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URBANO NA REGIÃO DO VALE DO PARAÍBA PAULISTA**

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Received: 09/08/2025
Accepted: 02/26/2026

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ABSTRACT

Since 1990 the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have acquired a crucial role in directing global economic policy directions. The aim of this article was to understand how IFIs act in financing urban development, with possible repercussions on regional space. As a working hypothesis it is understood that the processes of metropolization lead to the reproduction of global hegemonic orders from the modus operandi of IFIs. It is assumed that successful metropolitan experiences tend to radiate into large and medium-sized cities, reproducing conflicts and impacts of the development process on a local and regional scale. The empirical object of the research are the programs carried out in two cities of the Metropolitan Region of Vale do Paraíba and Litoral Norte (RMVPLN), São José dos Campos and Jacareí-SP. The research method is based on documentary research from primary and secondary sources. In this context, the experiences of acquisition of external credit by the municipalities of São José dos Campos and Jacareí in recent decades demonstrate the reproduction of a tendency to reorganize local and regional spaces according to the modus operandi of the IFIs for financing urban development, through infrastructure projects and the transposition of management models to the public sector. Thus, the present text can contribute to the discussion on the political-economic orientations of IFIs in integrated (regional) contexts of urban development.

Keywords: Globalization. Metropolization. International Financial Institutions. Urban development. Neoliberalism.

RESUMO

A partir de 1990, as Instituições Financeiras Internacionais (IFIs) adquiriram um papel crucial no direcionamento das orientações político-econômicas globais. O objetivo deste artigo foi compreender o modo de atuação das IFIs no financiamento do desenvolvimento urbano, com repercussões possíveis no espaço regional. Como hipótese de trabalho, entende-se que os processos de metropolização conduzem à reprodução de ordens hegemônicas globais a partir do *modus operandi* das IFIs. Parte-se da premissa de que as experiências metropolitanas bem-sucedidas tendem a se irradiar para as cidades grandes e médias, reproduzindo conflitos e impactos do processo de desenvolvimento em escala local e regional. O objeto empírico da pesquisa são os programas executados em duas cidades da Região Metropolitana do Vale do Paraíba e Litoral Norte (RMVPLN), São José dos Campos e Jacareí-SP. O método da pesquisa se baseia em pesquisa documental de fontes principais e secundárias. Nesse contexto, as experiências de aquisição de crédito externo pelos municípios de São José dos Campos e Jacareí ocorridas nos últimos decênios demonstram a reprodução de uma tendência à reorganização de espaços locais e regionais de acordo com o modus operandi das IFIs para o financiamento do desenvolvimento urbano, mediante projetos de infraestruturas e transposição de modelos de gestão ao setor público. Assim, o presente texto pode contribuir para a discussão sobre as orientações político-econômicas das IFIs em contextos integrados (regionais) do desenvolvimento urbano.

Palavras-chave: Globalização. Metropolização. Instituições Financeiras Internacionais. Desenvolvimento urbano. Neoliberalismo.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have established themselves as key players in guiding urban development policies in peripheral and semi-peripheral countries. More than mere sources of financing, institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) have come to act as vectors for the dissemination of political and economic prescriptions aligned with the precepts of the Washington Consensus, promoting market-oriented reforms, fiscal decentralization, and the adoption of business management models in the public sector.

While such interventions initially focused on large national cities, more recently there has been a selective shift in these strategies towards medium-sized or intermediate cities, especially those involved in regional metropolitan expansion dynamics. It is in this context that the Metropolitan Region of Vale do Paraíba and Litoral Norte (RMVPLN) emerges as a privileged locus for investigating the spatial, institutional, and fiscal ramifications of these new financing arrangements

This article starts from the hypothesis that contemporary processes of metropolization, understood as phenomena of macro-organization of space, subordinated to the logic of hegemonic globalization (Lencioni, 2017; Santos, 1996), find in the credit operations of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) a privileged instrument for reproducing unequal socio-spatial orders at the local and regional levels. This reproduction would occur through the spread to medium-sized cities of intervention models originally applied in large metropolitan centers, consolidating what recent literature has termed “urban adjustment” (Arantes, 2004).

Focusing on urban development programs financed by two institutions, the IDB and CAF, the starting point is the premise that successful experiences in large metropolises tend to spread to medium-sized cities, reproducing management models, impacts, and conflicts in urban development processes and on a regional scale.

The primary objective of this study is to comprehend the *modus operandi* of IFIs in financing and implementing urban development projects in two cities in the RMVPLN—São José dos Campos and Jacareí—while reflecting on the implications of these processes on municipal revenues and the risk of financial dependence; on administrative restructuring; and on the production of urban space



with possible repercussions at the regional level, generating conflicts and accentuating asymmetries in local and regional development.

The selection of these two municipalities is substantiated not only by their geographical proximity and functional integration into the regional metropolitan dynamic, but also by the temporal and institutional succession of their experiences. While São José dos Campos signed its first contracts with the IDB in the late 1990s, Jacareí turned to CAF in 2019, taking the São José dos Campos experience as a positive reference for acquiring external credit. A comparative analysis of these trajectories facilitates comprehension of the continuities and particularities of IFI actions within the context of regionally integrated urban areas, as well as the long-term implications of this financing on municipal autonomy and the quality of urban intervention and regional propagation processes. The objective of this study is to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the impact of the political-economic orientations of International Financial Institutions on urban development in regional contexts historically integrated with the logic and dynamics of the expansion of large metropolises.

