

THE WINE ROUTE OF SAN JOSÉ DOS PINHAIS/PR: a tourist territory in (trans) formation

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ABSTRACT

Tourism as a social dynamic and economic activity, is the object of the investigation of this study set in the Colônia Mergulhão, in São José dos Pinhais/PR. This is a territory in a state of trans(formation) due to tourism. A brief diagnosis of tourism in the Colônia Mergulhão is presented, based on theoretical discussions about tourism in rural areas and the new relations of production in rural areas. Methodologically the research was built based on a survey with specific questions about this reality, shown by the actors involved, namely: a) The municipal city hall; b) Entrepreneurs of local tourism; and, c) Association Wine Road Colonia Mergulhão (ACAVIM). The study revealed the strengths and weaknesses of tourism in the Colônia, as well as the opportunities and threats to which it is exposed. It was concluded that tourism, organized through the Wine Route, has brought important gains for the community, and that its maintenance as the main economic activity is based on the union of the former rural producers, now tourism entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs have Italian culture their biggest competitive differential, which can only remain solid through the participative management of those involved.

Keywords: Wine Route. Rural tourism. Tourist territory.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is increasingly seen as an alternative for promoting development and reducing regional inequalities; cultural valuation; the exchange of information, and the preservation of local ecological characteristics. In Brazil, the process of systematic planning of tourism on a national scale is recent, thus, it was only in 2003 that the an exclusive ministry was set up to deal with this subject – the Ministry of Tourism (MTur).

In the southern region of the country, in the states of Santa Catarina, Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul, regional initiatives have gained strength, through the promotion of Business and Events tourism, Rural Tourism and Leisure Tourism, even before the structuring of a National policy for tourism. Paraná, along with Santa Catarina, in the 1990s, began a process of Planning and Organization of their territories for tourism, launching a series of actions to promote activity, such as the competitive tourist itineraries. These itineraries, for the most part, were based on local communities, the rural environment and, as a differentiating element, foreign colonization.

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Thus, some regional itineraries appeared in Paraná, particularly in the metropolitan region of Curitiba, which were called Routes or circuits. For example, there is the Circuito Italiano (Italian Circuit) in the municipality of Colombo and Caminho do Vinho (Wine Route) in the municipality of São José dos Pinhais, in the Colônia Mergulhão, both with planning started in the year 1999. The initiative to create circuits was born from (EMATER), the Coordenação da Região Metropolitana de Curitiba (Coordination of the Metropolitan Region of Curitiba) (COMEC), Paraná Turismo and Ecoparaná, in partnership with municipal governments. This initiative aimed to promote the development of rural tourism as an alternative to communities located in areas of water sources.

Specifically, the Wine Route of Colony Mergulhão in São José dos Pinhais was created with the purpose of fostering local development actions, disseminating folklore, handicrafts and typical foods, as well as promoting the valorization of historical and cultural heritage, by

stimulating the preservation and conservation of historic houses. In addition, it seeks to value the quality of the products sold, such as colonial wine, juice, colonial and agricultural products, transforming the region into a differentiated "tourist destination". Seventeen years after its creation in 2016, the Wine Route has become a consolidated tourist destination in the metropolitan region of Curitiba, but it faces different challenges in the commercialization of products and services.

Therefore the aim of this study is to discuss some relevant issues to the rural tourism planning and management process, specifically in the Wine Route, in order to understand the present stage of articulation of the actors involved and the apparent opportunities and challenges in the management of the itinerary.

METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

This is a qualitative approach, since it is in keeping with Oliveira (2001, p.116): "The researcher will interpret the real world from the subjective perspectives of the subjects under study [...] the researcher has to feel within himself the experience of the subject" and this type of approach "is interested in the way different people give meaning to their lives" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1994, p. 50). According to the research objectives, this is an exploratory investigation, since, referring to Gil (1995) "These studies aim are to provide greater familiarity with the problem, with a view to making it more explicit or building hypotheses" (p. 45).

