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Contributions of Repertoires of Collective Actions in the Organization of the Populations Affected by Dams: A Study of the Itapebi Hydroelectric Power Plant

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Abstract

This research seeks to analyze the contributions of repertoires of collective actions in the organization of those affected by dams based on a study of the Itapebi Hydroelectric Power Plant. The repertoires of collective actions in this article are inspired by the author Charles Tilly and originate from the field of the theory of political sociology of social movements, defined as a set of forms of action in which there is political motivation. The initial assumption of the research is that the repertoires of collective actions created at the local level play a crucial role in the organization of those affected by the hydroelectric plant under study and help sustain the national demands of the Movement of Those Affected by Dams. The results of the research indicate that, through local experience, lived over the years by those involved, these repertoires have performed not only a central function in the organization of those affected in relation to compensatory issues proposals by the company responsible for the Itapebi enterprise, but also in the creation and strengthening

public policies that will absorb local demands and their articulation with the national movement of those by dams.

Keywords: repertoires of collective actions; organization; population affected by dams; public policies.

Introduction

Studies on populations affected by energy production dams have been the object of research in social and human sciences, both in national and international literature since the last decades of the 20th century.

Along with the escalation of energetic programs in Brazil, other knowledge areas and disciplinary fields have shown interest in the theme, exploring approaches on social, cultural and environmental aspects, land occupation, human rights, and public policies, making literature more complex so as to indicate deep changes over territories involved in hydroelectric projects and on the lives of social groups and whole populations affected by such industrial projects.

Many of these studies have originated from academic research centers, which, by publishing their research, have enabled the access to necessary information on the enterprises and served as an element of pressure over the Brazilian electric energy segment – the segment's holding company, Eletrobrás, and its operating companies. As a result of this pressure and by demand of the National Environmental Council (Conama, in Portuguese), an advisory and deliberative body of the National Environmental System, Environmental Impact Studies (EIA) and Environmental Impact Reports (RIMA) of these enterprises were performed after the mid-80s, some of which counted on scientific collaboration by universities. Therefore, the environmental studies that used to be carried out by international consulting companies hired by the electric energy segment had to conform to the EIA and RIMA guidelines proposed by Conama (Teixeira, 1995). This access to information has since then benefited organizations of those affected by dams and supported their "repertoires of collective actions" (Tilly, 1978) to claim for recognized rights in face of the construction of hydroelectric projects.

Considering this context, this research aims to analyze the contributions of repertoires of collective actions in the organization of people affected by dams through a study of the Itapebi Hydroelectric Plant. The research's initial supposition is that locally created repertoires of collective actions are crucial for the organization of those affected by the studied plant, and they help to support national demands of the Movement of Those Affected by Dams (MAB, in Portuguese). The research seeks to evince, by exploring local experience lived throughout the years by those involved, that these repertoires have not only performed a central function in the organization of those affected regarding compensatory proposals made by the responsible enterprise, but also in the creation and strengthening of public policies able to absorb local demands and their articulation with the national movement of those affected.

To explore the research problem and achieve its objective, it is important to understand that an organizing process is the set of practices that characterize it (Czarniawska, 2008). It is also understood that repertoires of collective actions, a definition created by the American sociologist Charles Tilly that arises from the field of political sociology theory of social movements, is a set of

forms of action in which there is political motivation; a known repertoire of collective actions available to common people at a certain historical moment (Tilly, 1978, pp. 151-152). Repertoires of actions by social groups affected by the Itapebi dam have arisen during the organization of those involved, who perceived themselves as affected by the implementation of the project, conferring a situation in which the process of organization itself happened based on the repertoires constructed and appropriated by the affected people.

The Hydroelectric Plant of Itapebi, located in the municipality of the same name, in the State of Bahia, was implemented to meet electricity demands by Brazilian Petrochemical Companies (EPB) from Salvador and from the Petrochemical Complex at Camaçari-BA. The dam flooded urban and rural areas in the municipality of Salto da Divisa (MG), as well as rural areas of three municipalities in Bahia: Itapebi, Itarantim, and Itagimirim. The study highlights the municipality of Salto da Divisa, the only one where affected people organized themselves due to their claims in relation to the enterprise.

For decades, the Brazilian State has, by means of its energy policy, developed a striking legal system to ensure the construction of hydroelectric plants, considering planning, concession, licensing, implementation approval, and necessary financial resources, under the argument that it is a clean, safer, long-lasting and less expensive energy when compared to other traditional energy generation methods; hydroelectricity has been the means most used by the country to supply its electricity demands (SRD, 2016). On the other hand, governments have failed to create effective institutional channels to meet the demands of the involved populations, or even to present a specific public policy on the matter that suitably covers the rights of or compensations owed to affected people.

The MAB is a national social people's movement that advocates in favor of people affected by dams at the local, regional, and national level. Its documents register that, throughout the years, populations affected by dams have made some achievements, such as in the case of those affected by the Hydroelectric Plant of Itá, but they did not have their rights recognized as part of a governmental public policy. More recently, the MAB has claimed for the approval of the National Policy for the Rights of Populations Affected by Dams (PNAB) as a public policy, a document designed collectively by three MAB representatives and its legal and scientific advisors, with the collaboration of an NGO. The main points advocated by the PNAB are: the recognition of rights for affected people; the establishment of a legal framework; the creation of a governmental body responsible for the policy, with the effective representation and participation of affected people; and the definition of new financing sources to put these demands in action (MAB, 2013). The national movement of those affected, with the support of regional and local movements, claims for the establishment of the policy as a legal tool to be followed by any electric energy company during the construction of dams in the Brazilian territory.

Despite recognizing the importance of the Movement of Those Affected by Dams as a leading national actor, this research intends to evince that, in the studied experience, since the beginning of the construction of the Hydroelectric Plant of Itapebi in 1997, there was autonomous leadership in local political organization for more than 20 years before the arrival of the MAB in the municipality, in 2015. Based on this scenario, the research presupposes that locally created repertoires of collective actions contribute to the organization of those affected by the Itapebi dam, constituting important pillars to strengthen the MAB and supporting the strength of a local leadership capable of supporting political motivations of the affected people during decades.

This research is organized into four sections, besides the introduction. In the first section, the text presents a theoretical discussion on repertoires of collective actions. After that, it discusses the organizing process in the construction of repertoires by those affected by dams. These initial items explore the theoretical bases that served for the construction of the study's theoretical framework. The third section presents the methodological procedures adopted during the study. The fourth section registers the research's results, aiming to articulate the empirical analysis to the study's theoretical pillars. Lastly, the fifth and last section brings forth the study's final remarks.

Repertoires of collective actions: an initial theoretical approach

This research studies repertoires of collective actions due to their instructive potential in understanding the forms of actions used in the organization of people affected by dams.

Despite having many Brazilian interpreters of Tilly, the country and Latin America have experienced a delay in the dissemination of his theories; among them, the repertoires of collective actions theory. This delay was caused by factors such as: (a) academic anti-imperialist feeling in Latin American human and social sciences; (b) criticisms of the structuralism thought with which Tilly's theories were associated; (c) scholar resistance to the loss of Marxist references or, as many called it, the supposed "death of Marxism"; (d) the influence of Alain Touraine and other authors from "new social movement" theories; (e) little academic concern in Latin America for theories produced by North-American social movement authors (Bringel, 2012); and (f) not knowing the coverage of Tilly's theory, not necessarily simply connected to structuralism (Alonso, 2012). These factors contributed to the theories of resource and political mobilization having little room in Brazilian and regional debates up to the 1990s. In this sense, a group of authors, led by Tilly along with Tarrow and McAdam, researching repertoires of collective actions and social movements, sought to establish a new broader and relational research agenda on collective actions. Also according to Bringel, despite gaining international notoriety, this agenda was not systematically disseminated in Brazil.