The issue raised here is directly related to the debate on regional development and metropolitan planning (IPEA, 2021), insofar as IFI financing selectively chooses strategic municipalities for the application of its resources. This phenomenon engenders systemic effects, leading to the reorganization and revitalization of regional spatial structures. This is particularly salient in the context of the proliferation of development models based on regional hub cities (Brazil, 2020) and the predominance of infrastructure projects, particularly those involving the road system, which have the potential to disrupt environmental sustainability conditions.

This article is organized into four sections. It begins with a theoretical foundation on the metropolization of regions and cities in the current context of neoliberal globalization. It highlights the decisive nature of IFI financing as a variable in the study of the tendency to reproduce hegemonic orders of metropolitan expansion.

The subsequent section will provide a historical context for IFIs. The third section will analyze the documents collected on multilateral development projects and their socio-spatial impacts in the two cities, highlighting similarities and differences between their respective experiences. Finally, considerations will be made regarding the influence of IFIs on territorial and urban planning and



management. It will be hypothesized that IFIs consolidate the tendency toward hegemonic socio-spatial reproduction in regional urban contexts, to the detriment of structural demands.

METODOLOGY

The research methodology was based on documentary research of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources can be classified as reports, contracts, and municipal laws produced in the context of multilateral financing for major infrastructure projects in the two cities in the Paraíba Valley Metropolitan Region studied in this work: Jacareí and São José dos Campos. The data was collected through public research on the websites of city halls and international financial institutions: 1) Jacareí City Hall and Corporación Andina de Fomento, also known as the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF); 2) São José dos Campos City Hall and Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The loan agreements not available to the public were accessed through coordination between the researchers and the Jacareí City Hall. In addition, secondary sources included regional and/or local newspapers available in digital format.

The documents were analyzed using an intuitive method that focused on direct observation, sensory perception, and practical experience. Moreover, references from regional academic publications and Critical Geography were utilized to substantiate the findings and facilitate comparative analysis.

METROPOLITIZATION: MACRO-ORGANIZATION AND HEGEMONIC REPRODUCTION OF SPACE

The relationships established between hegemonic orders, metropolization, and the reorganization of regional or urban spaces are concomitant with contemporary acceleration and the global scope of socio-spatial complexity. In this context, science, technology, information, and communication become factors of economic-productive and socio-spatial transformation and unification everywhere, with repercussions on urbanization, which is becoming more widespread and complex. This leads to the constitution of a macro-organizing metropolitan system of the global, national, and state urban network.



Considering the prevailing circumstances at the global and national levels, the theoretical approach proposed here, centered on metropolization and the omnipresent metropolis (Santos, 1993), serves to underscore the notion that metropolization processes are heavily influenced by rationalities, actions, and actors that embody the prevailing forces of globalization in metropolises, as well as in regions and cities that have been integrated into their developmental processes.

This selective regionalization underscores the tendency toward the socio-spatial reproduction of logics of integration into the globalization of informational orders (political and economic), productive and social dynamics, and technical objects in preferred locations. Additionally, it emphasizes the strategy of institutionalizing metropolitan regions in Brazil, a process that is supported by state political projects that favor certain actors over the interests of society as a whole (Santos, 1994).

By promoting ideological irradiation (Santos, 1993), such processes of regional integration into the functioning structure of globalization, organized from commands and impulses originating in metropolitan spaces, reproduce, on different scales of the urban network and varied geographical ranges, ways of financing, producing, making policy, managing, living, and inhabiting, amplifying and intensifying social inequalities.

Therefore, the historical transformations brought about by globalization and instrumentalized by the metropolization of space can only be understood today, from the totalizing perspective of the dialectic between global and local social orders, whose integration-disintegration nexus manifests itself through diverse configurations of the metropolitized (Silva Neto, 1985) or metropolized (Lencioni, 2017) socio-spatial fabric.

Lencioni (2017) delves into the concept of metropolization, emphasizing the distinction between spaces that have undergone this transformation and those that have not. Metropolized spaces are characterized by the adoption of attributes and features reminiscent of metropolises, albeit on a reduced scale. Furthermore, these communities may exhibit a propensity to adopt patterns of consumption and living that mirror those observed in metropolitan areas. Additionally, these communities are characterized by a substantial density of immaterial networks and the presence of individuals experiencing social exclusion (Lencioni, 2017, p. 43).



In this approach, metropolization implies phenomena intrinsically linked to the productive processes of the globalized economy. Metropolized spaces can be found outside metropolises or established metropolitan regions and may be configured around metropolitan centers and in nearby regional spaces.

The values, habits, and patterns of coexistence are of particular interest in this study. The models of productive restructuring, urban development, urbanization, or urbanity spread beyond metropolitan areas are also of importance. These models may integrate into such spaces or even disrupt them.

In this sense, consideration is given to the integrative nature of transport conditions and population movements amid the overlapping flows of space. That is to say, the axes of greater road traffic remain of significant importance for observing the magnitude of metropolization in different regions and cities, as they define the scope of physical-territorial integration, direct the density of diverse flows, and also serve as shelters or are linked to the creation of new urban-metropolitan or regional centralities. Tavares (2016) attributes to these axes their organizing force in the territory and even their status as a supposed new planning paradigm, operating in neoliberal times and on multiple spatial scales (p. 686).

