC**. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2008.

IBGE . Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. **Regiões de Influência de Cidades 2018 – REGIC**. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2020.

IBGE. **Estimativa populacional – 2020**. Disponível em:

<<https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas/sociais/populacao/9103-estimativas-de-populacao.html?=&t=o-que-e> > Acesso em: 28/06/2021.

IPECE – Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica do Ceará. **PIB dos municípios cearenses – 2016**. Disponível em:

https://www.ipece.ce.gov.br/wpcontent/uploads/sites/45/2018/12/ipece_informe_142_17_Dez2018.pdf Acesso: 28/06/2021.

LENCIONI, S. Reconhecendo metrôpoles: sociedade e território. In: SILVA, Cátia Antonia, et. al (Orgs). **Metrôpole: governo, sociedade e território**. Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 2006.

MEDEIROS, M. A. **A quebra do sistema produtivo do semiárido: o caso de Cariré**. Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Graduação em Geografia) – Centro de Ciências Humanas, Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú. Sobral, 2000. 98p.

PDUI/RMS. Plano de Desenvolvimento Urbano Integrado da Região Metropolitana de Sobral. **Relatório final**. Fortaleza: Governo do Estado do Ceará/ Consórcio PLANMETRO. 1163p.

RODRIGUES, A. V.; SALES, T. B.; TELES, G. A. O comércio na cidade pequena: a relação entre Cariré-Varjota no Ceará. **Revista Homem, Espaço e Tempo**, v. 11, p. 57-77, 2018.

RODRIGUES, A. V.; TELES, G. A.; SALES, T. B. A institucionalização da Região Metropolitana de Sobral (CE): disparidades socioeconômicas e integração em

questão. In: **XIII Encontro Nacional da Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Geografia**, São Paulo. Anais (...) São Paulo: ANPEGE, 2019.

SANTANA, A. N. C. **Pequenas cidades do Ceará no (des)encontro do urbano e do rural: Groaíras e Meruoca em discussão**. Tese (Doutorado em Geografia) – Centro de Geociências, Universidade Federal Fluminense. Rio de Janeiro, p. 235, 2011.

SILVA, M. I. F.; HOLANDA, V. C. C. Um estudo dos circuitos da economia urbana na cidade de Cariré – CE. **Revista Homem, Espaço e Tempo**, v. 3, p. 52-71, 2009.

SOARES, P. R. R. Regiões metropolitanas ou aglomerações urbanas: contribuição para o debate no Rio Grande do Sul. **Ensaio (FEE)**, v. 36, p. 323-342, 2015.

RODRIGUES, A. V. **Cidades médias no contexto metropolitano brasileiro: institucionalização e planejamento territorial da Região Metropolitana de Sobral/CE**. Dissertação (Mestrado em Geografia) – Centro de Ciências Humanas, Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú. Sobral, 2020, 205p.

Contribution from the authors:

Author 1: Elaboration, discussion of results, literature review, fieldwork, paper review

Author 2: Monitoring, final analysis of results and paper review