The main branch in Tilly's studies (1978) comprises the many shapes of manifestations and conflicts among social groups, where studies on conflict, political violence, and repertoires of collective actions are the main elements suggested by the author so that the processes of changes in States were understood as more contingent, transitory and reversible than in his previous studies on political development. Another classical contribution by Tilly consists of easily coding the knowledge by social and political historians on the many shapes of collective action, as well as generalizing the questions regarding causes, changes, and variation of these forms of repertoire of collective actions, thus hypothesizing that the history of contestation restricted currently available options of action. In this context, a key element for Tilly's interpretation consists of a contingent, interactive, complex, and relational approach to history and social processes (Bringel, 2012).

Historical descriptions of repertoires of collective actions need to be connected to the political explanations of their time. In the search for historical explanations, these repertoires are connected to social movements. In this sense, Tilly (2010) lists his main arguments: (a) since their origin in the 18th century, movements have proceeded not as isolated performances but as interactive campaigns; (b) social movements combine three kinds of claims: program, identity, and position; (c) the evidence of program, identity, and position claims varies significantly among social movements, those claiming within social movements, and among these movements' phases; (d)

democratization is responsible for creating social movements; (e) social movements affirm popular sovereignty; (f) social movements, when compared to forms of social and local-based politics, depend on political and cultural factors for their size, durability, and effectiveness; (g) when social movements are established within a political scenario, their shape, communication and collaboration are facilitated in other connected scenarios; (h) shapes, personnel, and demands by social movements shift and evolve through time.

Considering Tilly's historical explanations (2010), Alonso (2012) explains that the author has constructed his Theory of Political Mobilization (TPM), driving out economic, determinist, and psychosocial explanations for collective actions. Thereby, the notion of repertoires of collective actions have arisen. Also according to Alonso, Tilly constructed in 1976, based on a notion of repertoire as forms of actions repeated in different kinds of conflict, a structuralist and rationalist approach, focused on the connection between interest and action, favoring singular actors (p. 32).

Repertoires, as special-purpose associations, public meetings, marches, and many other forms of political action, have existed before its combination within social movements. This combination of repertoires with demonstrations within campaigns has created distinctive aspects of the social movement (Tilly, 2010). Luchmann (2016) observed the importance of partnerships in the creation of collective awareness and mobilization for action. According to McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2009), actions developed by social movements become repertoires that connect claimers to the objects of their claims. These actions range among the creation of associations or interest parties, public meetings, demonstrations, protests, electoral campaigns, committing to petitions, pressure, land occupation, construction, publication programs, creation of public service organizations, and even setting up barricades, among other specific actions.

Collective actions can be explained in their development, according to Tilly (2004), as below:

A sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities (let us call it a campaign); employment of combinations from among the following forms of political action: creation of special-purpose associations and coalitions, public meetings, solemn processions, vigils, rallies, demonstrations, petition drives, statements to and in public media, and pamphleteering (call the variable ensemble of performances the social movement repertoire); and participants' concerted public representations [...] (p. 3).

Repertoires are expressions of current historical interactions between social movements and their opponents, arising in face of a propitious situation that will guide its construction. Under a strategic view, these opponents react to the dissemination of a new repertoire through repression, usually making use of social control strategies in the intent of transforming new repertoires into conventional ones (McAdam et al., 2009).

In face of the critique toward collective forms of action, Tilly himself revisited this approach, concluding that they did not exclude one another (Bringel, 2012). Thus, the notion of repertoires of collective actions was consolidated in the theory of collective actions, being used to observe evidence that the production of demands is focused on a limited number of forms, which are repeated with minimal variations and constitute the collection (or repertoire) from which potential actors select in a more or less deliberated way (Bringel, 2012, p. 46).

Despite understanding that repertoires are limited, Tilly highlights that they are contingent, considering that variations depend on the repertoire's flexibility or rigidity, as well as on the innovation of involved social groups, places and the historical moment in which they are used (Bringel, 2012). One can also highlight, in the set of these repertoires of collective actions, protests, public demonstrations, pamphleting, marches, boycotts, strikes, petitions, manifestos, letters to authorities, public hearings, judicial actions, rallies, occupations, among others.

In his classical book, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1978), dedicated to the construction of his theory of political mobilization (TPM), Tilly's first notion of repertoires of collective actions arises in general terms:

At any point in time, the repertoire of collective actions available to a population is surprisingly limited. Surprisingly, given the innumerable ways in which people could, in principle, deploy their resources in pursuit of common ends. Surprisingly, given the many ways real groups have pursued their own common ends at one time or another (Tilly, 1978).

According to Alonso (2012), although this concept has gained notoriety in Tilly's work, the notion of repertoire was being disseminated since 1976 as a form of action reiterated in various kinds of conflicts by the structuralist and rationalist approaches, focused on the connection between interest and action, and favoring singular actors. However, throughout thirty years, the concept has undergone many changes, presenting a more relational and interactionist approach, favoring people's experiences with situations of conflict and the use/interpretation of plans or scripts in performances. Tilly kept this new approach up to his final works in 2008, the year of his death.

These changes can be observed in Tilly's studies after the 1990s, especially with the review of the notion of repertoire that, according to Alonso, bore a new definition:

The word repertoire identifies a limited set of routines that are learned, shared, and acted out through a relatively deliberate process of choice. Repertoires are learned cultural creations, but they do not descend from abstract philosophy or take shape as a result of political propaganda; they emerge from struggle [...] At any particular point in history, however, they learn only a rather small number of alternative ways to act collectively (Tilly, 1995).

According to McAdam et al. (2009), repertoires materialize the articulation between innovation and perseverance, reflecting their different ideas. The efficiency of a repertoire results from its novelty, skill, time, and ability to surprise its opponents or the authorities. In this sense, repertoires encourage perseverance and maintain resistance.

In a more recent approach, Tatagiba, Paterniani and Trindade (2012) show that the concept of repertoire of collective actions has been used to explain how social movements aim to meet the challenges of collective actions in many contexts. In addition to this approach, Lüchmann, Schaefer and Nicoletti (2017) highlight that a repertoire enables the identification of many forms of action or

of the diversity of associative action, being not only related to different profiles, associative objectives and resources, but to contexts, norms, and available institutional arenas.

Most people participating in a collective action belong to communities from which significant meanings and identities derive. Even without measuring costs and benefits, people act to confirm central ideas of the meanings and identities in their lives, especially when repertoire models and claims are available in the history of the groups (McAdam et al., 2009).

To consider social movements as represented merely by their identities and interests restricts their study to respective documents, public statements, and negotiations of their collective identities. However, social movements connect their collective claims to authorities, showing that the population is deserving, unified, considerable, and committed. This leads movements toward public actions – performances – presented by them both to signal their demands to authorities and to create and retain supporters (McAdam et al., 2009). Social movements are not any popular action carried out by any cause to all people and organizations, they are oriented toward the combination of aspects from campaigns, repertoires, and demonstrations of collective actions (Tilly, 2010).

The organizing process in the construction of repertoires for those affected by dams

In administration, an organization can be defined by its bureaucratic organization that meets the interests and areas dominated by the market. This kind of organization is referred as hegemonic for being a model that prevails in market through competitiveness, consumption and all fundamental decision-making processes, which are set in the reproduction of an individualized and dominant process (Misoczky, Flores, & Böhm, 2008).

In this regard, Misoczky (2010) explains that organizing does not stand for bureaucratic organization – for the author, this way of organizing is taken as a synonym for management practice. Organizing is to socially produce ways for cooperation, which are constantly unstable and changing (p. 27). Thus, alternative organization sources of inspiration are needed to deconstruct the discourse of hegemonic organization. Guided by this concept, one can argue that some of these sources of inspiration arise from the Landless Workers' Movement (MST, in Portuguese), Via Campesina, Latin American Movement of Those Affected by Dams (MAR, in Portuguese), indigenous and native peoples' movements, among others, which are examples of alternative organizations that contribute to the dissemination of counterhegemonic discourse.