According to Silva Neto (1985), it is imperative to underscore the spatial dimension of metropolization, accentuating “the phenomenon as a global process of spatial restructuring,” which manifests “at the pace of the metropolis, the center of organization and control” (p. 51). This process is characterized by flows “originating from decisions made in favor of investment productivity,” resulting in a hierarchical structuring of space. For the author of this study, “this process radiates from the world’s major metropolises (...) and metropolitanizes the places it reaches, turning them into metropolitan areas, including the simplest cities and the most remote countryside” (p. 53), integrating them into a system of domination, capitalist reproduction, and total commodification of social life.

It is also worth noting the interpretative perspective of the “ultra-liberal inflection of the urban social order,” based on Ribeiro (2020), which has repercussions on the modus operandi of coalitions in the direction of pro-market urban and regional policies, linking real estate appreciation to circuits of financialization of the economy. This shift is consistent with processes of institutional dismantling and new governance arrangements guided by multilateral organizations, their financing, and credit lines. According to Lencioni (2017), metropolises are no longer included in the state’s development strategies and have become strategic locations for the survival of capitalism, that is, for the need for adjustments in the face of



a systemic capitalist crisis (Ribeiro, 2020).

Financialization has emerged as an autonomous accumulation circuit, exerting its influence on various domains of economic and social life. Classic spatial selectivity is associated with the processes of production and appreciation of urban land. This selectivity generates “planning models, financing and provision standards for housing and corporate real estate production, privatization of services and urban infrastructure” (Ribeiro, 2020, p. 22).

In the context of globalized dynamics, various regions and cities have become increasingly interconnected, thereby establishing “new fronts for the accumulation of real estate capital and the expansion of emerging sectors linked to the advanced tertiary sector” (Ribeiro, 2020, p. 30). This phenomenon has given rise to the implementation of large-scale urban renewal and redevelopment programs and projects. In response to these developments, new actors and coalitions of interests have emerged, leading to the establishment of novel “local institutional, political, and cultural conditions” (Ribeiro, 2020, p. 35).

Consequently, the process of metropolitan macro-organization of space is reaffirmed, with the power of command and regulation emanating from global actors assuming a dominant role. This macro-organizational process combines movements of intense concentration and deconcentration, constituting an “archipelago of ultra-connected poles,” a hyperpolarization, but a network-type polarization (no longer zone-type) and, by extension, a network metropolis (Santos, 1996, p. 216; Veltz, 2017). This fragmented corporate metropolis expands through centrifugal forces that often become factors in the disintegration of regional and local realities on which they focus.

In this conceptualization of metropolization, the actions of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) emerge as a pivotal variable in elucidating the modus operandi underlying the hegemonic reproduction of metropolitan space. This reproduction is achieved through contractual agreements and urban development projects targeting intermediate or medium-sized cities, emulating the original experiences of this action in metropolises or large cities. This prompts a reflection on the necessary implications at the regional development level.

Indeed, it is impossible to intervene in cities without impacting the socioeconomic interdependencies that define the regional urban network, as well as the various urban centers that drive this network, which



are articulated by territorial integration systems. Consequently, the financial support allocated to the urban development of regional hub cities, which function as intermediary cities, has the potential to influence not only agglomeration economies and conditions of physical accessibility to goods and services, but also the infrastructure system that supports regional productive vectors (Tavares, 2018).

Moreover, in the context of metropolitan regions established by states, the issue of access to international credit will likely extend to the necessary mobilization of funds for integrated urban development funds within the region and for intermunicipal cooperation actions aimed at the organization, planning, and execution of public functions of common interest, such as economic development, land use and occupation, the environment, the road and mobility system, and planning itself. As elucidated in IPEA studies (2021) concerning the financing of metropolitan region development, despite the National Metropolitan Development Fund's rejection, metropolitan agencies possess administrative and financial autonomy, which renders it rational for them to seek not only loans to finance local urban development but also contributions for regional development.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR HISTORY IN BRAZIL AND IN THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO

International financial institutions (IFIs) can be classified as financial intermediaries for countries in the Northern Hemisphere. The World Bank Group (WBG) comprises a consortium of seven organizations, each with its own distinct mandate, structure, and decision-making processes. Subsequent to the establishment of the World Bank, a number of regional development banks were founded, including the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), which functions as the World Bank's regional arm for Latin America since its inception in 1959 (Makino, 2015). The Andean Development Corporation (CAF), otherwise referred to as the Development Bank of Latin America, is a subregional financial institution that was founded in 1970 and is headquartered in Caracas, Venezuela.

The IFIs began operating in the context of the Cold War, led by the World Bank with its strategy of attacking poverty, based on a set of palliative measures structured around a warmongering logic, whose real interest was to combat political instability in the Third World, which could bring these countries closer to the Soviet Union (Arantes, 2006).



While European cities underwent substantial reconstruction with considerable financial assistance from the United States, in the developing world, particularly in Latin America, the efforts to combat poverty gave rise to divergent patterns of urbanization, falling short of contemporary urban design principles. In the 1980s, with the advent of neoliberalism, IFIs adopted the doctrine of structural adjustment, which in practice required creditors to adopt neoliberal measures, such as municipal strengthening and competitive federalism (Arantes, 2004).

According to Arantes (2004), the implementation of neoliberal policies became more pronounced in 1990, marked by the intensification of IFIs' involvement in the political sphere and corporate interventions in urban areas, leading to a redefinition of adjustment to an urban dimension.

Arantes (2004) considers that multilateral organizations aim to intervene in developing countries with the goal of creating a favorable environment for the global realization of value. Social tensions and poverty are understood as synonymous issues that must be controlled, so that in 1990, according to Maranhão (2018), the World Bank and the United Nations developed a new development strategy based on the Washington Consensus and grounded in Indian economist Amartya Sen's theory of development as freedom (Maranhão, 2018).