In order to understand the current reality of the Wine Route, topics related to Rural Tourism, Development, Planning and Tourism Management were discussed theoretically. In order to gather information, we conducted (2) semi-structured interviews with local entrepreneurs, as well as public managers involved in the process of creating and managing the itinerary. Specifically, SWOT analysis was used to present the Internal Strengths and Weaknesses and the External Opportunities and Threats to the Wine Route.

RURAL TOURISM: THEORETICAL DISCUSSIONS AND MARKET CONTRIBUTIONS IN BRAZIL

The urbanity of the rural

The practice of tourism in Brazil is not recent, given the innumerable landscape and historical and cultural possibilities of its territory, but the organization of the activity with a strategic and planned vision is still contemporary and, among various possible segments, one that has been gaining prominence in the National scenario is Rural Tourism. According to Sirgado (2001), in Brazil, the organization of the activity began in Lages (Santa Catarina), at Pedras Brancas Farm, in 1984, where a Municipal Tourism Commission was set up to support the launch of a pilot project that was successful and paved the way for the emergence of a new product in the Brazilian tourist offer.

The Brazilian rural environment has undergone profound transformations in recent decades, and is no longer considered only as a space exclusively of the agricultural sector, giving possibilities to other forms of productive arrangements, such as Tourism, that can become a vector of valorization of the territory, with less social burden than traditional forms of production usually cause.

Many authors have discussed the concepts involved in tourism, due to the diversity of Brazilian ruralities; Possibilities of associated activities and, above all, the existence of areas with both rural and urban characteristics, called "rural" areas, or even occurrences of "rural urbanities" that, according to Rua (2006), differ from those who speak of a "Urbanization of the rural". "The latter would lead to the disappearance of the rural, which would become urban, while the former would preserve the specificities of the rural, considering it, above all, as a hybrid territory, where urban and rural interact.

In view of the dynamism of the Brazilian rural it becomes increasingly complex to separate the rural from the urban, and from this moment we prefer to consider the existence of

multiple realities of the territory, each with its peculiarities, dynamics, process of formation and transformation. On this subject, Santos (2012) reflects that:

Considered at a given point in time, a landscape represents different moments in the development of the society. The landscape is the result of an accumulation of society. For each place, each portion of space, this accumulation is different: objects do not change in the same time, at the same speed or in the same direction. (p..55)

Thus, this article focuses more on investigating the forms of planning, promotion and development of tourism, and its reflections on the Colônia Mergulhão, than simply offering an exhaustive theoretical debate about definitions and concepts of what is rural and what is not not.

For Campañola e Silva (2000), Rural Tourism is related to any activity of leisure and tourism that is carried out in rural areas. This concept is complemented by Zimmermann (1996) as a tourism activity carried out in rural areas, committed to agricultural production and local development, where its demand is quite specific, considering production as an aggregate factor. In a more socioeconomic approach, Almeida and Riedl (2000) consider that this segment is known as a tourism activity that occurs in the rural area that provides an alternative for rural landowners in the current land crisis, coupled with the lack of incentives for rural inhabitants.

Investigating rural tourism involves, first and foremost, the geomorphological diversification of the Brazilian countryside, the rural man's culture, the active political and economic changes and the territorial arrangements that are formed. According to Bloss (2000), the economic growth of the activity ratifies the profitability of rural tourism over traditional crops. In addition to a social practice, tourism is an economic activity that is increasingly present in the Brazilian countryside and, as such, it is important to analyze its effects on the landscape, considering the relationship between the economy and environmental sustainability.

It should not be forgotten that the natural components of the landscape, i.e. pure air, sunshine, mountains [...] are entirely free. They are at the free disposal of all, or almost. They are priceless. In a way, they are the bonus of the package. It is for this reason that many regions deplete their resources, without realizing that they are increasingly losing their independence. (KRIPPENDORF, 1989). In this context:

The new rurality raises the need to recognize the multifunctionality of rural areas and their opportunities for development from the different dimensions that interrelate across the territory: environmental, economic, cultural, political, institutional, among others (Estrada & Gerritsen, 2012, 319).

