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**AGRARIAN HERITAGE AS A STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY OF 'CASTILLA-LA MANCHA'  
(SPAIN) AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO THE MICRO-REGION OF  
CANOINHAS (SANTA CATARINA, BRAZIL)**

**Abstract:**

The objective of this article is to present studies carried out in the territory of the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain), in order to investigate strategies of development based on the concept of agrarian heritage, and subsequently consider the agrarian assets of the region of Contestado (Brazil), with a view to the establishment of similar strategies of regional development. The methodological approach considered the examination of the plans for the development of Castilla-La Mancha, based on fieldwork carried out in the provinces of that Spanish territory and supported in the review of literature on the conceptual category of agrarian heritage. It is concluded that the search for strategies of regional development can be based on similar actions carried out in other territories and that their implementation will require the mobilization of the social and political agents of the micro-region of Canoinhas.

**Keywords:**

Agrarian heritage, Autonomous community of Castilla-La Mancha, Canoinhas Micro Region, Regional development

**JEL Classification:** R58, Q26, Z19

## 1 Introduction

The historical process of formation has a special influence on the development of regions, territories or countries. In this context, we present the micro-region of Canoinhas, which composes the territory of the Contestado, which extends through the northern and central-western regions of the State of Santa Catarina.

As a consequence of activities historically related to extractive production and land concentration, the micro-region of Canoinhas, in comparison to the twenty micro-regions that make up the State of Santa Catarina, currently holds the third worst Municipal Human Development Index (HDI-M). Given this situation, proposals aimed at providing alternative development strategies may be considered justifiable.

It's appropriate to specify the notion of development adopted here, which follows the conceptual orientation of Dallabrida (2015):

Territorial development is understood as a process of continuous change, located historically and territorially, but integrated in intra-territorial, supra-territorial and global dynamics, sustained by the potential of the resources and assets (material and immaterial, generic and specific) existing in a location, with regard to the socio-economic promotion and the improvement of the quality of life of its population (page 325).

The search for alternative strategies of development encompasses the analysis of the potentials of a given territory. In addition to endogenous elements - considering those specific resources - it requires the active participation of the local agents in fostering the desired development process, through the use of the patrimonial elements already existing in that territory, which characterize their territorial identity (Plaza, Cañizares, Ruiz Pulpón, 2017 17). In recent years, the debate about the processes of heritage, that allow the identification, recognition, valuation, preservation and the diffusion of certain patrimonial assets has increased, and, as a result of this approach, new categories, new types of heritage, have been created. In this article, we intend to analyze Agrarian heritage and its potential, by examining its implementation in the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain, with a view to its application to the micro-region of Canoinhas, considering that its theoretical-methodological framework is in harmony with the characteristics of both territories, namely: the appreciation of the agrarian activity and of the individuals involved in this activity, with special attention to the the most fragile links in the segment: traditional and environmentally sustainable practices and their executors - farmers, breeders and smallholders - through family-based production. In short, agrarian heritage meets the demands for development, since it incorporates a distinct tutelary purpose, which consists in the productive use or acceptance of heritage as factor of development. "This allows linking heritage to strategies of development or to productive activities, especially at local level" (Ruiz, 2015: 57).

Although the purpose of this article is to present a study about the conceptual category of the agrarian heritage implemented in the Autonomous Community of La Mancha (Spain), with a view to its applicability to the micro-region of Canoinhas (Brazil), it is appropriate to initially describe the historical processes concerning the formation of the territories under analysis. Subsequently, the theoretical references pertinent to the conceptual category of agrarian heritage, the methodological procedures used and the results and discussions regarding the identification and recognition of agrarian heritage in Spain and, similarly, the potential possibilities present in the micro-region of Canoinhas ( Brazil).

### **The process of the historical formation of the micro-region of Canoinhas**

The territory of Contestado, which includes the micro-region of Canoinhas, in its early days, was occupied predominantly by indigenous populations of the Xokleng group, who did not practice agriculture, only hunting and gathering as a means of survival. From the first decades of the eighteenth century, the non-indigenous occupation of that territory began. This process intensified with the opening of the Troop Path.