In Brazil, following the advent of monetary stabilization in the 1990s, there was a marked increase in the approval of loans and disbursements. Nevertheless, the Lula administration (2003-2012) introduced a shift in the underlying logic of housing financing through public funds, which financed the Minha Casa Minha Vida (My House My Life) Program. The inflow of financial capital was boosted by housing credit, which was captured by large construction companies for the construction of housing in band 1(one). Meanwhile, multilateral financing was redirected to the urban regeneration of central areas (Shimbo, 2013).

In this context, the city of São Paulo was a pioneer, requesting external credit from the IDB in the 1990s with the aim of securing funds for the implementation of the Urban and Functional Redevelopment Program for Downtown São Paulo, known as Procentro. Originally, the project was developed with the participation of the NGO Associação Viva o Centro (AVC) between 1993 and 2000, and aimed to popularize the region through social housing. Throughout the process, the project underwent a series of changes due to the discourse surrounding the degradation of the city center. Consequently, in 2003, the



project was renamed the Downtown Action Program, a decision that was influenced by the IDB. Consequently, the demands of social movements for social housing in the central region were effectively disregarded in the face of the monopolization of the real estate sector (Shimbo, 2013).

At the regional level, the experience of the IDB-funded Regional Hubs Urban Development Program in Ceará in 2020 offers additional insights into the relationship between multilateral financing and regional development. The program is structured around three components: I) improvement of urban infrastructure; II) support for regional development; III) modernization of municipal management. This structure elucidates the *modus operandi* characteristic of IFIs: a combination of selective investments in heavy infrastructure (which concentrate the largest share of resources), socio-environmental conditionalities imposed on municipalities, and the institutional restructuring of subnational entities (Brazil, 2020). In the case of Ceará, the establishment of the Program Management Unit (UGP) in direct conjunction with the Secretariat of Cities, aligning with the model observed in São José dos Campos and Jacareí, underscores the pervasive influence of a business management paradigm. This initiative not only redefines the relationships between the state and municipalities, but also reorients the dynamics of “hub cities” within the broader context of the state’s regional urban networks.

The program’s role extends beyond the mere provision of infrastructure; it functions as a catalyst for the competitive integration of territories into the dynamics of the globalized economy, thereby reinforcing spatial selectivity and polarization around medium-sized urban centers. The necessity for regional development plans and the stratification of municipalities into “hub cities” (p. 14), “cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants” (p. 15), and “other cities” (p. 14) illustrate the operation of multilateral financing in the production of new functional regionalizations to the imperatives of financial and real estate capital.

The cases of the urban redevelopment process in São Paulo and the urban development program in Ceará, viewed from the perspective of gentrification, point to the consolidation of a pattern of regional development subordinated to the logic of supra-local economic valorization, to the detriment of endogenous strategies for territorial cohesion and the reduction of intraregional inequalities.



FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF METROPOLITAN PROCESSES IN REGIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The use of international financing by Latin American countries for development plans and projects is not new (as already mentioned); this was demonstrated by IPEA (2023) in studies prepared to support the new National Urban Development Policy.

Although autonomy in raising external funds has become common practice among subnational entities, in Brazil the federal government plays a decisive regulatory role in negotiations with International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Subsequent to the submission of the project to the Foreign Financing Committee (COFLEX), the authorization and guarantee of the parties in question are requisite. Subsequent to this, negotiations are conducted between the financing agency and the subnational entity, documentation is forwarded to the responsible agencies of the Ministry of Economy and the National Treasury Secretariat, authorization is obtained from the Federal Senate, and approval is granted by the Federal Government (IPEA, 2023, p. 85).

Among the credit institutions operating in Brazil from 1980 to 2009, according to the study, the World Bank (WB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) stand out. From 2010 to 2020, 74% of the cooperation agreements signed were with the IDB (41%), operating in São José dos Campos, and CAF - Andean Development Corporation (33.7%), a financing institution for urban development in the municipality of Jacareí, São Paulo.

While international loan agreements have been documented since the late 1940s, a significant escalation has been observed since the mid-1990s and, more notably, since 2008, coinciding with the rise and crisis of neoliberalism. From 2010 to 2020, a total of 92 contracts were signed, constituting 66% of the aggregate agreements since 1982. In that same decade, according to the same study, 34% of the resources allocated to Brazilian municipalities were concentrated in the Southeast region, 29.3% in the Northeast, and 22.8% in the South. The remaining 12.9% of municipalities were located in the North (7.5%) and Central-West (3.4%) regions.

The primacy of these municipalities helps to explain why urban development is the main focus of 74% of agreements between Brazilian municipalities and international organizations, in addition to agreements aimed at basic sanitation (7%) and social development (10%), representing a further 17% of the total (IPEA, 2023).



It is considered that the new COFLEX rules (Resolution No. 2, dated September 5, 2017), which establish a municipal contribution of approximately 20% of the total project cost, rather than 50%, will give a greater number of cities, especially medium-sized ones, access to multilateral financing. Conversely, the technical, administrative, and financial fragility of municipal management in most municipalities necessitates a consideration of the supposed institutional lessons learned from this financing, which reproduces patterns of urbanization and metropolization derived from macroeconomic guidelines on a regional development scale.

It is difficult not to be concerned about the risk of further compromising the financial sustainability and institutional dependence of municipalities. Supported by the understanding of financial violence and information violence (Santos, 2000), international financing functions as an instrument of current globalization, selecting locations within the dominant rationality, which, for the effectiveness of its actions, seeks to conform to its command the destination of places that are preferred, where differentiated and unequal relationships are created.