Having understood the meaning Misoczky (2010) confers to the term 'organization', we recall the notion of organization used in this work, as defined in the introduction and concerning not only the entities comprising the affected movement that are subjects to the research but also meaning the organizing process, that is, the set of practices that characterize it (Czarniawska, 2008). Therefore, organization occurs through the actions taken by heterogeneous actors, structures that govern actions, and through material arrangements that support organizing practices (Schatzki, 2006). In this study, thus, the organizing process is substantially connected to the set of repertoires of collective actions powered by local subjects and, more widely, in the scope of the local movement of those affected by the studied enterprise.

The first organization of people affected by dams appeared at the end of the 1970s. As the civil-military dictatorship withdrew civil and political rights, many organizations opposing to it

sprouted. This decade also saw the global energy crisis, which led many central countries to search for new ways of energy production in substitution for the lack of oil. Therefore, the countries with great energy potential were the target for studies on the exploration of energy sources. Great international companies demanding a lot of electricity arrived in Brazil, and, thus, the government begun the construction of great hydroelectric projects in many regions of the country (Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens [MAB], 2011).

Among the many problems brought forth by these projects, we highlight compensatory or indemnifying policies for the energy segment, which were characteristically excluding and followed their own thinking, given that the works or floods indicated in the projects have resulted on expelling a large number of people from their place of residence and work. This situation was repeatedly seen in hydroelectric constructions which caused great dissatisfaction among families and other affected people for decades. This situation motivated the appearance of several resistance groups in the areas where projects were being implemented. The cases of the following hydroelectric plants are exemplary: Tucuruí, in the Northern region, Itaipu, at the Brazil-Paraguay border, Sobradinho and Itaparica, in the Northeast, Itá and Machadinho in the South. The affected people in these regions have created many local and regional organizations (MAB, 2011).

These are, thus, the first motivations for the appearance of initial repertoires of collective actions, among them are the many forms of local organization, being extended to regional and national organizations, and, at last, international forums.

The notion of affected people defended by the involved social groups is among these remarkable driving forces and concerns the recognition, that is, legitimization, of rights and its holders. In other words, establishing that a certain social group, family or individual is, or was, affected by a certain project means recognizing their right to some kind of reimbursement or compensation, rehabilitation or non-monetary reparations as legitimate – and, in some cases, legal ones (Vainer, 2008, p. 40).

In this context, it is important to recall that the term organizing, understood as an organizing process, is unleashed by a transformation in the environment followed by a representation: organizational actors group a certain segment in their own environment using resources available to them. With that, they are able to achieve successful results, broadening and renewing their repertoires, and thus the notion of affected people, which was experienced by local social groups and incorporated into their repertoires. Organizing is, thus, a continuous encounter with ambiguity, ambivalence, and equivocations, starting from an attempt to understand life and the world (Czarniawska, 2013).

Pioneering experiences of people affected by dams that originated MAB, as the highest national forum assembling diverse forms of collective actions, stemmed from the movement of expropriated people from Itaipu, followed by the organization of the ones affected by the “Uruguay Project” in the south of Brazil, and by the organization of those affected by the Sobradinho Dam in Bahia (Sigaud, 1986). Among these pioneering experiences, we highlight the “Uruguay Project”, which established the construction of 25 hydroelectric plants (Scherer-Warren & Reis, 2008). The mentioned authors expose repertoires manifested in this project, such as a petition with more than a million signatures, great processions, the creation of a publication and radiocast programs, as well as affected people occupying campsites of the Eletrosul company, built to shelter construction engineers and technicians.

The Catholic Church of Liberation Theology, through the Land Pastoral Commission (CPT, in Portuguese), Basic Ecclesial Communities (CEBs, in Portuguese), and its pastoral agents, has been a notable presence in the organizing process of the people affected by dams, making their physical structure available for social groups to carry out events, meetings and other collective actions, as well as offering capacitation to train leaderships (Scherer-Warren & Reis, 2008). The politization of dams encouraged by the Catholic Church has also been expressed through specific local actions that stuck crosses on the borders of the projects (Foschiera, 2010; Scherer-Warren & Reis, 2008).

In 1989, a national action of great repercussion took place as the initiative of the Regional Commission of Those Affected by Dams (CRAB, in Portuguese), which organized the 1st Meeting of Those Affected by Dams, in the city of Goiânia, seeking to exchange experiences and build networks between affected organizations from various Brazilian regions that faced hydroelectric issues (Scherer-Warren & Reis, 2008).

During this meeting, the Provisory National Coordination of Workers Affected by Dams (CNPTAB, in Portuguese) was created, serving as political motivation for the creation of new affected commissions and ramifications in many Brazilian regions, such as: the Regional Commission of Those Affected by the Xingu Complex (CRACOHX) in Altamira (PA); the Commission of Those Affected by the Hydroelectric Plant of Tucuruí (CATHU) in Tucuruí (PA); the Commission of Those Affected by Iguaçu Dams (CRABI), in Paraná; the Movement of Those Endangered by Dams in the Ribeira Valley (MOAB), in São Paulo; the Movement of Those Affected by Dams in the Jequitinhonha Valley, in Minas Gerais, among others. Besides that, CNPTAB has been responsible for disseminating the debate on hydroelectric plants in universities and labor unions, designing the first national newsletter of those affected by dams and organizing, in March 1991 in Brasília, the 1st National Congress of Workers Affected by Dams (Foschiera, 2010).

According to Scherer-Warren and Reis (2008), stemming from the National Congress of Workers Affected by Dams, the MAB was institutionalized as a national movement, widening its political articulations, which confirms Tilly's idea (2010) that a social movement is not only constituted by its claimers' forms of action, but also by its articulation to the claimed objects and target-audience.

International debate forums are arenas for the interaction of MAB's repertoires of collective actions. The 4th Social Sciences and Dams Meeting, which took place in the Universidade Federal Fronteira Sul (UFFS), in the municipality of Chapecó (SC), was characterized by the articulation of several Latin American organizations, which together have created the Movement of the Affected by Latin American Dams (MAR) (MAB, 2016).

This new articulation, represented by eighteen organizations from twelve countries, was created to strengthen the political struggle of all people affected by dams in Latin America. Moreover, MAR became an important tool for the consolidation of the Latin American paradigm and of MAB's repertoires of collective actions. Civil society was organized into different levels of association that were structured based on interests, values, and citizenship achievement, in which social actions and demonstrations became symbolic expressions and exerted political pressure, focused from start on creating chances aiming at social and public policies that have not been presented by the State with its economic enterprises.

Methodological procedures of the research

This research considers, chronologically, the period from the arrival of the company in the municipality of Salto da Divisa in 1997 to the conclusion of empirical data collection by the end of 2018. Therefore, it was possible to recover the forms of organization and repertoires of actions by those affected by Itapebi dam during this period, bringing forth the experiences they lived throughout this period. Regarding the spatial definition, the study was carried out in the municipality of Salto da Divisa, Minas Gerais, considering that, despite being the municipality with the smallest flooded area in relation to the other three affected municipalities in Bahia (Figure 1), it was the only place where affected people organized themselves to present their claims.

