

Transition Space: new standpoint on São Paulo State's (Brazil) population redistribution process

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ABSTRACT

There is a recent crop of studies regarding the reorganization and redefinition of the rural and urban spaces in Brazil, and especially in São Paulo State. The new standpoint considers shifts in the articulation between these spaces, as a consequence of their increasing spatial proximity and market relationship, as well as due to the emergence of a new laborer contingent that stands in the interface between traditional urban and rural economic activities. The most recent population assessment showed, for the first time in decades, an increasing rural population for São Paulo State, ending a long lasting rural exodus. We understand this rural population growth as a unique tendency towards the configuration of a well-defined new transition space. In defining this new transition space the study benefited from a novel attribute of the 1991 Demographic Census and the 1996 Population Count, the disaggregation of dwelling situation. It is our aim to show not only the population distribution among the now three spaces – rural, urban, and transition – but also the population's characterization regarding migratory situation, insertion into economic activities, and dwelling attributes. We contend that these characteristics will reflect the uniqueness of the State's "ruralization" process, that in truth, is another face of the urban expansion. Migration – particularly the intra-county and intra-regional ones – is vested with major importance, as a component of the aforementioned population growth and shift in demographic profile. The conformation of the new transition space is an urban population's necessity imposed onto a market thirst, labor demanding rural population. In this respect, this study brings about some new facets and implications for São Paulo's population policy considerations, of the "return to the countryside" movement, and the population "turnaround."

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Introduction

"Rural population grows and changes its profile" - such were the headlines of the influential newspaper Folha de São Paulo¹. The report's argument was that "after decades of consistent decreases, the Brazilian rural population reinitiated a growth phase during the 1990s. Agriculture, however, can not account for this process. On the contrary, a character shift occurred: the rural (locational) exodus became an agricultural (occupational) exodus."

The same happened in São Paulo State (SPS) - the rural population grew at a 0.68% average annual rate during the 91/96 period, as compared to an approximate 2% annual decrease during the previous decade. One fundamental question must be posed as regarded to the case of SPS: would this new demographic process represent a simple coming back to the rural way of life? Even considering that the countryside has actually changed relative to its economic configuration, as shown by Silva (1999), the rural population growth may be rather an statistical inaccuracy caused by the rigid and narrow definition of "rural area" in the census' and counties' administrative spheres.

The present study proposes an alternative viewpoint towards the population redistribution process in SPS - the conformation of a *transition area* - linking place of residence with demographic and socioeconomic aspects of the urban-rural articulation. The traditional rural-urban dependency relationship has been substituted by tighter commercial and residential bonds, with the expansion of non-agricultural activities in the rural areas leading to infrastructure development, and consequent improvement in communication and transportation between the two areas. The previous unilateral dependency has changed to an imposition of urban traits onto the rural areas, an actual result, as argued here, of the urban sprawl.

¹ Folha de São Paulo, March 22nd 1999 edition, pages 1-5.

2. Methodological considerations

The population distribution between rural and urban areas was obtained from the Demographic Censuses of 1980 and 1991 and the Population Count of 1996, according to the Administrative Regions (ARs) of São Paulo State (SPS). The "Transition Area" has been defined as an intermediary category between urban and rural, taking advantage of the new classification of place of residence offered by the 1991 Census and the Population Count of 1996. More precisely, the "Transition Area" includes the population residing in the Census categories "isolated urban areas" and "rural agglomerates of urban extension." Special consideration is given in the study to the Population Economically Active (PEA²), which allows indication of possible interactions between place of work and residence. Table 1 shows the place of residence categories as defined in the present discussion.

Table 1
Reclassification of "place of residence" for the population of São Paulo State, with respect to the definition of "transition areas."

Area reclassification	Place of residence (1991/1996)
"Urban" (1 e 2)	1) Urbanized area 2) Non-urbanized area
Transition (3 e 4), where:	
Urban Transition/UR-TR (3)	3) Isolated urban area
Rural Transition/RU-TR (4)	4) Rural agglomerate of urban extension
"Rural" (5, 6, 7, e 8)	5) Isolated rural agglomerate or village 6) Isolated rural agglomerate or nucleus 7) Other population agglomerates 8) Rural area (excluding rural agglomerate)

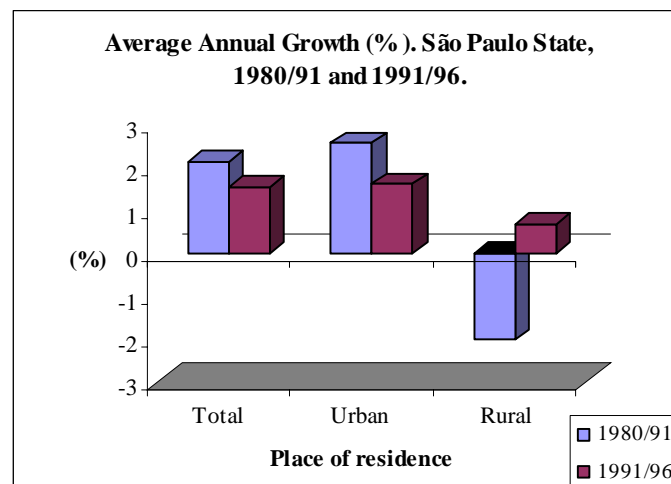
Note: The terms "urban" and "rural" are presented between quotation marks when not including the population of the transition area. Source: FIBGE (1994).