METROPOLIZATION AND REPRODUCTION OF GLOBAL HEGEMONIC ORDERS IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT THE EXPERIENCE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SÃO JOSÉ DOS CAMPOS WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (SP, BRAZIL)

In consideration of the initial hypothesis and preliminary evidence, it is acknowledged that successful experiences (with IFIs) in metropolises and large cities are often replicated in other cities of intermediate or medium size. These replicated models serve as a foundation for municipal policy and management, influencing social and urban development. This phenomenon is exemplified by the municipalities of São José dos Campos and Jacareí, which are discussed in the following sections.

In the late 1990s, the Paraíba Valley region began to receive political and economic influence from International Financial Institutions (IFIs) through projects initially implemented in the city of São José dos Campos, in the state of São Paulo. The hypothesis is that the IDB selected the city due to its status as a technology hub, its development model, and its spatial organization, which has historically been driven by industrialization and, since the 1970s, by scientific and technological development in the aerospace sector and an economy strongly based on services and knowledge.



The model for local development was characterized by sprawling urbanization, in which the concentration of income and land driven by industrialization shaped areas of social inclusion and exclusion. The south and east regions were characterized as veritable pockets of precarious settlements resulting from slum removal processes. In contrast, the western region was occupied by high-end horizontal condominiums and large residential and commercial buildings.

Since the 1970s, municipal policy had entailed the physical removal of slums. However, at the close of the 20th century, a new form of this policy emerged through a partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The official implementation of the slum clearance plan occurred in 1999 with the Casa da Gente (Our Home) project in São José dos Campos (1999), and it was associated with a government program known as the Habitar Brasil-IDB (HBB) Program (Souza, 2015).

The program financed by the IDB was implemented by Caixa Econômica Federal with the objective of urbanizing slums. However, its implementation in the municipality of São José dos Campos was marred by local interests, which predominantly prioritized the physical eradication of slums to promote the construction of peripheral housing units on the outskirts of the municipality (Rosa Filho, 2002). This phenomenon was exemplified by the relocation of informal settlements in the eastern part of the city. A total of 453 families from Vila Nova Tatetuba, Vila Nova Detroit, and Caparaó were displaced and subsequently resettled in a housing complex located in the far east, at a distance of 16 km from their original settlements (Reschilian; Santos, 2014).

The Casa da Gente Project achieved a successful resettlement outcome for the majority of the families from the three communities, with a small remaining population from Morro do Regaço. From December 2003 to January 2004, the municipal government proceeded with the removal of the remaining residents, operating under the authority of court orders and with the assistance of a robust police presence.

The resistance of the residents of Morro do Regaço was supported by the Central de Movimentos Populares (CMP), which criticized the way the resettlement was being conducted. A total of 45 families were provided with shelter by an NGO in São José dos Campos, which received support from the Workers' Party (PT). A segment of the resistance group relocated to housing on the eastern periphery of the city, while a group of 28 families took up residence in a federal government-owned area in



the central region that had been ceded to the Southeast Railway Network (Reschilian; Santos, 2014; Souza, 2015).

The municipality of São José dos Campos' experience with the IDB, albeit facilitated by the federal government, has enabled the municipality to establish a line of credit without intermediation. In 2006, the municipality submitted a request to the National Treasury Secretariat (STN) of the Ministry of Planning for authorization to contract an external credit operation through the IDB. This operation was to be guaranteed by the federal government and was intended to partially finance the Urban Structuring Program (PEUSJC) (Silva et al., 2021).

The PEUSJC was formally endorsed by Complementary Law No. 306/06, enacted on November 17, 2006, which instituted the Integrated Development Master Plan (PDDI). The objective was to regulate the physical and territorial development of the city, encompassing a series of initiatives concerning road infrastructure, transportation, macro-drainage, land regularization, green spaces, and the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) (São José dos Campos, 2006).

In practice, PEUSJC would execute the master plan, concentrating heavy infrastructure subprograms that required high investments. These investments would be passed on by three entities: the state government, the municipal government, and the IDB. However, the IDB raised concerns about the dominance of a highway-focused vision, which compelled the municipality to adhere to a series of environmental and social conditions. Thus, the Program was divided into three components: 1) Urban-Environmental Improvements; 2) Urban Mobility; 3) Institutional Strengthening (Silva et al 2021). According to Santana (2012), the conditionalities act as a kind of compensatory cushion for the imposition of fiscal adjustment measures linked to projects financed by World Bank and IDB loans.

Component 1 — Urban-Environmental Improvements — grouped together subprograms for linear parks, voluntary collection points (PEVs), and regularization of irregular land subdivisions, including the removal of the Banhado Community, which inhabits a protected area embedded in the central region, the subject of dispute with the real estate sector due to its landscape potential (Silva et al 2021).



Component 1 brought together most of the conditions required by the IDB, considering the new policies to combat poverty. Arantes (2004) and Maranhão (2018) agree with the palliative profile of these policies, functioning more as a way of managing social problems to minimize risks to international financing. In turn, Component 2—Urban Mobility—in the PEUSJC brought together the originally planned road plans, based on expressways designed in urban voids with potential for horizontal urbanization, or designed in areas inhabited by slum populations (Silva et al., 2021).