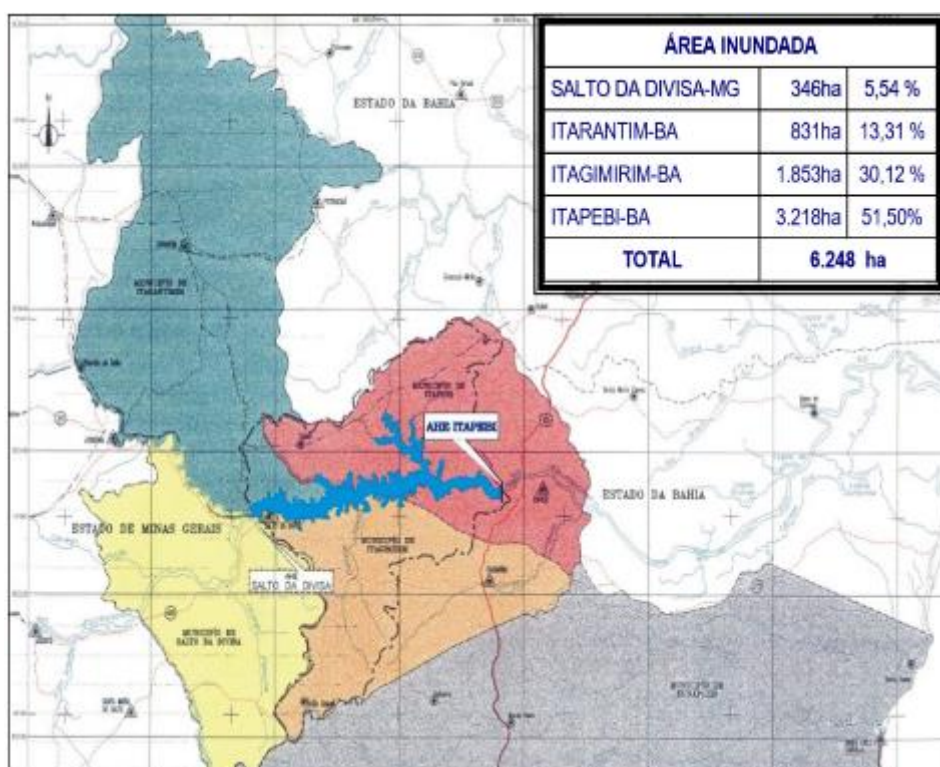


Figure 1. Map of the area flooded by the Itapebi Hydroelectric Plant in the states of Bahia and Minas Gerais

*Map key - Flooded area

Source: Environmental Impact Study of Itapebi Plant designed by Engevix (1995).

The municipality of Salto da Divisa is located in the Jequitinhonha Valley, in the state of Minas Gerais, by border with Bahia, 845 kilometers from Belo Horizonte. According to the demographic census by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2010), its population counts up to 6,859 inhabitants. The Jequitinhonha River lies to the east of the municipality, then runs through some municipalities in Bahia and flows to the Atlantic Ocean in the city of Belmonte (BA).

The literature used in the study was collected from different disciplinary areas, which allowed for the construction of a multidisciplinary theoretical-conceptual framework as its

theoretical base. This research is qualitative, using empirical sources from interviews with selected subjects (Table 1), which were mapped during the field research in Salto da Divisa (MG).

Table 1
Characterization of research subjects

| Subjects | Founding / Opening Date | Position/ Role | Number of Affected People* |
|--|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Catholic Church (Dominican Sisters) | 26/01/1993 | Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharistic Communion | - |
| Human Rights Support and Defense Group (GADDH) | 18/09/1998 | Representative | - |
| Community Communication Association (ASSCOM) – Community Radio | 15/11/1998 | President | - |
| Salto da Divisa's Community Washerwomen Association | 04/02/2002 | President | 88 |
| Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association (APSD) | 20/12/2002 | President | 150 |
| Salto da Divisa's Construction Workers Association | 12/05/2003 | President | 174 |
| Salto da Divisa's Rural Communities Association (ACRUSALD) | 01/05/2005 | Representative | - |
| Salto da Divisa's Extraction Workers Association (ACOES) | 20/01/2010 | President | 48 |
| Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Colony | 05/02/2014 | President | 110 |
| Damaged Houses Association | - | President | 553 |
| Movement of the Affected by Dams in Salto da Divisa | 26/11/2015 | Coordinator | - |

*Number of people affected in Salto da Divisa (MG) informed by the subjects during field research and registered in documents.

Source: Designed by the authors based on Redesim (2018) Salto da Divisa's Rural Communities Association (2005); Human Rights Support and Defense Group (1997), and interviews.

The following criteria were used for the choice of subjects: length of action in the studied municipality; organizations representing social groups that consider themselves as directly affected by the Itapebi dam; organizations supporting people affected by the Itapebi dam; organizations and people who know the claims of the affected people and are directly involved with them. This research is interested in the point of view of those affected and of entities interacting directly with them, fighting for their claims. This choice criterion agrees to the idea of "repertoire", which, according to Tilly (2006), are interactions, relations among groups of actors, and not isolated actions. The author reaffirms the relationality of the concept, presupposing a multi-actor interaction.

The research's empirical data were analyzed by an interpretative approach as established by Gil (2008), in which two analysis categories were defined, as shown in Figure 3. The author splits the

analysis process into three phases: (a) data reduction; (b) data categorization; and (c) data interpretation.

Aligned to the proposed interpretation approach, the interpretation of the contents in data collected from interviews with the subjects is guided by theoretical categorization. Among the two categories defined in advance, based on literature, we highlight subcategories that appeared during the interviews, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2
Analysis categories and subcategories

| Categories | Subcategories |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Organization | a) Characterization and leadership of the institutions supporting affected people in their organization; b) Local organizing process of the affected people. |
| Repertoire of Collective Actions | c) Collective actions presented by affected associations and local institutions supporting them; d) Advances and challenges to repertoires of collective actions in the articulation among affected associations and institutions supporting them. |

Source: Designed by the authors

Coordinating repertoires of collective actions in the organizing process of the affected by the Itapebi dam

In this section, the research results will be presented, specially based on consultation to document sources and interviews carried out in the municipality of Salto da Divisa (MG) with the subjects mapped according to Table 1. The results are presented with the analysis subcategories defined in advance, so to ease the understanding and articulation of field findings with the research's theoretical pillars.

The construction of the Itapebi Hydroelectric Plant and its relation to the population and locality

The Itapebi Hydroelectric Facility is located at the Jequitinhonha River, in the southern end of Bahia, 8 km from the city of Itapebi (BA) and 118 from the city of Belmonte (BA). The location where the hydroelectric plant was installed is 619 km far from Salvador and 902 km far from Belo Horizonte. The main access to the facility is through the BR-101 highway, which connects it to cities that have airports in the region, such as Ilhéus and Porto Seguro, at a 200 and 110 km distance from the plant, respectively, as shown in the Itapebi Plant's Environmental Impact Study, designed by Engevix (1995).

During the 1960s, the first studies in the lower Jequitinhonha were begun in order to enable the construction of the plant. During a long time, Furnas studied the region but interrupted its activities there, transferring it to the São Francisco Hydroelectric Company, which made use of the material inherited from Furnas and, in 1989, updated and redesigned it, leading to the revision of

the inventory studies, which were concluded by the formerly consulting company Engevix in 1991, according to the Itapebi Plant Environmental Impact Study (Engevix, 1995).

In 1998, the joint venture composed by the Electricity Company of the State of Bahia (COELBA, in Portuguese) and Neoenergia won the bid to exploit the Itapebi Hydroelectric Facility and created the company Itapebi Geração de Energia S.A. to operate the plant. In April 1999, the company obtained the concession for the use of public assets at Itapebi, besides the authorization to implement the system of restricted interest transmission of the powerhouse. The construction was initiated in 1999 and concluded in 2003, when the facility started its operations (Itapebi Geração de Energia S.A., 2018).

The Catholic Church, the main leadership in the initial organization of the affected people, reported that the company did not attempt to talk directly to the population about the enterprise, having sought the municipal government to discuss the implementation of the plant. In this sense, the Church explained that it, along with the Human Rights Support and Defense Group (GADDH), “imposed” this dialogue aiming to show the company that there was an organization defending human rights in the locality.

The Salto da Divisa’s Community Washerwomen Association highlights GADDH’s action:

... it was all done with the Human Rights Defense Group... we didn’t know what it was, so when the group knew and recognized it, and knew that they were coming only to destroy (Representative of Salto da Divisa’s Community Washerwomen Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

The company tried to approach the Community Radio with the intention of advertising the construction of the plant for the population, however, the company pulled back when it discovered that the radio was related to the Catholic Church (Dominican Sisters) and to GADDH.