² Economic Active Population (PEA) are those people who, being 10 or older, declared had searched for, or worked in the previous 12 months, either continuous or sporadically.

3. Population distribution in São Paulo state according to place of residence

The population of SPS grew from around 25 million, 88.6% urban in 1980, to around 34.1 million, 93.1% urban in 1996. Table 2 shows the population distribution according to place of residence, urban or rural, during the two considered periods. A marked decrease in the annual growth rates for the total and urban populations, and an inversion to positive values in annual growth of the rural population, occurred in SPS during the period (Figure 1). This rural population growth is surprising relative to recent historic trends in SPS, and different from most other States in the country, and must be better studied in a regional scale (i.e., the Administrative Region category), and with the detail provided by the disaggregated information on place of residence.³

Figure 1
Average Annual Growth. São Paulo State
1991-1996.



³ Formally, population growth ensues from three components: natural growth, migratory surplus, and from "reclassification." Whereas the former two are determined by demographic parameters, the third can only be defined by more complex considerations. In fact, for a given county and period, urban population may grow due to simple administrative character reclassification from rural to urban, even whether no one has been born, migrated or died. The same may happen when a county splits, forming new administrative units which urban and rural areas may be unequally reduced. Thus, and because the present study does not address this

One intriguing fact stemming from this recent demographic trend is that the largest share of all regional differences in rural population concentration, in 1996, according to place of residence in SPS, actually refers to the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo (MASP) (Table 2). Whereas the whole State's rural population increased by some 78,000 people during the 1991/96 period, the MASP alone grew by over 244,000 people, obviously implying that most of the remaining ARs of the State lost rural population in the same period. The MASP together with the ARs Campinas and Sorocaba contained as much as 58.7% of the State's rural population in 1996. One must bear in mind that these ARs house the largest total populations, as well as the most urbanized ones.

The MASP alone increased by 11.6% in the period 1991/96, values comparable, not coincidentally, to the recent growth of several of its peripheral urban areas. The rural population growth of the AR São José dos Campos also increased, by 1.1%, in this period, reversing the trend seen during the previous decade.⁴ Another noteworthy aspect of this population redistribution process is the magnitude of rural population decrease between the two periods, which were remarkably smaller in 1991/96 as compared to the previous decade in great many ARs.

Could the alleged Statewide rural population increase in fact reflect rather an urban sprawl over areas still classified as rural? Bearing acceptance of this explanation, wouldn't it be justifiable, for the sake of improving demographic analytical accuracy, to introduce a transition area? Indeed, this seems to be exactly the case for the MASP, and especially for São Paulo city proper, since these areas, however presenting areas classified as rural, do not really show any agricultural productive-related structures. One must consider, however, that the MASP presents opportunities (large consumer market, for instance) for the development of non-agricultural activities in rural areas, that could partially account for this rural population growth.

problem, the conclusions about population trends as regarded to place of residence, may present a bias.

⁴ The remaining ARs present negative Average Annual Growth Rates in the period (1991/96).

Table 2
São Paulo State population, according to place of residence (Urban or Rural)
1980, 1991 and 1996.

Administrative Region	Population 1980			Population 1991			Population 1996		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
MR São Paulo	12,588,745	12,183,715	405,030	15,444,941	15,112,917	332,024	16,581,932	16,005,558	576,374
Registro	185,566	102,756	82,810	226,413	138,319	88,094	239,841	152,392	87,449
Santos	961,243	956,075	5,168	1,220,249	1,215,006	5,243	1,309,263	1,304,031	5,232
São José dos Campos	1,221,221	1,069,274	151,947	1,651,594	1,513,345	138,249	1,792,714	1,642,201	150,513
Sorocaba	1,510,478	1,079,788	430,690	2,016,489	1,610,651	405,838	2,224,772	1,837,516	387,256
Campinas	3,212,565	2,677,598	534,967	4,409,363	3,965,764	443,599	4,875,605	4,458,286	417,319
Ribeirão Preto	658,067	580,770	77,297	897,889	838,357	59,532	965,483	922,282	43,201
Bauru	662,374	527,305	135,069	824,249	732,651	91,598	894,301	823,049	71,252
São José do Rio Preto	949,893	671,466	278,427	1,130,282	949,576	180,706	1,217,864	1,063,980	153,884
Araçatuba	524,999	402,537	122,462	614,818	532,754	82,064	646,037	578,928	67,109
Presidente Prudente	662,163	457,084	205,079	734,312	600,902	133,410	755,353	629,688	125,665
Marília	680,928	487,455	193,473	789,468	659,036	130,432	835,889	734,371	101,518
Central	543,393	445,976	97,417	728,940	645,513	83,427	794,372	717,802	76,570
Barretos	268,916	213,591	55,325	358,306	315,036	43,270	383,779	347,814	35,965
Franca	411,523	341,506	70,017	541,511	486,034	55,477	601,904	549,719	52,185
Total	25,042,074	22,196,896	2,845,178	31,588,825	29,315,861	2,272,964	34,119,109	31,767,617	2,351,492