Indeed, Component 2—Urban Mobility—accounted for 64% of the program’s resources, thus reinforcing the IDB’s history of focusing on large infrastructure projects. Despite the IDB’s central focus on poverty alleviation in its discourse and mission, the outcomes indicate that social policies do not constitute a priority. As Santana (2012) contends, International Development Bank (IDB) projects appear to promote environmental and social improvements in borrowing countries; however, in reality, they mask the intention to make substantial investments in urban infrastructure.

Finally, Component 3—Institutional Strengthening—established the creation of the Program Management Unit (PMU), linked to the Mayor’s Office, with the responsibility of operationalizing the program through administrative decentralization and multidisciplinary of the team (Silva et al., 2021).

Component 3—Institutional Strengthening—was based on the ideology of good governance, which in practice represented the instrument by which adjustment policies were to be imposed on municipal governments (Maranhão, 2018). The restructuring of the public sector occurred in accordance with business logic, thereby providing the administration with an institutional framework conducive to the smooth functioning of the market. The role of public authorities was reformulated, civil servants were incorporated into the business management model, politics was depoliticized, and the government underwent a transformation into a management-oriented entity. In the context of business management, it is imperative to address poverty in a manner that ensures its impact on the implementation of liberalization policies is minimized. In essence, the city is regarded as a facilitator for the reproduction of capital and labor, thereby diminishing the political and public dimensions of the polis.

Consequently, the successful experiences of São José dos Campos with the IDB were adopted by other cities in the metropolitan area, including Jacareí, thereby contributing to the replication of models necessary for the proper functioning of the global economic order.



THE VIOLENCE OF MONEY: PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE MUNICIPALITY OF JACAREÍ AND THE ANDEAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The violence of finance and the violence of information are constituent factors of globalization and drivers of economic and social life. Santos (2000) asserts that these are two central forms of violence, the foundations of the ideological system that justifies hegemonic actions and leads to the single discourse of the world, the basis of the new totalitarianisms—that is, globalitarianisms—that we are witnessing.

The contracting of external credit operations by governments and companies for a variety of projects is possible through international financial institutions. The projects for which credit is contracted can be divided into several categories, including but not limited to education, sanitation, energy, agriculture, and urbanization. Nevertheless, the violence of international financing is contained in two ways. First, the dollar is imposed as the sole currency. Second, governments adopt structural adjustment measures in a way that financed project becomes an instrument.

In November 2019, the municipality of Jacareí entered into a loan agreement with Corporación Andina de Fomento (CAF) for a sum of US\$ 60 million, with the objective of financing the Urban and Social Development Program (PRODUS) with a term of the agreement of 16 years (Russell Bedford Auditores Independentes, 2021; CAF, 2019).

Jacareí's PRODUS received approval from the STN and the Senate in November, similar to the approval received by São José dos Campos (CAF, 2019). As indicated in the PRODUS presentation document, the experience of São José dos Campos is recognized as a factor that guarantees an advantage for Jacareí in its efforts to obtain international financing from CAF. This observation lends further credence to the phenomenon of the spread of metropolization processes (Jacareí, 2017).

Another advantage described in PRODUS is the argument of low interest rates, considered the best in the international financial market (Jacareí, 2017). Arantes (2006) had demonstrated the preference of Brazilian managers for international financing precisely because interest rates would be lower than those of Brazilian banks. The interest rate used by CAF is the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR), a rate that is frequently utilized by International Financial Institutions (IFIs). The LIBOR rate is derived from loans made in the London financial market. According to the loan agreement



between CAF and the Municipality of Jacareí, the annual interest rate is variable and results from the sum of LIBOR plus 5.01% plus a margin of 1.80%, which is to be paid every six months (CAF, 2019).

The variability of exchange rate fluctuations constitutes the primary source of risk in international financing (Arantes, 2006). However, the potential risks were thoroughly assessed and delineated in the loan agreements. For instance, in the case of PEUSJC, it was acknowledged that “interest rates may be subject to considerable fluctuations during the term of the Loan Agreement, which is why the Interest Rate alternative may entail significant financial risks for the Borrower and the Guarantor” (IDB, 2011, p. 10). Similarly, in the PRODUS agreement, it was stipulated that “The Borrower undertakes to pay CAF interest on the outstanding principal balance of the loan every six months at a variable rate resulting from the sum of LIBOR for six-month loans, applicable to the interest period, plus a margin of 1.80%” (CAF, 2019, pp. 5, 6).

The discourse of Brazilian managers disregards the temporary and highly variable nature of the LIBOR interest rate, since it does not follow internal price variations and can serve as an instrument of indebtedness.

It is worth noting that the contract stipulates payment in dollars for all disbursements (CAF, 2019). The imposition of the dollar as the sole currency affects all of the borrower’s costs, including interest, charges, and commissions, which are entirely subject to the variability of the financial market. As if such violence were not enough, CAF decided at its discretion to replace the LIBOR rate with the Term SOFR rate, quoted at 5.32%, so that borrowers who took out loans until December 31, 2021, would be allowed to use the old LIBOR rate only during a transition period, which ended on June 30, 2023 (CAF, 2024; Global-Rates, 2024).

The obligation to repay the debt is a consequence of the internationalization of financial capital, which necessitates the utilization of financial groups affiliated with multinational corporations as instruments for the extraction of savings from peripheral nations, thereby facilitating the expatriation of domestic currencies. This expatriation is carried out through royalties, service payments, profit remittances, and other strategies, whereby the amount, upon returning to the country of origin, takes the form of credit or debt (Santos, 2000).