... they tried to approach us, but when they realized that the Dominican sisters and GADDH, which is the Human Rights Support and Defense Group, were the ones leading, they pulled back, because they thought the radio was, as people say, a casa da mãe Joana¹ and then they saw it was an organized group, so they pulled back (...) (Representative of the Community Communication Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

According to reports by Salto da Divisa’s Extraction Workers Association, the approach to these workers happened when Engevix, the company responsible for the Environmental Impact Studies, set to register some people for monetary compensation due to the loss of activities in the segment. However, it was reported that not everyone was included, and that the compensation was derisory.

Salto da Divisa’s Rural Community Association has reported that farmers who owned lands close to rural communities were in favor of the enterprise, since they considered it would benefit their lands, and, thus, did not support family farmers.

Based on Vainer and Araújo (1990), it is possible to argue that the company approached rural communities using a patrimonial territorial strategy (pp. 20-21), in which it only recognized those who owned property rights, disregarding all family farmers and workers of the areas to be flooded. The company also made use of “individual negotiation” to buy lands at prices way below market value. Therefore, some family farmers received indemnities similar to 30,000 Reais as compensation for the areas that would be flooded.

Characterization and leadership of institutions supporting the organization of the affected people

This analysis subcategory aims to identify the characteristics and leading roles of the institutions supporting affected people in their organization, as well as presenting how the organization process of affected people occurred.

Catholic Church (Dominican Sisters)

Having arrived at Salto da Divisa in 1993, the Dominican Sisters were sheltered by the parish house until they were acquainted to the people and place. When they had obtained their own residence, they started to organize the pastoral work they wished to implement in the locality through the Basic Ecclesial Communities (CEB).

The reports indicate that the arrival of the Dominican Sisters at Salto da Divisa was received with resistance by coronels and landowners from start, in opposition to their warm reception by less favored segments, who little by little started to accept and trust the work by the Sisters. Intending to approach and understand local reality, the Sisters took time to listen to people and observe the place. With that, they got to know social and economic problems present in the locality and region, just as the matter of religiosity in Salto da Divisa, and, knowing the great challenges they would face, they began their pastoral activities. The starting point were meetings with small social groups at the neighborhoods – they carried out reflections on the bible in the houses and organized the liturgy in the parish. They created small base communities and, after that, supported the creation of neighborhood associations, aiming to favor the formation of leaderships in the municipality, diocese, and region. During this work, they proposed the fight for justice and peace in the city, proclaiming the freedom of people in all human dimensions.

Based on data collected from the interviews, the Catholic Church has encouraged the creation of two key entities that have supported the affected people: the Human Rights Support and Defense Group (GADDH) and the Community Communication Association, commonly known as the “Community Radio Voice of the People”. These entities have played the role of alternative organizations, according to the definition by Misoczky (2010). In 1997, when there was a public hearing to announce which areas would be flooded by the construction of the Itapebi Dam and that, despite being located in the municipality in Bahia, it would also affect Salto da Divisa in Minas Gerais, the mentioned organizations were the first to warn the municipality’s affected people regarding the possible social and environmental impacts caused by the construction. The following excerpt describes the Church’s support at the beginning:

The role of the Church was played by the (Dominican) sister that took action in protecting the affected people. So she worked a lot, travelled a lot, she went to places that had dams,

that had dams under construction, she went to see the results for the affected people. So where she went, as (...) also went. They saw a very dramatic situation, because the affected people were not listened to as the contractors, the constructors of the dam had promised. So they organized themselves and got in touch with Odebrecht, which is the company that built the dam, and worked with them, it was very hard for them. The church gave support here because they saw the situation of places with dams, which was not as promised (Representative of the Catholic Church, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

This situation is similar to the role of the Church in the pioneering experience of organizing those affected by the “Uruguay Project”, as reported by Scherer-Warren and Reis (2008), whose study shows that the Catholic Church has, throughout time, sided with the affected people in claiming for their rights.

Human Rights Support and Defense Group (GADDH)

As aforementioned, the Catholic Church led the creation of GADDH through the action of the Dominican sisters seeking to help contain high rates of violence toward women and the numerous cases of child and teenager sexual abuse, which culminated on the death and rape of local people. GADDH indicated that this situation was frequently neglected by authorities, which did not take reasonable measures regarding it and cases caused by the public power itself and by people acting in bad faith. The Church worked to make people believe they had the conditions to fight for their rights, and that there was a group willing to support them. According to article 1 of its statute, GADDH was founded on December, 7th 1997, in the city of Salto da Divisa, as a private legal entity of philanthropic, educational, cultural, promotional character, as well as promoting counselling, studies, research, and being a non-profit organization of indefinite duration (GADDH, 1997).

GADDH became a well-respected organization within Salto da Divisa not only by the civil society, but by executive, legislative, and judiciary public bodies. In recognition for their work in defense and support to human rights, GADDH was chosen as the mediator of conflicts arising between claims of the affected people and the company responsible for the enterprise since the announcement that the construction of the plant would affect municipalities in both states, Minas Gerais and Bahia. Later on, GADDH was one of the organizations responsible for and encouraging the organizing process of the affected by the Itapebi dam in the municipality.

Community Communication Association (ASCCOM)

In November, 15th 1998, the Community Communication Association (ASCCOM) was created by an initiative of the Catholic Church. Commonly known as the “Community Radio The Voice of the People”, this mean of communication gained great importance in Salto da Divisa for approaching and uniting the urban and rural populations.

The Radio was legally created to function as the communication between the people of Salto da Divisa and its neighbors, capacitating and informing them, as well as providing a public interest service for inhabitants of the urban and rural areas. Besides that, the creation of the radio played an important role in raising popular awareness through programs interacting to all community, as shown in the following excerpt:

So, one of the reasons for the creation of the community radio was for the people to have voice and a say. Because we lived years ago, decades ago, in a city by the rule of coronels, where people had no voice, no say, right? A kind of dictatorship (...). When the radio appeared, people started participating, calling, coming to the radio, coming and talking, asking, explaining. So the community radio is this tool that is up today informing and explaining, so people can have a voice and a say in demanding, claiming their rights, duties (Representative of the Community Communication Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

The radio also rose as a different and quality element for the pastoral work performed by the Catholic Church, since it favored the union and organization of groups, such as the Basic Ecclesial Communities (CEB), neighborhood associations, and other associations concerned with specific population issues, thus fulfilling its mission as a tool at service of the population. In this sense, the community radio has played an important role in organizing the people affected by the dam, making room for their claims, publishing information of interest and deepening channels between those affected and the population as a whole. Scherer-Warren and Reis (2008) mention that the creation of radio programs are important repertoires that contribute for the organization of affected people.

Movement of Those Affected by Dams (MAB) in Salto da Divisa

According to the interviews with those affected by the Itapebi Plant in Salto da Divisa, the national MAB did not engage directly in their issues from start, with the announcement of the construction of the hydroelectric plant. The Dominican sisters, along with local groups, were the ones visiting other regions that had hydroelectric plants constructed to understand and then inform the population regarding the impacts power plants could cause in these regions. These visits enabled the first contact to national MAB, which was already at work in other Brazilian regions. However, it was only after 2015, following a cultural event at the Jequitinhonha Valley, that a MAB branch was established in Salto da Divisa, inserting local struggles in the national MAB. The interviewee explains:

... there was already a movement of affected people in Salto da Divisa; what happened is that there was no identification of the name MAB. It was just a movement of people affected by the dam, which was coordinated by the sisters at the time... They saw the need of organizing these groups in associations, creating the neighborhood, extraction workers, washerwomen, fishermen associations. Anyway... a whole structure was created for these groups to be able to contest legally the implementation of the Itapebi Plant project (Coordinator of the Movement of the Affected by Dams in Salto da Divisa, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

As aforementioned, from 2015 on, bonds among local, regional, and national spheres are deepened, creating a landmark for local organization materialized by the 32nd Popular Cultural Festival of the Jequitinhonha Valley (Festivale) in Salto da Divisa from the 26th of July to the 1st of August. The event counted with the presence of the national MAB, besides cultural organizations from all over the region. After that, with MAB knowing the local problems caused by the Itapebi