In general terms, we agree with Oxinalde (1994) when considering that rural tourism encompasses tourism modalities that are not excluded and that are completed, such that tourism in the rural space is the sum of ecotourism, green tourism, cultural tourism, sports tourism, agrotourism, adventure tourism, gastronomic tourism and wine tourism, among others.

New production relations in rural areas and the need for planning

The difficulties encountered mainly by small producers have caused them to look for alternative ways to survive, and it is in this context that the tourist activity has its incentive in several Brazilian states, including Paraná. Thus, Rural Tourism is considered as an alternative for the small producer, whether a part-time farmer, or an farming unit with multiple activities, or even Pluriactivity, which Fuller and Brun (as quoted in Shneider, 2003) refer to as:

[...] different activities and interests of individuals and families living in the productive unit. Pluriactivity involves a form of agricultural labor management is always included, although it may or may not be an exclusive activity or even the most important activity [...] (p.77).

The small properties of Colônia Mergulhão are being transformed by the new economic conjunctures, in this case by tourism, considering its positive or negative effects according to the perspective of those involved, in this case, the business producers of the Colônia itself. Oliveira (1996) points out some transformations in Brazilian agriculture that fit into the reality addressed here: Transformations of peasants into capitalists; Globalization of the economy; Territorialization of Capital; Increase in wage labor and peasant family work; The contradictory unity between the city and the countryside. It is true that this is not a generalization, but several of these aspects apply to the tourism dynamics of the Wine Route, where local producers (nowadays tourism entrepreneurs) have been promoting a "rearticulation of small production with commercial capital" (Silva, 2003), due to the technological and economic changes. It is emphasized that the Brazilian rural is not uniform, it is multiple and it is not possible to restrict the characteristics of the field in Brazil only to these realities.

Concerning tourism analyses in the geographic space, Coriolano and Silva (2005) point out that explaining tourism implies studying the geographic space, as tourists travel to see places, therefore, there is a close relationship between Tourism and Geography. Tourism materializes forcefully in the logic of geographical differentiation of places and regions, a result of human action forming an inseparable set of objects and actions (Santos, 2006). The territorialization of tourism is the process that will lead to the creation of a tourist territory, and according to Candiotta (2010), this corresponds to the space where power relations between the social actors involved with tourism take place. Thus, when a project or tourist establishment is installed, a process of territorialization of tourism begins, inserting new territorialities to the place, forming new dynamics that deserve to be studied.

The rurality is a tourist attraction that finds increasing numbers of followers, who become its consumers of the attraction. It is about knowing the field as it presents itself. Many properties are formed in places of unparalleled natural beauty, with beautiful landscapes and important tourist resources. Others retain all the the history of years or even centuries,