From the year 1728, a set of roads was inaugurated that connected São Paulo to Rio Grande do Sul - which intersected the micro-region of Canoinhas. The Path of Troops, as it became known, remained active for almost two hundred years, which facilitated the process of the occupation and colonization of the southern region of Brazil.

During the first decades of the 19th century, as a result of the The Path of Troops and the expansion of the *erva mate* trade, the first waves of immigrants settled in the micro-region of Canoinhas. In the year 1829, the installation of a colony of immigrants took place in Rio Negro (current municipality of Mafra).

Among the characteristics peculiar to the micro-region of Canoinhas, the most notable include land disputes and social conflicts related to the possession and use of land. In the early twentieth century, that territory became the scene of the Contestado War (1912-1916), one of the largest social movements in Brazilian history. That conflict provoked the resistance of the peasant population to the destruction of their way of life and the disposition of their lands to North American companies, to the railway and logging sector, as well as large landowners. At the height of the fighting, the local population at that time opposed more than half the number of soldiers in the Brazilian army, some seven thousand men, in addition to the local police. State repression intensified with the hiring of a contingent of more than a thousand armed men by the landowners of the region. By the end of the conflict, it is estimated that tens of thousands of people had perished.

Currently, the micro-region of Canoinhas consists of twelve municipalities located in the northern plateau of Santa Catarina, southern region of Brazil: Bela Vista do Toldo, Canoinhas, Irineópolis, Itaiópolis, Mafra, Major Vieira, Monte Castelo, Papanduva, Porto União, Santa Terezinha, Timbo Grande and Três Barras. This set of municipalities occupies a total area of 9,411.12 km<sup>2</sup>, and it has a population of 243,739 inhabitants, of which approximately eighty-two thousand (about 1/3 of the total) live in rural areas, while approximately one hundred and sixty-two thousand (around 2/3 of the total) reside in urban areas (IBGE, 2014).

It is reasonable to specify three factors acting in the micro-region of Canoinhas that generate obstacles to the implementation strategies of territorial development : (i) as a result of the trauma associated with the social conflict and the genocide practiced against the *Caboclos* during the Contestado War, those living in the territory were instilled with feelings of shame, which silenced the movement and struggle of the peasant farmers; (ii) the expansion of land which had been experienced, which has promoted the concentration of land ownership, under the control of landowners and multinational corporations; (iii) the perpetuation of an economic model that favors silvicultural-based extractivism, destined for the production of pulp and paper.

### **The process of the historical formation of the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha**

The Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, which is part of the Kingdom of Spain, is made up of five provinces: Albacete, Ciudad Real, Cuenca, Guadalajara and Toledo, and occupies an area of 79,462 km<sup>2</sup> (INE, 2016) which corresponds to 4.39% of the territorial area of Spain, hosting a population of 2,041,631 inhabitants, which represents 15.70% of the Spanish population.

The history of human occupation, in the territory where the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha is located, dates back thousands of years, to the time of the Paleolithic period, that is, before 10,000 years BC. Over the centuries, the territory was inhabited by indigenous, Celtic, Iberian, Roman, Muslim populations among others, who contributed to the formation of its history, techniques and agrarian production (Sáez, Sánchez, Colino, González, Díaz and Ruiz, 2014: 393).

In contemporary times, especially during the course of the twentieth century, events that determined the course of Spanish society also reverberated over that territory. The Civil War (1936-1939), and the establishment of a dictatorship that extended for almost four decades, subjugated Spain. This period was characterized by the repression of fundamental rights and the suppression of individual freedoms, as well as an incisive process of centralization, which also influenced territorial planning. The process

of democratic transition, triggered in the late 1970s and early 1980s, ended the centralizing character of the previous period, developing a project of autonomic and territorial decentralization (López, 2007).