Plant, it began a process of articulation with local organizations of affected people to support their claims. MAB counts with a well professionalized structure and a wide view on the rights of affected people, and so all the population in the municipality has recognized them, not only those belonging to the organizations, which can be observed in the interview:

MAB is nowadays recognized in Salto both by people belonging to the associations and those who don't, because they understand that it was not just the ones in the associations that were affected, but the whole city (Coordination of the Movement of the Affected by Dams in Salto da Divisa, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Within this new scenario, MAB created four base groups in the locality, which adhered to the structure and form of action preexisting in the local social movement of the affected people, strengthening local demands and contributing to their new articulation to MAB's activity in the regional and national levels. MAB's mentioned deep view regarding the rights of the affected people caused the local incorporation of this new perception of those who were affected, consolidating articulations in these spheres even though the legal process was already being conducted. The coordination of the local MAB explains:

Local associations kept on working as usual... Specially because MAB and the association's views were now in agreement (Coordinator of the Movement of the Affected by Dams in Salto da Divisa, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Local organizing process of the affected people

With the construction of the Itapebi plant, 1,123 people were registered as directly affected by it (Table 1) among the 6,859 inhabitants of Salto da Divisa (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2010). This number, despite its relevance, recalls the debate on the notion of affected people as argued by Vainer (2008), which is unrestricted by compensations for material losses, since this notion covers wider aspects of social justice, also related to cultural and symbolic matters in the perception of the affected people that were not taken into account in EIA and RIMA studies.



Figure 2. Social Groups Affected by the Itapebi Plant

Key: 1. Salto da Divisa's washerwomen by the Jequitinhonha River before the Itapebi Plant (currently a flooded area); 2. Salto da Divisa's Fishermen by the Jequitinhonha River before the Itapebi Plant (currently a flooded area).

Source: Municipal Council of Salto da Divisa (2018).

Salto da Divisa's Community Washerwomen Association

Salto da Divisa's washerwomen (Figure 2) used to perform their economic activities by the Jequitinhonha river, washing clothes for families of the municipality. They used to work in groups, chatting and singing during laundry. This activity was seen as a cultural tradition, with the washerwomen being recognized by their chants as the Jequitinhonha washerwomen.

At the time of the arrival of the Itapebi Plant in the municipality, as the EIA/RIMA studies did not consider that the lake would flood the riverside where the washerwomen worked, they were left out of those affected by the plant. However, after the flood, both the riverside and formations used for drying clothes were flooded throughout all of the municipality's urban areas. Given that, the washerwomen united themselves and created the Salto da Divisa's Community Washerwomen Association, supported by the Catholic Church and GADDH, increasing the number of organizations related to professional losses arising after the arrival of the hydroelectric plant.

It was God who first got us together with the Human Rights Defense Group, the Dominican Sisters were with them... Then we always got together, talked to the sisters: we are going to be affected one by one. No, they say we are not going to be affected, that we will be free, and that everybody will be able to wash clothes and that the water will only reach the lookout. From the lookout up was where everyone worked... I just know that the case went on and we felt harmed, you know? And, with the sister, with the community asking us, you don't join meetings, you have to register an association, join meetings, be part of the community and all that. To create the association, the sister went registering everyone, registering everyone, getting us t-shirts of the affected (President of Salto da Divisa's Community Washerwomen Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Even though the company built a community laundry room as a compensation for the end of washing activities by the river, for the washerwomen, it did not supply their needs and their claims remained the same. In the view of the company responsible for the dam, the negotiations with the workers were closed; even so, washerwomen dispute the results and keep on meeting and presenting their claims to the entrepreneurs regarding the impacts of the end of washing activities by the Jequitinhonha river.

Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association (APSD)

Just as the washerwomen, fishermen (Figure 2) also used to work by the Jequitinhonha river as a supporting mean for their families, with artisanal fishing as part of the city's tradition and culture.

After the announcement of the construction of the Itapebi Plant, questions regarding both the fishermen's improvement in professional life and the future of artisanal fishing at the Jequitinhonha river rose up, as shown in the following excerpt:

All that happened was because of it. Also because, I'll just go back a little, because at the time that there was no hydroelectric plant, our work was artisanal, really artisanal. And we had no need of all this to survive, we just needed a cast net, a surfboard, a rubber bag, and a flour bag, these were our fishing stuff. And now we are in this situation because of the plant that had environment impacts and destroyed our tradition, our professional tradition. It's not that I am against progress, but progress exists but also respecting our traditions, our rights (President of Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Given the uncertainties around this traditional activity, fishermen, with the support of other entities that were already acting on claims by those affected, united themselves and created Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association (APSD), with the main objective of organizing fishermen to present their claims to the Itapebi Plant, considering that fishing activities suffered major changes after the lake's creation, affecting fishing production in the region. APSD was one of the pioneering organizations in the municipality and, due to its experience, other affected organizations sprouted throughout the years.

APSD still claims the guarantee of their rights by the Itapebi Plant. This association gave rise to another fishermen organization, which will be discussed later on.

Salto da Divisa's Construction Workers Association

These workers were impacted by the construction of the Itapebi Plant due to the end of stone and sand extraction works and of brick producers caused by the lake flooding. With that, raw materials produced by extraction workers became more expensive and, as a consequence, unemployment increased among construction workers. Given the new situation posed for them, this social group found support and guidance in the Catholic Church and GADDH, organizing themselves to create Salto da Divisa's Construction Workers Association. This scenario is reported

by the Association in shorthand notes of the Public Hearing carried out by the Legislative Assembly of Minas Gerais (ALMG) in Belo Horizonte in December, 20th 2016:

I would like to explain a bit how the Construction Workers Association was created. It was one of the last associations created, because when Itapebi started to inform on the construction of the plant, it always left loose ends. Because of that, the Construction Workers Association only felt the impacts after the lake was flooded, which, if I'm not mistaken, happened in November 2002, when the lake started to cover the Tombo and Fumaça Waterfalls... The ones who saw it were moved by it. It covered all the area from where stone, gravel and sand were extracted, automatically, we, construction workers, civil construction, would be affected because we used to get that raw material for free. We used to just go there, take it and use it to build. At the time, it also ended the work of artisanal construction workers, who built with mirrored stones. In Salto, there are still many houses that were constructed by artisanal work. When we saw this situation, we created our association, in March 2003, composed by workers of civil construction and assistants (Minas Gerais, 2016, p. 22-33, originally in Portuguese).

The Salto da Divisa's Construction Workers Association reports that the flooding of the Jequitinhonha river caused by the Itapebi Plant led to the extinction of sand and stones that were extracted in the locality. With that, construction works reduced and the lack of jobs made many people move out of town. Construction workers received no compensations, and, for that, they claim their rights for the Itapebi Plant.

Salto da Divisa's Rural Communities Association (Acrusald)

According to article 1 in their statute, Salto da Divisa's Rural Communities Association (Associação das Comunidades Rurais de Salto da Divisa, 2005) was founded on May, 1st 2005, based on the Rural Community Ilha Paraíso and belonging to the judicial district of Jacinto (MG), as a non-profit private legal entity of its own personality and indefinite duration, ruled by its own statute. The initiative was taken by three family farmers, who started to meet to discuss the situation of family farming in the municipality and created Acrusald seeking to gather and defend the right of all small family farmers in the municipality. Besides the rural community of Ilha Paraíso, other communities entered the organization, namely: Ilha Maravilha, Ilha Fantasia, Ilha Brilho do Sol, Ilha Monte Cristo, Ilha Girasol, Ilha Nova Gália, among others. It is important to highlight that these communities are located up the Itapebi reservoir, however, other rural communities were also affected for being in the area flooded by the Itapebi Plant, making family farmers from these communities seek shelter at the ones located up the reservoir. The following report shows how the company responsible for the construction of the Itapebi Plant approached the rural communities that were flooded:

The company bought cheap lands, dirt cheap. Favoring themselves, right? With no social justice. And they (family farmers) thought those thirty thousand was a lot of money... The first strike of the Plant was that, if there was resistance, then it could have ended differently... For the farmer, the construction of the dam was wonderful, because before it

they had no water for the cattle to drink, and the lake flooding favored it (Representative of Salto da Divisa's Rural Communities Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

For the interviewed representative of Acrusal, the damages suffered by rural workers after the construction of the Itapebi Plant violate these workers' constitutional right and harm the foment to the progress and advance of rural extension in Salto da Divisa (MG). In this sense, Acrusal proposes for the affected producers to: identify, analyze, mobilize, and gather efforts to get more attention of competent public bodies, so to gain more support for the production and commercialization of their products through organized political and social interventions.