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1980, 1991 and Population Count 1996 (Special Tabulations - NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

A better understanding of this demographic dynamics can be achieved by analyzing the data on type of residence by location, that is, whether it is "isolated or in condominiums," or other.⁵ The category "isolated/condominium" represents the majority of rural dwellings in SPS in 1991 (91.7%), as well as for the majority of the ARs (Table 3).

Table 3
Type of residence by location in Administrative Regions.
São Paulo State, 1991

Administrative Region (AR)	"Isolated/ Condominium" (%)	"Residential Agglomerate" (%)	"Subnormal Agglomerate" (%)	Other (%)	Total (%)
MASP	63.6	29.9	3.8	2.8	332,024
Registro	98.0	1.2	0.2	0.7	88,094
Santos	75.8	-	19.1	5.2	5,243
São José dos Campos	98.1	0.8	0.1	1.1	138,249
Sorocaba	97.9	0.5	0.2	1.4	405,839
Campinas	93.0	3.8	2.1	1.1	443,600
Ribeirão Preto	94.9	2.4	0.2	2.5	59,533
Bauru	95.3	0.2	0.4	4.1	91,597
São José do Rio Preto	99.2	0.3	0.2	0.4	180,706
Araçatuba	97.9	0.1	0.9	1.1	82,065
Presidente Prudente	97.9	0.1	0.1	1.9	133,410
Marília	97.9	0.9	0.1	1.1	130,433
Central	95.2	-	1.4	3.5	83,426
Barretos	97.7	0.4	1.1	0.8	43,271
Franca	98.0	0.9	-	1.0	55,477
Total	91.7	5.5	1.2	1.6	2,272,964

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999).

Unfortunately, these data are not conducive to checking the expansion of urban over its peripheral rural areas, because the "isolated" and "in condominium" residence types are grouped together in one single Census category, making it impossible to distinguish a rather common situation in rural areas (i.e., isolated house) from the one typical of urban areas

⁵ This classification appears only in the 1991 Census data. The categories are as follows: "isolated or in condominium house or apartment" (isolated/condominium); "House or apartment in low-income residential agglomeration" (residential agglomerate); "house or apartment in subnormal residential agglomeration" (subnormal agglomerate); and "other" that includes quarters, improvised dwellings, or collective dwellings (other).

(i.e., the condominiums). However, the MASP, contrarily to the other ARs, had only 63.6% of its total rural dwellings in these residence types. Similarly, whereas the typically urban "residential agglomerate" category represented 29.9% of the MASP residence types, these were only 5.5% at the State level. These numbers corroborate the above sustained character of the rural area growth in the metropolitan region, given that "low-income residential agglomerates" are unlikely to occur in rural areas, indicating that these may be related to population located in areas still classified as rural, but actually showing traits of urban extension.

4. Transition area demographic dynamics

The distribution of the population of SPS according to the place of residence classification in "urban", transition, and "rural", for the period 1991/96 is presented in Table 4. It may be seen that the area "rural transition" appeared in 1991 with 206,205 people included in the "rural agglomerate of urban extension" category, increasing to 369,916 people in 1996. The "urban transition" category had 269,207 people included in the "isolated urban area" in 1991, and 316,109 people in 1996.

The transition category increased its relative importance in the period. When this category (transition) is included in the analysis, the previously notified increase of 78,000 people for the rural area in SPS during the 1991/96 period, becomes instead a decrease of 85,182 people. Hence, the growth registered in the rural area in the period was due, in fact, to an increase in the population residing in the transition area, particularly in the "rural agglomerates of urban extension," (RU-TR) with a net increase of 164,000 people (Figure 2).

Table 4

São Paulo State population as reclassified by place of residence: "Urban", Urban transition, Rural transition or "Rural" 1991/1996.