In that context, as a result of the process of democratic transition, state reorganization and territorial decentralization, the advent of "regional Spain" or "State of Autonomies" transpired. In 1982, the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha was established.

While it's political and administrative formation is relatively recent, the provinces that make up the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha have a millenarian history, a fact that gave rise to difficulties of integration due to the absence of a regional conscience, demanding the reformation of an identity of regionalist character.

The "new" territory of Castilla-La Mancha consisted of "a space with a questionable common past, with a territorial conformation that had never existed ... deprived of historical references on which to build" (López, 2007: 390).

Faced with this reality, the construction of a new territorial identity represented a peremptory attempt at forming a new autonomous community. The new territorial formation, characterized by originality and exclusivity, required the elaboration of new identity links. The accomplishment of this arduous task was favored by a factor that contributed decisively: the patrimonial richness Castilian-La Mancha: the wealth of heritage present in Castilian-La Mancha.

The rich heritage of Castilla-La Mancha stems from its millennial history, characterized by the diversity of peoples and cultures that inhabited the territory. This assertion is corroborated by the fact that UNESCO has recognized four World Heritage Sites located in that territory: the Historic City of Toledo, the City History of Cuenca, Almaden Mining Park and the Rock Paintings. Besides these four noteworthy references, various archaeological parks, castles, museums, and numerous remnants of the Roman period may also be acknowledged.

Since the last decade of the twentieth century, this large territorial heritage has been valued progressively, significantly increasing tourism. It should be noted that a large proportion of tourists visiting Castilla-La Mancha come from neighboring regions, especially the capital, Madrid. The tourist structure has developed as a result of increased demand, which allows us to infer a trend of significant growth with regard to the territorial potential of La Mancha. In this context, territorial heritage represents a cultural and economic resource (Pillet, 2011: 727), a fact that provides the tourism sector with the capacity to contribute as a strategy for territorial development.

## 2 Revision of Literature

The conceptual category of agrarian heritage was essentially developed by a group of researchers from the International University of Andalusia in Granada, Spain, expanding the analytical capacity of the academic tools available and was consolidated in the Charter of Baeza (2012), according to which: Agrarian Heritage is made up of a set of natural and cultural goods, both material and immaterial, generated or exploited by agrarian activity throughout history "(Ruiz, 2015: 452).

The definition of agrarian heritage incorporates a broad set of assets:

(...) movable property. (utensils, implements or tools used for tillage, transport, storage and manufacture of crops and livestock, documents and bibliographical objects, etc.), exclusive real estate (constructive elements considered exclusively: farmhouses, orchards, centers of agrarian transformation, barns, fenced, areas, etc.), real estate as a whole or linear (landscapes, rural settlements, irrigation systems, unique agroecosystems, livestock routes, roads, etc.), intangible heritage (linguistics, beliefs, rituals and

festive acts, knowledge, gastronomy and culinary culture, craft techniques, living treasures, etc.) and natural and genetic heritage (local varieties of crops, native animal breeds, seeds, soils, vegetation and associated wildlife etc .) (The Charter of Baeza, 2012).

Notwithstanding the Baeza Charter, it constitutes a normative document that allows the international diffusion of the concept of agrarian heritage, making possible, its application to agrarian properties located in any country of the world, be it in the autonomous community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain , or in the micro-region of Canoinhas, Brazil, the set of investigations that established the parameters considered by the Charter, denominated "Project PAGO: Agrarian heritage: the cultural construction of a territory through agrarian activity", published in a work under the same title (2015). Throughout the text, the authors explain the objective of the concept of agrarian heritage, which consists of providing an integrated vision, contemplating goods endowed with agrarian value in their interrelated aspects, jointly, avoiding the fragmented and decontextualized recognition of agrarian goods. The processes of exclusivity can also create obstacles, since, by privileging certain aspects of a product to the detriment of others, a secondary role is imposed on the agrarian activity, subordinating it and obscuring the importance of agriculture (Ruiz, 2015: 29). This is the case, for example, of wine, by fixing the interest in the product itself, its cultivation and the processes that surround it are disregarded.