Salto da Divisa's Extraction Workers Association (Acoes)

Salto da Divisa's Extraction Workers Association (Acoes) is an organization covering the workers in stone and sand extraction and block producers. This organization was created after stone and sand extraction was made impossible by the flooding in the Jequitinhonha river, which led to generalized unemployment among these workers. Stone extractors claimed for the company to provide a new area with all the structure needed for stone and sand extraction in the outskirts of the municipality; as a response, the company pressured extraction workers to receive monetary compensation. Nevertheless, not all their demands were met, and the company did not recognize all categories covered by the association, as observed in the following excerpt:

They called extraction workers and had many meetings, along with the sister. And then what happened? They... there came a day they pressured the workers and said "take it or leave it. You either get this money I'm giving or nothing at all", they were already tired of the struggle, so they got the money, but it wasn't a compensation, it was small change they gave. Then there were... nine extraction workers who didn't get a thing, because they were up the lookout and didn't think the cable would get there. And the stones they extracted were from the margins of the lake, the sand also came from the lake of the river, Jequitinhonha... And what happened? Until today we have the associations together, with everything registered, with legal process, and it's about sixteen, seventeen years of legal process. We don't have a single answer (President of Salto da Divisa's Extraction Workers Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

In this segment's view, the company failed to identify that the group was larger, which, for the affected people, was one more disregard by the company in face of a reality it was unable to consider. The company also failed to foresee that the flooding in the sand extraction area would be larger, reaching close to the Itapuã harbor, where extraction workers also used to act. This set of problems made the workers organize themselves with the support of the Catholic Church and GADDH to create Salto da Divisa's Extraction Workers Association (Acoes), seeking to continue claiming their rights related to impacts unregistered in the EIA/RIMA studies and that affected the workers.

Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Colony

Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Colony, also known as the "Artisanal Fishermen and Fish Farmers Colony of Salto da Divisa-MG – Z 33", was created by Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association (APSD) aiming to guarantee labor rights for all associated fishermen. Artisanal fishermen and fish farmers organized themselves to create the colony even though a working fishermen association already existed given that the colony poses a stronger institutional value in the struggle for labor rights in this segment. This scenario favored bureaucratic procedures for fishermen and fisherwomen to acquire labor rights, such as the insurance during the prohibited season, paid maternity leave, retirement pension, among others. This situation strengthened fishermen's struggle as affected people. The following interviewee explains the scenario:

Well, in the beginning there was no colony here because we were lay in the subject. So, we founded an association, which is different from the colony. The colony does many things in favor of fishermen, especially the retirement pension, while the association can't do that, see? It acquired the insurance during the prohibited season, paid maternity leave, looking for resources for fishermen retirement. And that's why we, since we are far from the city, like in the Almenara city there is a colony, we chose to also found a colony here, because the people are poor and have no money to go from here to the other colony that is very far from here, and fishermen have no resource for that. See? (President of Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Colony, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Colony counts with 110 members and has achieved its rights as a colony, guaranteed by law. However, the fishermen decided to interact to the company responsible by the plant through the Association, thus sharing their actions regarding their rights. The Association is responsible to present fishermen's claims to the Itapebi Plant, being supported by the Colony, which is responsible to present fishermen's claims to labor institutions.

Damaged Houses Association

The Damaged Houses Association was created due popular need for claiming their rights in face of the impacts in their houses during the construction of the dam and after the lake flooding. Some houses suffered wall cracks due to the explosions in construction works and the great circulation of trucks and heavy machinery in the municipality of Salto da Divisa. Years later, it was revealed that this effect affected a larger number of houses.

As soon as the inhabitants observed the cracks, they met in small groups that later grew to a bigger organization willing to talk to the company responsible for the construction. They then decided to create the Damaged Houses Association and, thus, to be seen as more legitimate in their claims to the Itapebi Plant. An interviewee talks about the formation of the association:

I had a group, it wasn't an association, it was a group, you see? Since this group was created, I was the representative, you see. Then we created the association.... The judge himself told us we had to create an association to make it easier to solve the problems (President of the Damaged Houses Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Data provided by the Damaged Houses Association during an interview register that there are 553 families claiming for the Itapebi Plant to repair their residences, not only due to the mentioned causes, but also due to the flooding of the lake, since the water reached the city's water table damaging many houses in different neighborhoods all over the municipality.

The general scenario presented, grouping the reports from interviews with representatives of the affected people, is that, due to the floods, the washerwomen lost their working and leisure area in the Jequitinhonha river; fishermen lost their artisanal way of fishing, as well as the fishes themselves, which were reduced due to disappearance of many species; family farmers had to migrate to other localities after having their lands flooded, leaving behind their social and work bonds; stone and sand extraction workers and block producers had to stop their work due to the disappearance of raw materials, and, as a consequence, construction workers had to face unemployment after the end of extraction works. Besides that, many houses were damaged, suffering water infiltration and cracks caused by the plant's construction and the creation of the reservoir. Local leisure and tourism activities, usually seen in the Tombo da Fumaça Waterfalls (Figure 3), were ended after these areas were flooded.



Figure 3. Landscape at the Tombo da Fumaça Waterfalls in the Municipality of Salto da Divisa (MG) before and after the Itapebi plant's lake

Key: 1. Tombo da Fumaça Waterfalls (currently flooded); 2. Reservoir of the Itapebi Plant (formerly Tombo da Fumaça Waterfalls).

Source: 1. Instituto Estadual do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico de Minas Gerais (2017); 2. Researchers' personal records (2018).

The awareness regarding the effects of the Itapebi Plant was key for the organization of affected people in order to present their claims to the ones responsible for the electric energy segment in the locality. These claims were organized by collective actions supported mainly by the Catholic Church, GADDH, and the Community Radio, which resulted on the creation of associations of fishermen; washerwomen; stone, sand, and block extraction workers; construction workers; rural communities; and damaged houses. The set of these collective practices is in line with the idea of an organizing process as defined by Czarniawska (2008, 2013). Moreover, these associations are also alternative organizations as established by Misoczky (2010). The following excerpt shows that the fishermen association was one of the first created and that its actions caused the appearance of other associations throughout time, as seen in Figure 2.

You see, Salto da Divisa's fishermen association was a pioneer. It was because of it that all the process of the impacts, of recognizing the impacts, happened. Then, through it, appeared the washerwomen association, the construction workers one, the stone and sand extraction workers one. Even the association took a cause that was specific in the municipality to cover these issues to... to continue the legal processes. So the fishermen associations, they, in this sense, it's one of the main ones, right? (Representative of Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Lüchmann (2016) affirms that associativism is key to raise collective awareness and to mobilize for action. A proof of that is the number of associations created and operating in Salto da Divisa, as well as their engagement with the Movement of Those Affected by Dams. They keep the flame of local mobilization burning throughout time.

The support of the Catholic Church was always articulated with GADDH and the Community Radio. It is important to highlight the 2015 landmark, when a strong local organization already existed and representatives of the national MAB participated in the regional "Popular Cultural Festival of the Jequitinhonha Valley" at the municipality of Salto da Divisa. After that, as previously mentioned, a long-lasting approach between the local affected organization and MAB begun.

Collective actions performed by affected people associations and the local institutions supporting them

The first collective actions of the people affected by the Itapebi dam, in the municipality of Salto da Divisa, begun in the mid-1990s with the participation of the Catholic Church, GADDH, the Community Radio, and of the local social groups that were articulated and promoted meetings, public petitions, marches, public hearings, newsletters, among other repertoires (Figure 4) that are equally important for the associative organization of the affected people in the locality. These articulations motivated the creation of the mentioned local associations. Therefore, associativism was the starting point for the local organization of affected people, being incorporated to the other repertoires of collective actions as defined by Tilly (2010).