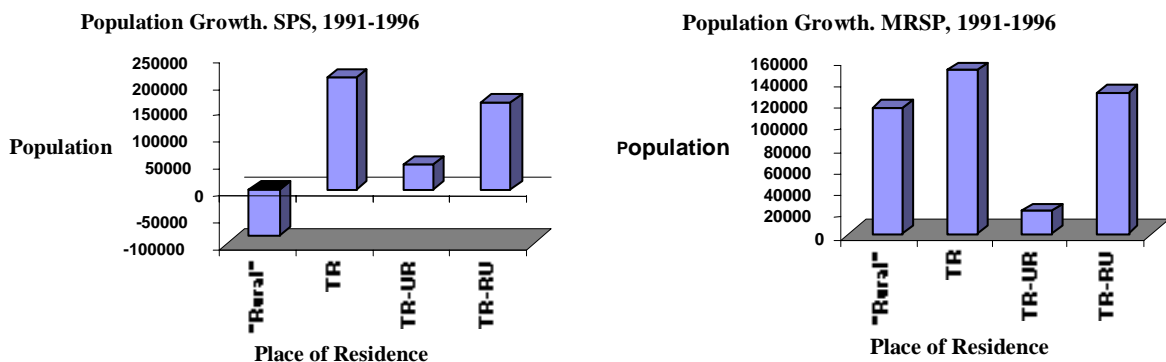
Administrative Region	Place of Residence/1991				Place of Residence/1996			
	"Urban"	"Rural"	"Transition"		"Urban"	"Rural"	"Transition"	
			UR-TR	RU-TR			UR-TR	RU-TR
RMSP	15,018,081	170,798	94,836	161,226	15,890,650	285,859	114,908	290,515
Registro	135,317	86,854	3,002	1,240	149,307	87,449	1,984	
Santos	1,215,006	4,773		470	1,304,031	4,684		548
S. José dos Campos	1,505,156	137,220	8,190	1,028	1,633,647	141,651	8,554	8,862
Sorocaba	1,587,703	403,986	22,949	1,852	1,789,060	381,493	47,892	5,763
Campinas	3,878,799	407,638	86,964	35,962	4,357,118	375,074	100,485	42,245
Ribeirão Preto	837,603	58,891	754	641	921,622	43,201	660	
Bauru	721,394	91,598	11,257		808,300	71,252	14,749	
S. José do Rio Preto	940,239	180,205	9,337	501	1,053,098	153,884	10,882	
Araçatuba	506,715	81,785	26,039	279	573,272	66,850	3,952	259
Presidente Prudente	599,165	133,410	1,737		627,136	116,574	2,552	9,091
Marília	656,576	130,432	2,460		731,214	101,518	3,157	
Central	644,859	83,103	654	325	717,126	73,462	676	3,108
Barretos	315,026	42,912	10	358	347,469	35,669	345	296
Franca	485,015	53,153	12,019	2,324	548,458	42,956	1,261	9,229
Total	29,046,654	2,066,758	269,207	206,205	31,451,508	1,981,576	316,109	369,916

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 and Population Count 1996 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

Figure 2

Population growth, according to place of residence: "Rural", "Transition", Urban-Transition or Rural-Transition.

São Paulo State and RMSP, 1991-1996.



source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 and Population Count 1996

Besides being one of the only two ARs to present net "rural" population growth, the MASP showed a larger population increase in the "rural transition" area as compared to the "urban transition." This net increase in "rural transition" population associated with its location in the "residential agglomerate" type of residence in the rural area of the MASP strongly corroborates the hypothesis of urban sprawl instead of rural growth, and is in agreement with previous observations of the urban expansion process underway in this region (Cunha, 1994)⁶.

This hypothesis is also furthered by the consideration of the different types of residence in the proposed transition area (Table 5). The "isolated/agglomerate" category represented 89.7% of the dwellings in the "urban-transition" area in SPS, whereas only 6.4% was represented by "residential agglomerates." The category "residential agglomerate" made up 56.1% of the dwellings of the "rural-transition" area in SPS, and as much as 61.0% in the MASP.

⁶ The other region that had presented this behavior is Campinas. As shown by Baeninger (1992), the urban sprawl is also a visible phenomenon in this AR.

Table 5
Place of residence in the "Transition area" by ARS.
São Paulo State, 1991.

Administrative Region	"Urban-transition"					"Rural-transition"				
	Isolated Cond.	Resid. Aglom.	Subnor. Aglom	Other	Total	Isolated Cond.	Resid. Aglom	Subnor Aglom	Other	Total
MR São Paulo	91.0	2.2	6.4	0.4	94,836	34,9	60.9	3.8	0.4	161,226
Registro	100.0	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,002	82,0	18.0	0,0	0,0	1,240
Santos	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	100	0,0	470
S. J. dos Campos	96.3	0,0	1.9	1.9	8,190	100	0,0	0,0	0,0	1,028
Sorocaba	92.5	0.4	6.7	0.5	22,949	86,0	0,0	10.6	3.4	1,852
Campinas	85.7	13.2	0.6	0.5	86,964	55,0	44.9	0,0	0.2	35,962
Ribeirão Preto	100.0	0,0	0,0	0,0	754	0,0	100	0,0	0,0	641
Bauru	79.3	13.3	0,0	7.3	11,257	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0
S. J. do Rio Preto	97.3	2.5	0.1	0.1	9,337	100	0,0	0,0	0,0	501
Araçatuba	98.2	1.5	0,0	0.2	26,039	100	0,0	0,0	0,0	279
Pres. Prudente	37.7	58.7	0,0	3.6	1,737	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0
Marília	75.0	17.8	7.2	0,0	2,460	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0
Central	100.0	0,0	0,0	0,0	654	7,7	0,0	80.3	11.7	325
Barretos	100.0	0,0	0,0	0,0	10	0,0	0,0	100	0,0	358
Franca	97.9	2.1	0,0	0,0	1,019	79,6	18.3	0,0	2.1	2,324
Total	89.7	6.4	3.1	0.8	269,207	39,9	56.1	3.6	0.4	206,205