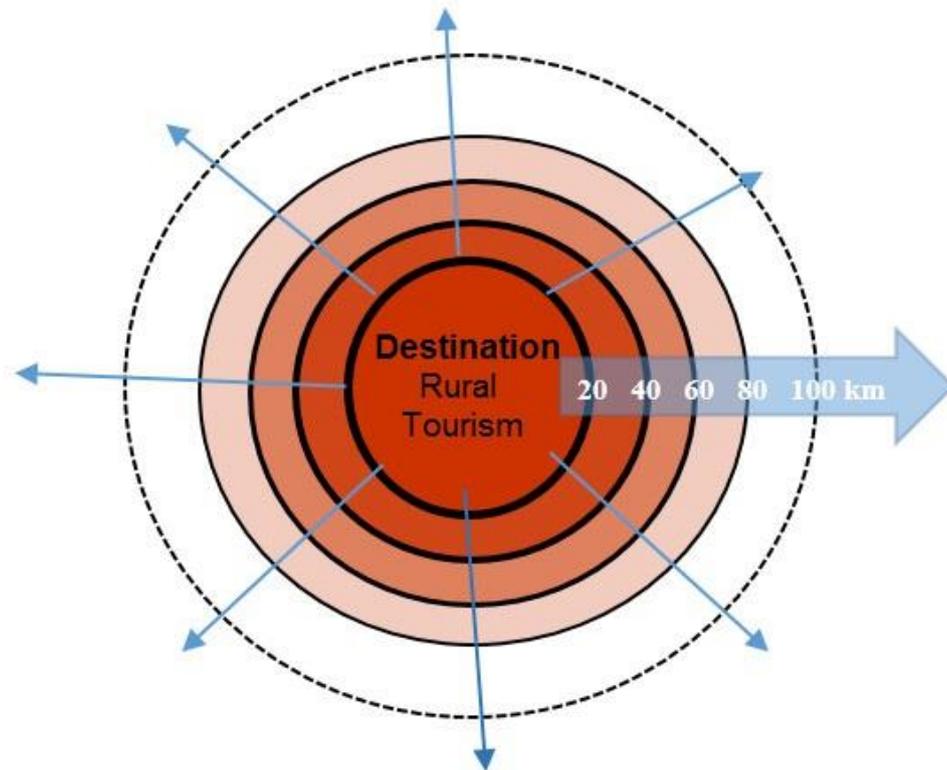
immortalized in the memory of its inhabitants or in old constructions and relics, as it is the case of Colônia Mergulhão. But what sustains the search for the countryside, for the rural and what makes this rural so significant is its "rurality", that is, a set of historical or cultural factors in the rural environment that expresses the daily life in the countryside.

The revitalization of small properties and the rural area, seeking alternative forms of economic resuscitation and appreciation of the lifestyle of the rural inhabitants, can be a factor for promoting regional development through tourism, based on the current features of the countryside, with a possible production of a place suitable for receiving visitors. But it is not possible to continue supporting a utopia that tourism does not promote a degree of business specialization for the owners, and that it also does not shape lifestyles, techniques and productive arrangements in the localities in which it develops. Tourism accelerates the insertion of the peasant producer (in this study, the producer-settler) in the current capitalist dynamics.

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One of the characteristics observed in the development of rural tourism is that the demand for these destinations is usually more intense from within the region itself (Figure 1), losing strength as it extends to more distant localities. These are local activities, with local demands; unlike other tourist possibilities of national or international attractiveness, influencing even the way in which the productive chain is constituted and the necessity of planning, management and strategies based on this characteristic.

Figure 1 – The demand for regional tourism weakens as the distance from the sending place increases



Source: The Authors (2016).

Therefore, tourism in rural areas has become the focus of policy discussions of the regional development incentive strategy. In rural tourism, with the creation of the Ministry of Tourism in 2003, these strategies have become more evident and better organized, with repercussions at state and municipal and organized society, particularly with the elaboration of the Guidelines for the Development of Tourism Rural in Brazil in 2004, by MTur.

Ensuring the development of the tourist regions of Brazil through the promotion of efficient policies is the great responsibility of public managers. The Ministry of Tourism, together with municipal and state secretariats, must be attentive to local needs and characteristics for development. This is also essential in the rural area, since the establishment of strategies that guarantee the maintenance of quality of life and the sustainable use of resources is only possible with proper planning of the activity.

Public policies for the development of tourism in Brazil have seen some advances and achievements, especially in the 1990s and 2000s, however, the role of the public sphere in the continuity of such policies is visible and critical. In the last five years. Tourism in general – including rural tourism - has not received the attention, investment and efforts of planners for its development, as seen in several other sectors (agribusiness, for example). Rural producers, especially small ones, still find it difficult to rely on tourism as a productive alternative, given the historical deficiency of policies and incentives to this sector, which unfortunately seems to have been perpetuated for a long time.