The Baeza Charter (2012) emphasizes agroecological and environmental values in its ongoing dispute - which takes place at a global level and manifests itself at a local level - against predatory agricultural practices, disseminated by agri-business, that "so many destructive effects are having on the environment, on cultivated biodiversity, on human nutrition or on the rights of farmers and indigenous peoples "(Ruiz, 2015: 43).

The identification, recognition and the valuation of assets of agrarian heritage , a process commonly called "*patrimonialization*", when carried out, may generate benefits to a given territory. This *patrimonialization* process tends to increase protective measures, as well as measures of development - through the provision of governmental or even external resources, an example of such being the countries of the European Union - and dissemination of these goods, including from the territory itself, providing a comprehensive and integrated perspective of agrarian goods, which enables the formation of a broad perception about the characteristics and the agrarian potential of a given society. This fact, which exceeds the economic potential, promotes the recognition and strengthening of territorial identity, either by the people and institutions outside the territory, or by the individuals who live there. In the case of workers involved in agrarian activities, it tends to raise their self-esteem and sense of belonging to a certain place and their respective identity. In relation to the other individuals, not directly involved in the agrarian activity - in the case of the urban population of the territory, where these goods were identified - it provokes a valuation that triggers awareness and respect, both for agrarian activity and for those who carry it out. Moreover, the recognition and strengthening of territorial identity can also promote the elevation of the levels of social capital in a given society, a *sine qua non* condition for endogenous development processes.

Among the requirements that affect assets subject to *patrimonialization*, it is necessary to have a historical perspective, that is, agrarian practices and goods derived from them must have cultural value, having undergone a process of cultural (re) signification, something that only manifests itself over the passage of time. This excludes present-time goods and recent practices incorporated in a given productive scenario.

Therefore, assets that allow *patrimonialization*, through the concept of agrarian heritage - as previously explained - must have ties with an agrarian function executed directly by the farmer, besides presenting a historical character. In those cases where the agricultural value suffered a significant depreciation, such value will be recognized from its historical attributes, concerning the history of agriculture (Ruiz, 2015: 37). On the other hand, those assets used in current and productive

agrarian practices may also be protected. This feature of the concept allows the protection of living agro-systems, suppressing the idea that *patrimonialization* requires a process of fossilization of the protected goods. In this case, the farmers, in addition, maintain the productive processes and the consequent agrarian valuation of the assets.

The process of the *patrimonialization* of any type of goods tends to attract the attention of the surrounding society. The proposals for *patrimonialization* move the social, political and economic agents of a given territory, and promote the expansion of debates and studies about the goods under consideration. In the specific case of agrarian heritage, the *patrimonialisation* process allows the identification, recognition and valuation of agrarian patrimonial assets, which are integrated with other elements present in the territory. Thus, in the short term, there tends to be an awareness in society about the importance of those goods, as well as the valuation of agrarian activity in general - usually perceived as having low socio-economic status - and, in the final analysis, the recognition and appreciation of people, men and women, who dedicate themselves to work in that field. Therefore, the initial movement, based on the proposal for the application of agrarian heritage, contributes to one of the aspects listed in the concept, necessary to justify its existence and recognition: that society becomes aware of the importance of the asset to be preserved. This fact will also allow a significant portion of the population involved in the debate to identify themselves with a given agrarian asset (whether material or immaterial), allowing self-identification with those goods, with the territory, with the social group directly responsible for the goods and, in a broad sense, with the history of that territory. Therefore, conditions exist to promote the potentializing of the elements that make up the cultural identity of that territory, favoring the expansion of social capital and promotion of the processes of development.