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

5. The productive insertion of the Population Economically Active (PEA)

The PEA corresponded to 41.6 and 44.0% of SPS's total population in 1980 and 1991, respectively. As regarded by place of residence, 89.7% of the total PEA resided in the urban area in 1980, and 93.4% in 1991. The study of the productive insertion⁷ of the PEA according to its place of residence showed that the urban PEA is mostly involved in the secondary and tertiary productive sectors of the economy, with the latter showing a marked increase (54.0 - 61.0%) in the period. Regarding the PEA inserted in the primary sector in SPS, the absolute number grew from 468,690 (1980) to 554,817 (1991), which

⁷ The productive insertion considered the economic activity sector categories primary (agricultural),

corresponds to no proportional increase (just 5.0% of the total PEA). In the MASP, on the other hand, the PEA inserted in the primary sector more than doubled in the period (42,064 people) representing an important increase, even considering that this represents only 1.2% of the total PEA.

Regarding the rural PEA of SPS, despite an absolute decrease from 1,063,276 in 1980 to 883,374 in 1991, a net increase occurred in the number of people in the tertiary sector, and a decrease of almost 180,000 people in the primary sector (Table 6). These figures point out the trend towards a "transfer"⁸ of workers residing in rural areas to typically urban activities - those belonging to the secondary and tertiary sectors (Figure 3).

Table 6
The Population Economically Active, according to Place of Residence and the Economic Activity Sectors.
São Paulo State, 1980 e 1991

Year	Place of residence - Urban PEA				Place of residence - Rural PEA			PEA Total
	Economic activity sectors			PEA Total	Economic activity sectors			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary			Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1980	5.1	41.1	53.8	9,117,712	68.5	16.2	15.3	1,063,276
1991	4.6	34.4	61.0	12,176,550	61.2	15.0	23.8	883,374

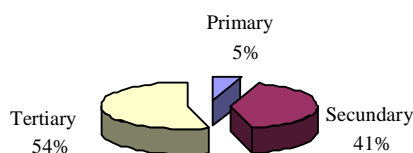
Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

secondary (industry) and tertiary (commerce and services).

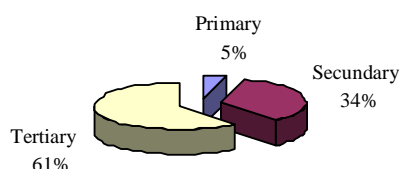
⁸ One can not overlook the arguments of Silva (1999) that a parcel of the PEA inserted in non-primary activities could exert this activity in the rural area proper. In this sense, it would be inaccurate to associate a "transfer" to the tertiary sector with a change in place of work from rural to urban.

Figure 3
PEA according to place of residence (UR or RU) and economic sector of activity.
São Paulo State, 1980 and 1991

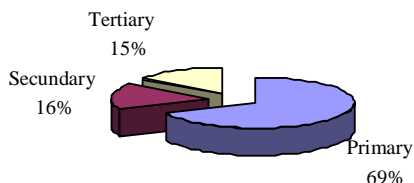
PEA - Urban Area - SPS, 1980



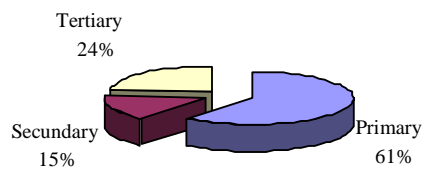
PEA - Urban Area - SPS, 1991



PEA - Rural Area - SPS, 1980



PEA - Rural Area - SPS, 1991

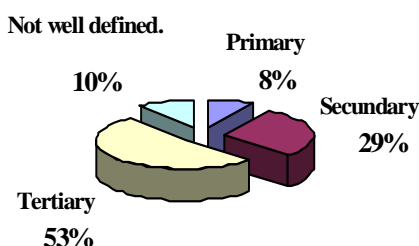


Source: FIBGE, Demographic Censuses 1980 and 1991

Regarding the transition area, most of the PEA was inserted in the tertiary sector in 1991 (52.3%) followed by the secondary (29.3%) and the primary sector (8,3%). The PEA of the transition area (178,821 people) consisted of 57.0% urban-transition, being 51.7% in the tertiary, 28.1% in the secondary, and 10.5% in the primary sector. The 43% residing in the rural-transition showed 53.0% in the tertiary, 31.0% in the secondary, and just 5.0% in the primary sector. This very small participation of the PEA of the rural-transition in the primary sector was even smaller in the MASP (corresponding to only 1.5%). This distribution of the PEA into transition, urban-transition, and rural-transition according to insertion into the sectors of economic activity can be seen in Figure 4.