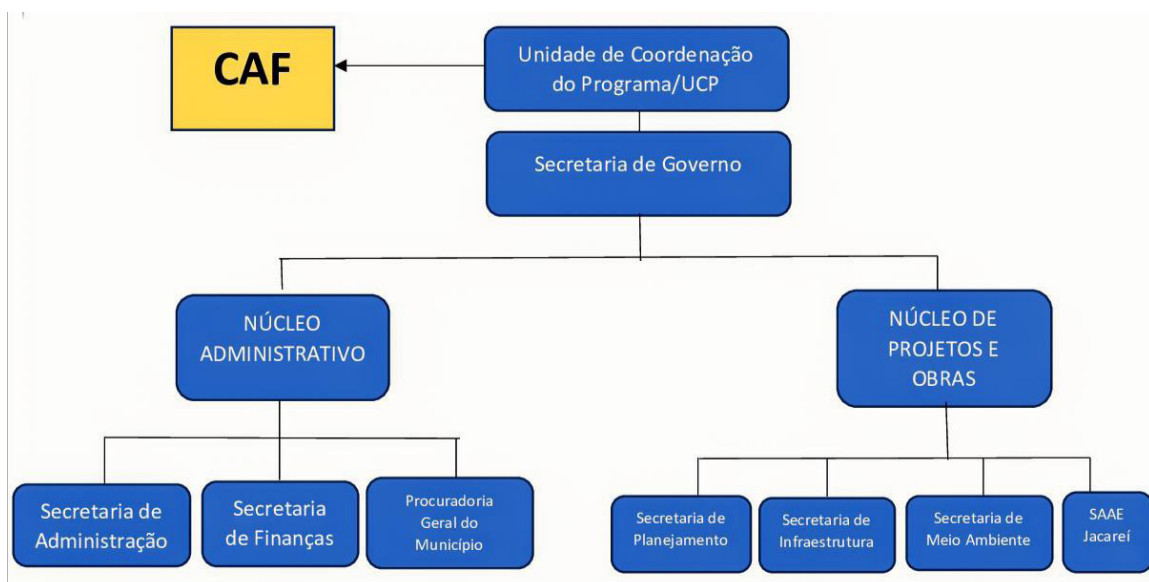
Moreover, the obligation to settle outstanding debts necessitates the acceptance of a unified mindset as a universal norm, resulting in the subjugation of peripheral countries through budgetary constraints (Santos, 2000). This process enables the increased implementation of economic doctrines promulgated by IFIs, such as administrative modernization.

THE VIOLENCE OF IDEOLOGY: REORGANIZATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY INTO BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Administrative modernization is a condition imposed on debtors, introducing neoliberal reforms into public administration and serving as a tool for transferring knowledge and training to the governments of peripheral countries in good financial market practices.

The preferred instrument used in international credit operations with municipalities has been the creation of program management units. Like PEUSJC, PRODUS in Jacareí was operated by the Program Coordination Unit (UCP), whose responsibilities followed the same model as the UGP in São José dos Campos: reporting directly to the Government Secretariat and CAF; preparing a decentralized multidisciplinary team; and monitoring the program’s external audit. This model can be seen in the flowchart below, which describes the structure of the UCP in the municipality of Jacareí:

Table 1 | Program Coordination Unit – UCP/PRODUS



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the PRODUS external audit report (Russell Bedford, 2021).

The flowchart above clearly shows that the UCP was not simply a department unrelated to the day-to-day political and bureaucratic affairs of the municipality. In fact, the existence of the UCP can only be understood as part of the neoliberal political and economic guidelines for state reform. However, Santana (2012) had considered that the World Bank and the IDB act as a kind of auxiliary intelligence for peripheral countries, promoting the transfer of technical knowledge to borrowing countries (Santana, 2012). The UCP functions as the institutional arm of CAF within the municipal government of Jacareí, as an offshoot of the financial institution embedded in public administration. For Santana (2012), the influence of these financial institutions on governments indicates a strong interest on the part of IFIs in pointing out the economic, political, and social direction to be followed by peripheral states.

The following section will conclude the analysis of the results, looking in detail at the funded project.

THE JACAREÍ URBAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - PRODUS

According to official documents, PRODUS's main objective is the road system and urban drainage of flood-prone areas. The funds are distributed among three components: 1) infrastructure; 2) program management; and 3) other expenses (CAF, 2019).

Explicitly, the difference in amounts allocated to infrastructure compared to other components is alarming, as it reveals the discourse of combating poverty as the main objective of financing:

The distribution of resources can be seen in Table 1.



Table 1 | Distribution of PRODUS Resources

Components	Subprograms	CAF	Counterpart	Total
1. Infrastructure	Road system	US\$ 37,515,891	US\$ 5,115,803	US\$ 42,631,711
	Expropriations	-	US\$ 6,477,882	US\$ 6,477,882
	Macro-drainage of the Tanquinho Stream	US\$ 10,125,965	US\$ 1,786,935	US\$ 11,912,900
	Linear parks	US\$ 7,518,144	US\$ 1,056,091	US\$ 8,574,235
	Total	US\$ 55,160,000	US\$ 14,436,711	US\$ 69,596,711
2. Program management	Construction supervision and management support	US\$ 2,700,000	US\$ 300,000	US\$ 3,000,000
	External audit	US\$ 180,000	US\$ 20,000	US\$ 200,000
	Studies and projects	US\$ 1,400,000	US\$ 243,289	US\$ 1,643,289
	Total	US\$ 4,280,000	US\$ 563,289	US\$ 4,843,289
3. Other expenses	Evaluation expenses	US\$ 50,000	-	US\$ 50,000
	Financing Commission	US\$ 510,000	-	US\$ 510,000
	Total	US\$ 560,000	-	US\$ 560,000
TOTAL		US\$ 60,000,000	US\$ 15,000,000	US\$ 75,000,000

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Annex B of the loan agreement.