As a result of the identification, recognition, valuation and conservation of a particular asset, there is a need for some kind of resource, including financial support, and, in the end, this asset - and the territory in which it is incorporated - obtains visibility through disclosure of the asset. This process has the potential to support other alternatives, including economic ones, such as tourism. It should be noted that the objective of agrarian heritage is not to be confused with the generation of goods or services to meet consumer demand. Its objective is to protect and recognize the assets used by agrarian activity, unrelated to monetary gain, which can generate significant collective benefits.

Therefore, agrarian heritage pre-supposes a series of benefits to a given territory, including becoming a pragmatic resource of development, with a view to the possibility of social and community organization in the surroundings of the agrarian patrimonial elements, capable of being valued and protected, including by means of an institutional model, like UNESCO, by promoting strategies aimed at improving the quality of life of the population living there.

### 3 Methodological Procedure

The methodology used considered the examination of the plans for the development of the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, based on fieldwork carried out in several provinces of that Spanish territory and relied on a review of available literature on the concept of agrarian heritage. Therefore, the application of this conceptual category to agrarian assets identified in the micro-region of Canoinhas (Brazil) was evaluated, with a view to its possible use in similar strategies of development.

In the Kingdom of Spain, the Castilla-La Mancha Strategic Plan for Tourism (2015-2019), entitled "Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives, Development of Plans and Lines of Action" was initially analyzed. In addition to the plan itself, specialized literature and data provided by the National Statistical Institute of Spain was examined. At the same time, a broad review of the available literature (almost exclusively produced in Spain) on the concept of agrarian heritage was carried out.

Later, in order to identify the characteristics, limits and possibilities of the process of construction of territorial identity from the distinctive signs of the territory of La Mancha, the characteristics present in that Spanish territory were evaluated through fieldwork, aiming, among other things, to identify monuments that support artistic tourism; to evaluate the natural conditions that foster rural tourism and adventure; to analyze the potentials that favor historical tourism; to recognize the traditions, cultures and legacies intrinsic to the territory of Castile-La Mancha, capable of enabling development-inducing strategies.

In the ensuing stage, with the theoretical-methodological apparatus related to the concept of agrarian heritage and the data collected, a qualitative and exploratory analysis of the possible applications of the concept of agrarian patrimony to the micro-region of Canoinhas (Brazil) was initiated.

## 4 Results and discussions

The adoption of the concept of agrarian heritage, besides valuing traditional agrarian practices, can foster alternative strategies of development.

In this context, it is appropriate to present the main aspects related to the agrarian heritage verified in the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain) and, later, to identify similar elements existing in the micro-region of Canoinhas (Brazil).

### 4.1 The agrarian heritage of the Autonomous Community of Castile-La Mancha

This article considers predominantly the following elements present in the territory of Castilla-La Mancha, related to the agrarian heritage: (i) the activities of winemaking; (ii) the *Don Quixote* Route.

The valuation of the heritage of viticulture, in the context of it being a cultural and gastronomic tourist product, constitutes an innovative strategy of territorial development. Under this approach, it is reasonable to consider that the Baeza Charter represents the consolidation of a methodology aimed at the selection and classification of any agricultural productive activity, including vineyards (Plaza, Cañizares and Ruiz Pulpón, 2017: 07).

It should be pointed out that the concept of agrarian heritage admits its applicability to wineries, since the category incorporates any activity, object or even product that is carried out, created or produced "by the farmer as part of an agrarian productive process" (Ruiz, 2015: 30). This suggests that activity of grape growing - taking into account the progressive increase of mechanization and the systematic implementation of the process of cultivation via *espalier* (which increases the use of mechanization) – may be identified and recognized as an agrarian asset.

In the territory of Castilla-La Mancha, grape cultivation consists of highly relevant activity, occupying an area of approximately eighty thousand square kilometers - the largest area of the European continent destined for grape production, which represents almost half of all Spanish cultivation (46.1%), around 13% of all European cultivation and around 6% of the cultivated area on a global level (Plaza, Cañizares and Ruiz Pulpón, 2017: 04). The activity of winemaking has been receiving important efforts in the area of heritage, aiming to incorporate it into the tourist circuit.