RESULT OF THE DISCUSSIONS

São José dos Pinhais – from indigenous to settlers

The territory of São José dos Pinhais, initially inhabited by native Indians, suffered the first incursion of white settlers in 1642 in search of gold deposits, giving rise to the first settlements of the region, but the administrative organization of the municipality was only installed in 1853. At the same time, over the years the city has grown and has become outstanding for its industrial park, becoming the third automotive center of the country. In addition to food production, the municipality is the third largest collection in Paraná. The urban nucleus of São José dos Pinhais is one of the largest and oldest of the state, located 15 km from Curitiba, has a population estimated at 287,895 inhabitants (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [IBGE], 2015). The Metropolitan Region of Curitiba – RMC is made up of the capital and 27 other municipalities.

The development of the municipality included on the participation of European immigrants who, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, due to political conflicts in Europe and Brazilian incentives, settled in the region. Groups of Italians and Ukrainians settled in the region, the former gave rise to the Colônia Mergulhão; and the second to the Castilian and Marcellin colonies.

Mergulhão Colony

Colônia Mergulhão is located in the rural area of São José dos Pinhais, between the Colônias Acyoli, Murici and Rio Pequeno, 10 km from the municipality of São José dos Pinhais. The Daldin, Bortolan, Bim, Juliatto, Pissaia and Posobom families were the first to settle here, bringing the tradition of the artisanal production of wine and other customs. This region received a considerable contingent of immigrants to Brazil between 1870 and 1920, leaving the port of Genoa in Italy, and other regions such as Sicily, Sardinia and Calabria. The source of income of these early immigrants was based on the extraction of wood, erva mate (green tea) and olive plantations. Historically, tourism has become the main local economic source. According to the local population and tour guides working in the region, Colônia Mergulhão received its name due to the large numbers of aquatic birds that lived in the region, such as the pied-billed grebe (*Podilymbus Podiceps*), called the “Mergulhão Caçador” in Portuguese.

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The Wine Route

The tourism potential of Colônia Mergulhão was first identified in 1998, when an inventory was created for the elaboration of the Tourism Development Plan of São José dos Pinhais. In 1999, participatory meetings with the community began. On that occasion, the proposal of the Project was to create a tourist itinerary entitled the Caminho de Vinho, or Wine Route (figure 2) was presented.

Figure 2 - Tourist Routes of the Wine Route in São José dos Pinhais - PR



Source: ACAVIM (2016)

The Associação Caminho do Vinho - Colônia Mergulhão (ACAVIM), is the association that manages the activities of the tourist route. It was founded on June 18, 2004, "arising from the need to organize the enterprises involved in the tourist route, seeking to preserve the rural identity of the region, brought mainly by the Italian ethnic group" (ACAVIM, 2016). The members of the entity met to decide on each situation related to the itinerary, as shown in figure 3, on the guided tour offered by one of the entrepreneurs, as well as the entry portal of Colônia Mergulhão, which marks the start of the Wine Route and figure 4, which highlights the standardization of signposting that identifies the members. According to the ACAVIM (2016), "self-sustainability is being sought for the Wine Route, maintaining activities with resources coming from the members themselves, who contribute each month to the entity, and through events such as the traditional Wine Festival."

Figure 3 - Guided tour



Source: ACAVIM (2016)

Figure 4 – Enterprises identification



Source: ACAVIM (2016)

Tourist Attractions of the Wine Route

The attractions of the Wine Route are classified by the ACAVIM into 5 groups according to the characteristics of the products and services offered. These are: 1) wineries, 2) colonial cafes, 3) leisure and events, 4) restaurants, and 5) others – which includes historic houses, museums, floriculture and other ventures related to local activities. The proportion of establishments in each group is presented below, with a description of the general characteristics of the businesses that follow.