The data in the table corroborate Santana's (2012) thesis, demonstrating the discrepancy between the figures for social and environmental policies and urban infrastructure works. In PRODUS, Component 1 accounts for 95% of the Program's resources, with the road system receiving almost half of the resources (US\$ 42,631,711). The remaining amounts are allocated to linear parks and macro-drainage, which embody CAF's socio-environmental conditions, akin to the allocation in PEUSJC with linear parks. (CAF, 2019).

Originally, 14 km of urban interventions were planned for the Road System subprogram, including new connections between existing roads and the adaptation of 22 km of bicycle lanes. The Tanquinho Stream Macro-Drainage subprogram is based on channeling and adaptation works on a section of the Tanquinho Stream, in addition to complementary micro-drainage works; recovery

of urban public spaces; implementation of linear parks; creation of a photovoltaic power plant; requalification of public spaces; and tree planting in parks.

At present, PRODUS has undergone a substantial reduction, and there is no mention on the Jacareí city hall website of the reasons for the suspension of most of the PRODUS subprograms, nor on the CAF website. Both entities demonstrate a deficiency in transparency and offer limited documentation accessible to the public. Of the fourteen PRODUS subprograms, only six remain in operation. Due to an absence of documentary sources, it is not possible to speculate on the causes of the subprogram suspensions. However, this absence of sources creates the opportunity for the formulation of new questions for future research.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this article, the authors sought to portray the actions of international financial institutions in relation to the municipal authorities of the cities of São José dos Campos and Jacareí, in the state of São Paulo.

The analysis of these experiences supports the hypothesis of the metropolization of regional space. This hypothesis is based on the theoretical concept that metropolization is a phenomenon of spatialization instrumental to the process of globalization and a macro-organizing force of urban networks—from the national network to the urban-regional networks of a federal state. This involves widespread replication of municipal and financial management and urban development models, with local and regional impacts, which ensure the possibility of improving the hegemonic forms of control of global processes anchored in preferred locations.

The objective of this study was to raise questions concerning the potential risks that international financing may pose to municipal and national finances, which are inherently unstable. Additionally, it examined the purported technical and managerial qualifications that are purportedly transferred from hegemonic organizational contexts, often without consideration for the challenges imposed on municipalities.

While International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have been active primarily since the post-World War II period in countries such as Brazil, in metropolitan or large cities, more recently, they



have selectively focused on intermediate or medium-sized cities, especially those that, due to their location, increase the profitability of financial and real estate capital. These cities reproduce models of urban-regional development through processes of urbanization and urbanity that are not always conducive to overcoming structural inequalities.

In the Paraíba Paulista Valley region, IDB financing functioned as a catalyst for the process of regional metropolization. A portion of municipal revenues was allocated to the repayment of foreign debt, and concurrently, public administration was reorganized in accordance with structural adjustment guidelines. These guidelines resulted in a shift in the dynamics of public service, leading to its transformation into a business management model. This process of “colonization” of the public sector occurred asymmetrically, adhering to the principles of the Washington Consensus.

This convergence between local and global interests has shaped the municipal territory through IDB transfers for urban infrastructure, which are absurdly unequal in comparison to the minimal resources allocated to environmental and social policies.

Evidently, the successful experience of São José dos Campos became a positive indicator for Jacareí in its acquisition of external credit from CAF. Although they are different institutions, the fact is that the experience of São José dos Campos spread to the neighboring municipality, with the same *modus operandi* based on three axes: a) administrative modernization; b) environmental and social conditionalities; and c) major investments in urban infrastructure, which confirms the hypothesis of this study.

In this sense, urban development financing enhances the reproduction of space management and production models within the region where the municipalities or cities initially covered are located, thus influencing the redefinition of hierarchies and functional roles within the regional urban network. In the Paraíba Valley region, it is known that the same process also occurs in the municipality of Taubaté, a relevant case study to confirm the hypothesis of the metropolization of the regional space and the strategic interest of financial institutions operating from regional hub cities (Brazil, 2020).

Furthermore, it is important to note that international loans have been listed as one of the main sources of revenue and metropolitan funds for financing urban and regional development,



according to the proposals of the Integrated Urban Development Plans (PDUI) and the Metropolis Statute, as revealed by research on the management of metropolitan regions in Brazil (IPEA, 2021).

In particular, it has been confirmed during public hearings concerning the RMVPLN PDUI in 2021 that the state of São Paulo is interested in completing the PDUIs for the metropolitan regions of São Paulo. This is also linked to the prospect of obtaining international financing.

Consequently, these projects function not only as providers of infrastructure but also as catalysts for the integration of territories into the dynamics of economic globalization. This integration process deepens productive specializations and reinforces the polarization exerted by metropolitan centers on their surroundings and by regional hubs on their corresponding urban networks.

In the case of RMVPLN, the succession of experiences between São José dos Campos and Jacareí demonstrates how the attraction of external resources can both reinforce and exacerbate intraregional asymmetries, thereby raising questions regarding the type of development that has been prioritized. More specifically, this raises questions about whether development is oriented toward territorial cohesion and the reduction of inequalities, or whether it is subordinated to the imperatives of financial and real estate capital appreciation on supra-local scales.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was carried out with the support of São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), case no. 2023/10.435-6 and 2025/19777-2, and the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development – CNPq Call 25/2021.



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