The processes of *patrimonialization* with regard to winemaking are generally related to obtaining "quality seals", which, in this instance, allow value to be added to a particular product - in the case of wine - in accordance with the requirements and demands of global markets. However, the process of homogenization, both cultural and production, also presents threats, given its influence on the concentration of agrarian activities. In the case of Castilla-la Mancha, the vineyards generate demand

for extensive territorial areas, implying a marked reduction in the economically active population working in agriculture, a condition that can be aggravated, for example, by the adoption of new techniques - such as grapes grown via *espalier* - and by the advance of the mechanization in the process of cultivation of the grapes.

The architecture of a vineyard in trellis is totally different from that of a vineyard. At the greatest distance between rows, the use of poles, wires and drip irrigation conduits that condition the arrangement of the vine shoots are added, facilitating the work of mechanization (Ruiz Pulpón: 2013: 256).

In addition to the process of *patrimonialization*, the valuation of the producer and the traditional practices still in use, linked to the process of the cultivation of the vintage - manual harvesting - makes it possible to facilitate sustainability, since the vineyards grown directly on the soil, without staking, mitigate water consumption, contributing to a better environmental balance. After the producer reaps the harvest and dispatches the produce to the winery, the agrarian practice of the cultivation of the grape comes to an end and the agro-alimentary process of the production of the wine begins, which, in turn, does not form part of the list of assets that can be included within the process of *patrimonialization*, according to the concept of agrarian heritage.

On the immaterial patrimony of Castilla-La Mancha, the significant diversity of goods perceived as allowable in the process of *patrimonialization*, demanded new forms of organization and management, involving interpretative discrepancies regarding cultural goods considered "real" and those "artificially created" (Ruiz, 2015: 55). Within this second group, it is permissible to include, for example, the routes of Quixote.

The Route of Don Quixote began with the celebration, in 2005, of the four hundred year anniversary of the publication of the work of Miguel de Cervantes. The route crosses 16% of the municipalities of the region of La Mancha, totaling 2500 kilometers. Despite its efforts, it has not yet found success within the tourism market, a fact that influenced the Tourism Strategic Plan (2010-2014), which proposed the development of "Quixote Scenarios", consisting of "visual panels that create tangible links with episodes / scenes of the work " (Pillet, 2011: 735).

The Tourism Strategic Plan (2015-2019) considers the condition of Castilla-La Mancha as a tourist destination, capable of competing nationally and internationally, using marketing strategies as a tool to increase the presence, permanence and spending of tourists.

Undoubtedly, those territories that seek alternative forms of economic development, among which is tourism, acquire a strategic advantage. The expansion of mass tourism, due to the diffusion of access to information, through the media in general, especially via the internet, together with increased capacity and the reduction of transportation costs, tend to favor the expansion of the sector. In this context, the trajectory of Don Quixote attains enormous potential, transforming itself into a cultural product that accrues a very high value.

Aside from the monetary aspect, another factor becomes relevant. The elaboration of a territorial identity - a deficit in the case of Castilla-La Mancha due to its recent process of political and administrative formation - based on the figure of Don Quixote and the territorial references present in the narrative of the masterful work of Cervantes. There is no way to remain oblivious to the influence of a history of more than four centuries, which maintains a very intimate relationship with the territory that served as its setting. The valuation of this cultural asset promotes the strengthening and consolidation of the territorial identity of Castilla-La Mancha. Certainly this process benefits from the support made available by the public authorities, with examples ranging from the most trivial to the most imposing and sophisticated.

In the specific case of the Route, it is worth emphasizing actions already developed for its



conservation and revitalization. An example consists of the mills located in the Fields of Criptana, in Alcázar de San Juan, province of Ciudad Real. Besides representing an important patrimonial category, from a territorial point of view, a part of them, making up the Route of the Quixote, have been turned into centers of territorial interpretation, which have added enormous scientific and pedagogical value to the script itself.