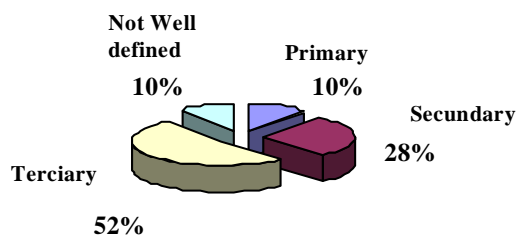
Figure 4
PEA residing in the transition area, urban-transition, and rural-transition according to sector of economic activity
São Paulo State, 1991.

PEA - Transition Area - SPS, 1991



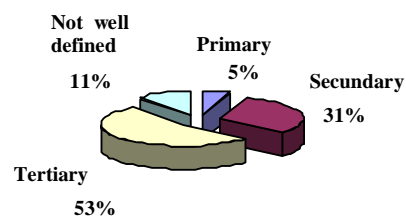
PEA - Urban Transition Area - SPS,

1991



PEA - Rural Transition Area - SPS,

1991



Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991

The PEA inserted in the primary sector of the rural-transition area is also unimportant when compared with the area formerly classified as rural. As can be seen in Figure 3 and Table 6, the primary sector responded by 61.0% of the rural PEA in 1991. In the rural-transition, this sector responded by only 0.7% of the total rural PEA. On the other hand, the secondary sector in the rural-transition responded by 17.8% of the total rural PEA, while the tertiary sector responded by 19.2%, reinforcing the distinction between rural-transition and "rural" area.

6. Population movements in São Paulo State: 1970/80 and 1980/91

Two interesting results regarding the distribution of the population according to place of residence stems from the analysis of place of residence of migrants at the census date against the previous place of residence: the weight of migration in explaining the population growth of any given region, and the understanding of possible relationships between place of residence and place of work/study between the urban and rural areas.

At the time of the Census of 1980, some ARs of SPS had a important contingent of its migrants residing in the rural areas. In fact, in 1980, more than a third of the migrants was residing in the rural areas in the ARs Presidente Prudente, São José do Rio Preto, Marília, and especially Registro (up to 47%). This situation changed completely in 1991, when most of the migrants resided in urban areas. In 1980, of the 5,984,788 migrants residing in urban SPS, 68% had previously resided in the urban area, and 32% in the rural. Of the more than 867 thousand migrants residing in rural SPS in 1980, 31% had previously resided in the urban area, and 69% came from the countryside (Table 7).

In 1991, of the 5,480,639 migrants residing in the urban area, 80% had previously resided in the urban area and 20% in the rural, whereas 44% of the migrants residing in the rural area came from urban areas and 56% from the rural. Taking into account the great importance of migration for the population growth of SPS, as well as for several of its ARs, these numbers stress the weight of migratory processes for the progressive urbanization of the State.

Table 7
Population movement according to place of residence - urban or rural - present at the
Census date and previous, by ARs.
São Paulo State, 1980 and 1991.

Administrative Region	Total of Migrants	Population movements – 1980 (%)				Population movements – 1991 (%)			
		UR/UR	RU/UR	RU/RU	UR/RU	UR/UR	RU/UR	RU/RU	UR/RU
MR São Paulo	3,451,333	64.9	30.5	2.3	2.3	77.7	19.9	0.8	1.6
Registro	46,085	38.1	14.7	32.7	14.5	50.2	11.5	19.6	18.6
Santos	294,812	81.7	17.7	0.3	0.3	88.6	11.0	0.1	0.3
S. José Campos	327,688	67.3	23.6	6.1	3.0	78.6	12.4	4.2	4.8
Sorocaba	363,781	48.2	25.6	18.7	7.5	60.9	17.7	11.1	10.3
Campinas	1,003,026	52.3	29.5	12.5	5.6	68.7	17.9	7.7	5.7
Ribeirão Preto	165,951	59.3	26.5	9.8	4.3	71.8	17.9	5.2	5.1
Bauru	167,619	47.7	24.5	21.5	6.3	66.2	16.7	11.2	5.9
S. J. Rio Preto	267,189	43.7	23.1	26.5	6.7	62.0	18.3	12.9	6.7
Araçatuba	136,707	52.0	24.1	18.4	5.5	65.3	16.9	11.6	6.3
Pres. Prudente	177,374	40.6	24.5	28.4	6.6	58.1	16.7	14.9	10.3
Marília	169,496	40.5	25.5	27.9	6.0	60.9	16.2	15.1	7.9
Central	137,519	53.0	24.1	16.2	6.7	64.3	17.9	11.1	6.7
Barretos	50,040	47.2	23.4	21.2	8.3	61.9	17.6	12.9	7.6
Franca	93,880	43.3	33.8	16.3	6.7	62.2	21.9	8.3	7.6
Total	6,852,500	59.3	28.1	8.8	3.9	72.1	18.0	5.5	4.4

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1980 and 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

Most of the decrease in absolute numbers of migrants in the 1980/91 period (768,071 people) resulted from a reduction of movement of people who had previously resided in the rural area. Even considering that the actual rural/urban migrant numbers may be underestimated⁹, that movement reduction again reinforces the argument of concentration of population in the cities, be these of any size.