Figure 4. Repertoires of Collective Actions by the Affected by the Itapebi Plant

Key: 1. Newsletter of the Salto da Divisa Popular Culture Movement and Movement SOS Tombo da Fumaça; 2. Public Hearing of the Human Rights Commission of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Minas Gerais (ALMG) at the Municipal Council of Salto da Divisa (MG); 3. Public Hearing of the Commission of Popular Participation of the ALMG on the Itapebi Plant in Belo Horizonte (MG).

Source: 1. Document made available by the Human Rights Support and Defense Group during the field research carried out in November 2018; 2. Maliniak (2014); 3. Barbosa (2016).

The Catholic Church reports that the company arrived at the area that would be flooded by the Itapebi dam to take down the houses, making room for the first construction works. However, the inhabitants, their associations and supporting entities stood in front of the machinery to stop houses from being demolished before they knew where they would be relocated to.

Besides that, a testimony reported that the affected people had organized a petition, another significant collective action, for the approval of a municipal law, as well as a state one, aiming to protect the Tombo da Fumaça Waterfalls from flooding, demanding restrictions to the flooding capacity of the plant and to its environmental licensing process. Even though these laws were subsequently revoked, the mobilization involving the affected people served as an important learning opportunity in the organizing process (Czarniawska, 2008, 2013) and to expose the driving force of local repertoires of action, as studied by Tilly (2010).

... we made many petitions here, many. We went at every house, door by door, asking for support of the people, and they supported in everything we needed. We went out to the streets, in the marches, the cry of the excluded, so many people joined. They helped us (Representative of the Human Rights Support and Defense Group, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Advances and challenges of repertoires of collective actions in the articulation between affected organizations and the institutions supporting them.

Meetings are highlighted in the set of repertoires observed by McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2009), and this research is based on the studies by these authors, since meetings have and continue to be the repertoires that most contributed to the organization of the affected people. Salto da Divisa's fishermen Association reports more than two hundred long-lasting meetings carried out during initial years:

There were more than two hundred meetings. Meetings that would begin at five in the afternoon and end around midnight, midnight and half, right? Or it would begin at seven a.m. and end around midnight, midnight and a half. It was usually like that. Just to clarify to us the matter of the environmental impacts that a hydroelectric plant would cause, and... since we did not know much, many of us even doubted the existence of that (Representative of Salto da Divisa's Fishermen Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Many meetings and public hearings were carried out to define how and where affected people would be relocated to. GADDH had access to the map the company had designed for the construction of a new neighborhood and presented it to the riverside population, however, no one agreed to the design of the houses that would be built, since, for the affected people, it was inferior to the households existing before the enterprise.

Another struggle, we got the people together again and they brought their map, the floor plan already done, tsc, tsc. Nobody accepted it, "look, we are not going to accept it like that, because my house was this way, my house was that way, my backyard was this way...". They wanted to make it all twin houses, see? No, we don't accept! Accept, don't accept, and more hearings... (Representative of the Human Rights Support and Defense Group, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

After many claims and inspections by the affected people, the company built a new neighborhood with eighty houses, named by the population as the Vila União Neighborhood (Union Village) to show that it had been the result of a collective action, of united forces. This situation illustrates the potency of a repertoire, as shown by McAdam et al. (2009), which can be also seen in the following excerpt:

Time passed... then we got, yeah, got more experience mostly through the guys from human rights, you see. Then it got to the point that we got eighty houses there at Vila União, the one they built for the ones who lived in the affected area. It's affected nowadays, get it? We got eighty houses, see. And through GADDH is how we did it, we had no experience, right, but we did these inspections after much fight with the plant, we did these inspections, you see? And... we are still here, you see? (Representative of the Damaged Houses Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Empirical data show that the collective actions carried out by affected people go beyond the local level, with a registered mobility of the affected people participating in demonstrations, meetings, and public hearings outside the locality to present their claims and to support those affected by other dams. The Damaged Houses Association reports that the affected people took part, and still do, in demonstrations in other cities, as in the cities of Mariana, Brasília, among others. Besides that, they joined the 8th National MAB Meeting, which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 2018.

There was a meeting out of the city, just like in the Mariana dam, people from here went there. There was a meeting in Brasília, people from here went there. Even to Rio de Janeiro they went, you see? The people are taking part and looking for more... so we're learning more and more with the people from other places, right (Representative of the Damaged Houses Association, 2018, originally in Portuguese).

Tilly's (2010) repertoire of collective actions used by the affected people were essential to encourage the creation of other organizations in the locality, as in the example of the Landless Workers' Movement (MST), of the *Quilombola* Community of Braço Forte, and the Traditional Community of Cabeceira da Piabanha. The creation of these local organizations is similar to the appearance of Regional Dam Commissions, as observed by Foschiera (2010) and the *Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens* (2011). The Human Rights Support and Defense Group and the Community Communication Association have reported that the articulation among all organizations is key to strengthen local organization and that representatives of those affected and of the entities supporting them are members of these new organizations, thus favoring the interaction among them.

Final remarks

The main objective of this research was to analyze the contributions of repertoires of collective actions to the organization of the people affected by dams based on a study of the Itapebi Hydroelectric Power Plant, starting from the recognition of its explanatory potential to understand the forms of action appropriated by the affected people, just as the political motivations that sustain their actions and expectations throughout decades.

To reach this objective, a literature review was carried out among many disciplinary fields, which allowed for the construction of the theoretical-conceptual framework of the study. Interviews at the locality and examination of documents were also carried out, some of which were provided for examination during the interviews.

It was possible to identify that the Catholic Church was the first leading local organization and the responsible for encouraging other key entities that supported affected people, such as GADDH and the Community Radio, among others. At first, these organizations were responsible for representing and assisting affected people in their claims for the Itapebi dam. After 2015, the Movement of the Affected by Dams (in a nationwide level) started to absorb and refer local claims and demands of the affected by the Itapebi Dam. It was also possible to identify that, due to the affected people's need to present specific demands for the Itapebi plant, they organized it through collective actions that resulted on the numerous associations created.

It was observed that collective actions by affected people in the municipality of Salto da Divisa were initiated in the mid-1990s, with the participation of the Catholic Church, GADDH, and the Community Communication Association, which articulated themselves and promoted meetings, public petitions, marches, public hearings, among other actions, equally important for the associative organization of the locality's affected people. These articulations encouraged the creation of local associations, such as the associations of fishermen, washerwomen, stone, sand and block extractors, followed by the rural communities and damaged houses associations. The research indicated the importance of repertoires of collective actions in various situations, such as the approval of two important laws, highlighting the importance of organizing. Besides, research results show that, in the set of collective actions appropriated by the affected people, meetings have and continue to be one of the most significant repertoires, since they enable the creation of associations. Moreover, the study identified that one of the main advances arising from repertoires for affected people was the construction of a new neighborhood for the population that was about to lose the possibility of having households in the area and shape they wanted.

Based on the indicated results, the research concludes that, through more than 20 years of local experience, repertoires of collective actions have played and continue to play a key role in the action of affected people in face of the Itapebi dam regarding the compensations proposed by the company. Such actions may help to establish public policies proposed by MAB, such as the National Policy for the Rights of Populations Affected by Dams (PNAB), which should be key in absorbing the demands of local populations affected by dams and able to solve conflicts caused by the electric energy segment and its providers, which usually are dragged through decades in Brazil.

The research confirms that locally created repertoires of collective actions contribute to the organization of the people affected by the Itapebi dam, characterized as important pillars that strengthen MAB, conferring legitimacy to the strength of local leaderships capable of supporting the political motivations of affected people during decades.

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Notes

1. Brazilian expression to indicate a place that is disorganized, having no rules, and where people can do whatever they want.

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