#### 4.2 The agrarian heritage of the micro-region of Canoinhas

In order to propose applications of the concept of agrarian heritage to existing elements in the micro-region of Canoinhas, this study identified a set of agrarian, material and immaterial assets that allow *patrimonialization*, selecting the following representatives: (i) The production of *erva mate* (material agrarian heritage); (ii) the *pixirum* (immaterial agrarian heritage).

Before discussing the aspects inherent to selected agrarian assets, it is advantageous to discuss the other elements that could form part of the agrarian heritage set of the region under focus.

Regarding the material agrarian heritage, there is a significant natural heritage, constituted by an ecosystem of relevant environmental value, the Mixed Ombrophilous Forest (FOM), an ecosystem originating from a forest formation that is part of the *Mata Atlântica biome*, also known as pine forests or *araucaria* forest. In relation to immaterial heritage directly related to agrarian activity, which adds relevant socio-cultural value, the following elements can be mentioned: (a) a religious practice denominated in that region by *fandango*, or dance of *São Gonçalo*; (b) the tradition of St. John Mary, a popular saint who was, in fact, an Italian pilgrim who crossed that region during the nineteenth century; (c) gastronomic heritage, with varieties of pine nut dishes, the fruit of the *Araucaria* pine, a prominent species in that territory, as well as dishes ranging from traditional *cabocla* food to those of German origin, such as *Einsbein* (knee of pork) and the *cuca*, a pie produced with wheat pasta and local fruits, something unknown in German cuisine.

Regarding *mate*, representative of the material agrarian heritage, it is a plant whose crushed leaves are consumed in water (hot or cold), and its use goes back to the indigenous natives of the region. The consumption of the *chimarrão* (name of the drink made with the *mate*) spread throughout the south of the American continent, with an incidence of the plant in an area of 540 thousand hectares, of which 450 thousand are in Brazil, covering the basin of Prata. (Gerhardt, 2013).

*Erva mate* is identified exclusively with the micro-region of Canoinhas. At one point in its history, the municipality of Canoinhas was named "World Capital of *Erva Mate*", resulting in its name being changed to "*Ouro Verde*", during part of the 1930s. Besides being a material agrarian asset, *erva mate* has an immaterial component, which is linked to its use and to its process of production. From unrecorded times, when only indigenous populations inhabited the territory, *erva mate* has been produced and systematically consumed. Its production process has unique aspects, historically transmitted from generation to generation. These motives characterize *mate* as agrarian heritage, which generates cultural identity and is present throughout the entire territory, indicating the need for its recognition and appreciation, something that can be obtained through the process of *patrimonialisation*.

*Pixirum*, a representative of immaterial agrarian heritage, is related to historically developed practices based on unpaid family or collective work. For example, a reference can be found in a judicial proceeding in the early twentieth century, which reads as follows: "All work is carried out by the squatter himself and his neighbors, who help each other and work in partnership" ( Land Process, 1910: 86). As a result of the unpaid collective agrarian work, a notion of unity was built up among the members of the community who practiced it, stimulating the construction and maintenance of its territorial identity. In the micro-region of Canoinhas, the *mutirão* [a mobilized task force] is comprised of *pixirum*. This traditional agrarian practice allows arduous and time-consuming tasks, difficult to carry out individually, to be executed in a few days or hours, such as the construction of sheds, fences,

brushings, land clearings, harvests and animal slaughter.

In societies in which mutual assistance, continuous collaboration and cooperation prevail, work relations are governed by a moral contract, bringing forth the positive results of the network of cooperation, since trust and the enjoyment of its advantages, generates more confidence. To trust in this context means "the expectation of reciprocity that people in a community, based on shared norms, have about the behavior of others. Those who feel and know that they can trust, receive more collaboration" (D'araújo, 2003: 33).

In the case of the *pixirum*, to summon and be summoned means to have legitimacy before that community and the primordial factor consists of the principle of mutual obligation, that is, that neighbor who benefited from the work of the members of the group, must repay the aid, attending immediately to the call when summoned.