Additionally, the urban to urban (UR/UR) movement was prevalent, representing 59% and 72% of the migratory movements in the 1980 and 1991 censuses, respectively. Conversely, the rural to urban (RU/UR) movement decreased by as many as 828,394 people in 1991 as compared to 1980 which represents a reduction of 43%. Even after this

⁹ Since the Census information actually relates only to the last migration movement, many of the movements reported as coming from urban areas can actually have origin in rural areas, because of the possibility of multiple movements. Hence, the studied data offer only an indication for rural/urban movement. For a deeper discussion of this character of the analysis, see Patarra e Cunha (1987).

reduction, the RU/UR movement still represented 18% of all migratory movement in 1991 (1,094,370 people). The rural to rural (RU/RU) movement also decreased, by significant 44% (265,241 people).

An increased UR/RU population movement occurred for twelve of the fifteen ARs in the 1991 census. Only for the MASP there was a significant decrease in UR/RU migrant numbers in 1991 as compared to 1980 (a total of 40,313 fewer people). Comparatively, migration towards the rural areas, especially during the 1970s, were important only in the ARs Registro, Sorocaba, and the agricultural ARs of Western SPS.

In order to better assess the impact of population movements in the conformation of the urban, rural, and transition areas of SPS, the participation of migrants in the formation of the resident population is presented in Tables 8 and 9. An important decrease in the participation of migrants in the composition of the resident population of SPS occurred between the censuses of 1980 (27.5%) and 1991 (19.8%), which represents 630,921 fewer people¹⁰. This same pattern is valid when the urban and rural areas are considered on their own. However, the relative participation of migrants in the resident population was higher for the rural area, in both considered periods (see also Figure 5).

The data on Table 8 also stresses the participation of migrants for the growth of the rural population of the MASP during the 1970s. Almost 40% of the rural population of the MASP declared to be migrants in the 1980 census, a proportion that decreased to about 20% in 1991. However, as can be seen in Table 9, this proportion changes when the reclassification of places of residence employed in this study is applied - the participation of migrants in the resident population is greatest in the urban transition area, both in the MASP and the State as a whole.

¹⁰ The small differences in the numbers of migrants between Tables 7 and 8 are due to partial declaration of origin.

Table 8

Migrant population according to its participation in the Total Resident Population. São Paulo State and Metropolitan Region of São Paulo, 1980 and 1991

Region	Place of residence/1980			Place of residence/1991		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
São Paulo State						
Resident pop.	25,042,074	22,196,896	2,845,178	31,588,825	2,931,5861	2,272,964
Migrant pop.	6,876,590	6,004,833	871,757	6,245,669	5,632,586	613,083
% migr / resid.	27.5	27.1	30.6	19.8	19.2	27.20
MASP						
Resident pop.	12,588,745	1,218,3715	405,030	15,444,941	15,112,917	332,024
Migrant pop.	3,466,819	3,306,151	160,668	2,672,552	2,608,080	64,472
% migr / resid.	27.5	27.1	39.7	17.3	17.3	19.4

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1980 and 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

Table 9

Migrant participation in the resident population, according to the reclassification of place of residence. São Paulo State and Metropolitan Region of São Paulo, 1991

SPS	Place of residence/1991				
	Total	"Urban"	"Rural"	UR-TR	RU-TR
Resident pop.	31,588,825	29,046,654	2,066,758	269,207	206,205
Migrant pop.	6,245,669	5,551,467	575,241	81,119	37,842
% migr / resid.	19.8	19.1	27.8	30.1	18.4
MASP					
Resident pop.	15,444,941	15,018,081	170,798	94,836	161,226
Migrant pop.	2,672,552	2,583,083	40,865	24,997	23,607
% migr / resid.	17.3	17.2	23.9	26.4	14.6

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

In fact, taking the data for SPS, one can observe not only the importance of migrants in the composition of the "rural" population, but also, the major participation of migratory movements for the composition of the resident population of the areas classified as transition - one fourth of the residents in the transition areas were migrants, against less than 20% for the "urban" population or the population of the State as a whole. More meaningful still, almost a third of the residents in the "urban transition" were migrants in

1991, a result that stresses the role of the areas of urban sprawl in the settlement of these people, both in the MASP as Statewide.

The importance of migration is emphasized by considering that the resident population of the "rural transition" areas of the MASP represents 48.5% of the resident population of the area previously classified as rural and that the migrants in this area represent 37% of the resident population of the rural area (Tables 8 and 9).

The role of population movements in the conformation of the "transition areas" is once more underlined when one observes the data on intra-county mobility, which can show movement between urban and rural areas within a given county¹¹.

The data of the 1991 census point out that, in the State of São Paulo, about 7% of the population had changed place of residence within the county. One surprising result is that almost 13% of those residing in rural areas had previously resided in urban areas, a proportion that is even higher for several ARs. The relevance of this UR/RU movement tends to be more important in the most urbanized regions of the State, such as S. José dos Campos, Campinas, Ribeirão Preto, and the MASP, where as much as 12.5% of the population residing in the "rural" area (discounted the rural transition) declared its origin in urban areas.

¹¹ This information, rarely used by migration researchers, is obtained for every resident by the following census question: "in this county, have you resided just in the urban area, just in the rural area, or in both?."

Table 10
Proportion of the residing population declaring change of place of residence within
the county.
São Paulo State, 1991

Administrative Region	Present place of residence						
	Urban			Rural			Total
	Total	"Urban"	TR-UR	Total	"Rural"	TR-RU	
MR São Paulo	1.08	1.07	2.45	9.56	12.42	6.52	1.27
Registro	15.06	15.26	6.26	4.70	4.57	14.03	11.03
Santos	0.62	0.62	-	7.46	7.61	5.96	0.65
S.J.dos Campos	5.22	5.18	12.95	12.83	12.73	25.49	5.86
Sorocaba	12.46	12.55	6.00	8.78	8.76	12.85	11.72
Campinas	8.74	8.77	7.53	12.47	12.30	14.40	9.12
Rib.Preto	10.76	10.77	6.76	23.89	23.75	36.51	11.63
Bauru	16.20	16.18	16.90	14.43	14.43	-	16.00
S.J.Rio Preto	20.35	20.47	8.82	14.32	14.31	18.36	19.39
Araçatuba	19.11	19.71	7.46	15.61	15.47	55.91	18.64
Presid. Prudente	21.52	21.54	17.33	15.07	15.07	-	20.35
Marília	21.79	21.73	37.13	13.62	13.62	-	20.44
Central	16.17	16.14	46.79	15.79	15.75	28.31	16.13
Barretos	21.59	21.59	100.00	22.88	22.83	28.49	21.75
Franca	15.32	15.28	36.41	19.33	18.90	29.17	15.73
Total	6.28	6.28	6.73	12.44	12.82	8.61	6.73

Source: FIBGE, Demographic Census 1991 (Special tabulations NEPO/UNICAMP, 1999)

Even though this UR/RU movement has been more important in the agricultural regions, it is surprising when registered in the most urban and industrial regions, especially the MASP, and the ARs Campinas, S. José dos Campos, and Sorocaba. These results emphasize, on the one hand, that the alleged rural growth in SPS could rather be a statistical artifice, and on the other, that the growth that is actually observed in parcels of the urban area (still to be reclassified) could be deeply conditioned by population movement, be it from within or from without the county of residence.

Concluding remarks

The analysis of the distribution of SPS resident population in the 1980s and first half of the 1990s, according place of residence, restated the intense urbanization process still underway in the State. However, the growth of the rural population during the latter period brought about a series of questions about the character of this process:

1. Could this rural population growth be a "return to the countryside" movement?
2. What are the demographic characteristics of this population?
3. What transformation would this rural population growth entail?
4. Could this rural population growth actually be a reflection of the urban sprawl?

A first hint suggesting that the rural population growth actually reflects an urban sprawl process came about with the analysis of place of residence, which showed that the recorded population growth was centered in the MASP, exactly the most urbanized one. In order to investigate the alleged growth of the rural population in SPS, the information on place of residence of the 1991 Census and 1996 Population Count was further disaggregated into "urban", "transition" and "rural" areas. Even though the "transition area" corresponded to just 1.5% of the total State population in 1991 and just over 2.0% in 1996, it harbored most of the growth previously addressed to the rural area. Again, the MASP concentrated most of the population growth of the State.

An analysis about the insertion of the resident population into the sectors of economic activity confirmed the changes in occupation of those residing in the rural areas. For this people, a considerable increment occurred in the activities of the tertiary sector of rural areas, even if the occupation in the primary sector still prevailed. However, people living in the transition area showed prevalence of the secondary and tertiary sectors, closing the gap between the rural and urban areas. This result calls for further investigation, since the Census data is not completely appropriate for this analysis, for it lacks detail to qualify occupational insertion (for a discussion on this aspect, see Silva, 1997).

Regarding population movement, the data shown in this study are quite conclusive in pointing out the importance of migration (both inter-county and intra-county) for the growth of rural areas (centered in the transition areas), especially in the most urbanized regions of the State.

In conclusion, this study evidenced, on the one hand, a continued urban sprawl process underway in the most populated areas, and on the other, a loss of rural population in the agricultural areas of the State. This result contributes to the discussion of what has been called the "new configuration of the rural areas of São Paulo State," particularly regarding the population dynamics and spatial distribution. It should be clear that a "return to the countryside" process is not underway in the State of São Paulo, as might be inferred by the Census statistics and the National Household Surveys (PNAD). Nevertheless, this conclusion does not invalidate the important findings regarding the new urban/rural economic relationships, rather, it calls for further investigation on the correspondences between the tightening the economic relationships and the spatial population distribution process.

Last but not least, as demographers we must stress the value of the category improvements and innovations employed by the IBGE in the collection of information about place of residence. Even though poorly explored, these information represent a new possibility for understanding the urban/rural developments in Brazil, and impose onto the county administrations the responsibility of adopting a policy of reviewing their urban delimitation, which certainly would ease the work of experts and decision makers.

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