Among the fundamental elements that characterize the *pixirum*, is the intrinsic obligation to provide food, both as a necessity for the continuity of the work for longer periods, and as an aspect of peasant farmer behavior. In other words, in return for the help in the field, the beneficiary "only provides lunch, the *cachaça* and facilitates the evening dance" (Entrevista Bueno, 2012). While men are engaged in roasting, carving or harvesting, the women, coordinated by the wife of the beneficiary, prepare the meal. Usually, roast beef and beans being the main ingredients served at lunch (Rocha Interview, 2012).

At the end of the long and exhausting day of work, the most anticipated time comes for everyone present: the *pixirum* dance. This festive celebration, which marks the closing of the work, brings together the workers involved in the activities of the day, their wives, other relatives and neighbors, and even those who could not attend work.

The practice of *pixirum* is not linked to a specific type of agrarian productive activity. It can be used in practically all works carried out in the countryside, consisting of relevant intangible heritage existing in the micro-region of Canoinhas, a property of enormous socio-cultural value for the peasant farmer population, and, therefore, permissible to *patrimonialization*, according to the framework proposed by concept of Agrarian Heritage.

## Conclusion

By the recognition and protection of assets used by agrarian activity, the conceptual category of agrarian heritage promotes the fusion of cultural and biological dimensions, contributing to the environmental protection of certain patrimonial zones. Therefore, agrarian heritage is an instrument of protection of traditional agriculture, traditional peoples, agro-ecological practices, reducing the harmful effects caused by relations and practices based on the logic of capital, represented in the rural environment by agri-business.

Formerly, the region of Castile-La Mancha was considered an inhospitable territory, relegated to oblivion, perceived as a place of passage. In recent decades, through strategies based on patrimonial categories, including agrarian heritage, it has acquired visibility and has become a point of reference not only for Spanish citizens, but also for foreign tourists of different nationalities. It is plausible to say that, to a large extent, this transformation took place from the elaboration of a territorial identity, supported by elements of the monumental work of Miguel de Cervantes, *The Ingenious Knight Don Quixote de La Mancha*, masterpiece of universal literature and heritage of humanity (Romero, 2005: 211).

The application of the concept of agrarian heritage, in addition to identifying, recognizing, valuing, preserving and disseminating certain patrimonial assets, that is, a practical procedure that integrates these assets into a *patrimonialisable* set, also admits interpretations from an alternative perspective, which ends by exposing not only its potential but also the limits and consequences of its application.

The objective of agrarian heritage is to place value on agrarian activity, the farmer and traditional agriculture, which promotes the valuation of a territory and the promotion and protection of environmentally sustainable practices. With regarding the prior example, it may also be considered an instrument of local resistance, which runs counter to the narrative and subjection of any and all assets to the global movement of commodification.

The search for references to the process of *patrimonialisation* can be based on strategies previously developed in other territories, based on the identification and valuation of their agrarian heritage as an instrument of territorial development. This is specifically the case of the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain.

The agricultural property belonging to the micro-region of Canoinhas allows us to envisage a process of searching for its identification, recognition, protection and valuation, which, in addition to socio-cultural importance, can set up an alternative development strategy for that territory. The feasibility of this strategy will depend on a process consisting of the following steps: (i) The elaboration of a complete survey of the agrarian assets present in the micro-region of Canoinhas, suitable for inclusion in the process of *patrimonialization*, from the perspective of the agrarian heritage, however, also considering other categories; (ii) The adoption of patrimonial legislation shared by the twelve municipalities that compose the territory under analysis; (iii) The mobilization of social and political agents: the universities of the region, civil associations, municipal public authorities, etc .; (iv) The promotion of conferences and public hearings, from which the local population can act directly on the process of *patrimonialization*, stimulating the expansion of the debate and the recognition - albeit informal - of the territorial heritage, strengthening territorial identity and promoting strategies of development.

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