Brief diagnosis of Tourism on the Wine Route: General Characteristics of the Developments

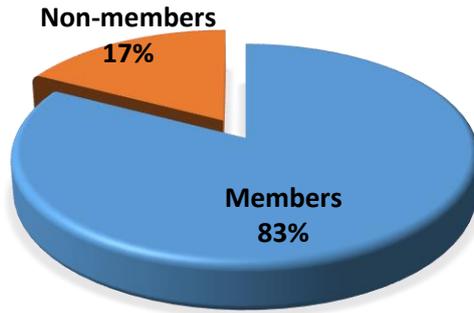
This section presents a brief diagnosis of the Wine Route, which was developed from:

A) Visits to the community using observation and informal conversations. It should be emphasized that the visits were carried out at two different times of the local tourist schedule: 1) weekends (Saturday and Sunday) where the tourist flow is intense in the businesses; And 2) during the week (Monday to Friday) where tourist flow is smaller.

B) application of interviews with business people and public managers involved in the process of planning and managing the Wine Way destination. Specifically, the interviews were applied to representatives of the Municipal Secretariat of Industry Commerce and Tourism, in which the Secretary, the Director of Tourism and a Technician of the Tourism Sector participated. In addition, a representative of the Associação Caminho do Vinho Colônia Mergulhão (ACAVIM) was interviewed. Business people of the Wine Route also took part, whether members of the ACAVIM or not.

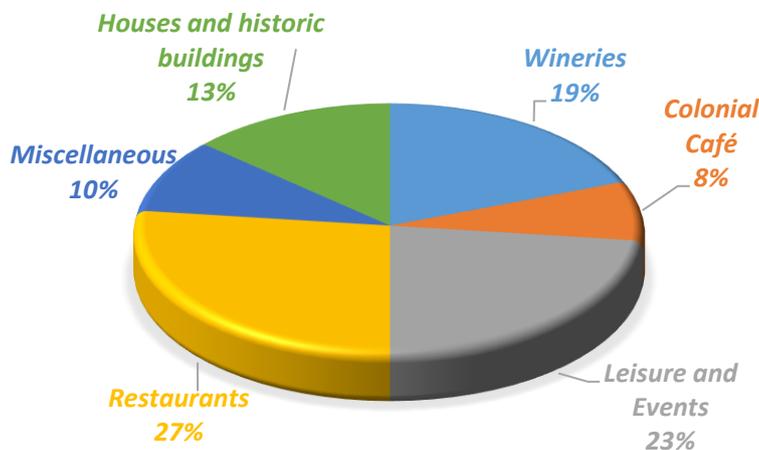
The establishments of the Wine Route were grouped by the type of service offered, according to the classification of the ACAVIM. Figure 5 shows the proportion of establishments that are members and non-members of the ACAVIM. Figure 6 shows the proportion of establishments that were part of the Wine Route in 2016, per group.

Figure 5 - Proportion of establishments that are members and non-members of the ACAVIM.



Source: The authors (2016).

Figure 6 - Proportion of establishments in the Wine Route.



Source: The authors (2016)

Of the fifty-two (52) enterprises identified, ten (10) entrepreneurs participated in this study, two (2) wineries, two (2) restaurants, three (3) leisure/events and two (2) colonial cafés. In addition, the interview was applied to one entrepreneur, who at the time of the research (2016) was not a member of the ACAVIM but had no plans to join.

Most of the Wine Road projects are members of the ACAVIM - 82.7%. According to some non-members entrepreneurs, there is a certain resistance among the members to accept new ventures, as it prioritizes those who are dedicated to preserving the colonial characteristics of the products and services offered, in accordance with the bylaws of the Association. A non-member entrepreneur pointed out: "there are people who think you can't have anything that isn't made here", referring to the resistance of the members of ACAVIM in relation to their enterprise.

All the entrepreneurs who are members of the ACAVIM evaluated the performance of the municipal public authority as positive, pointing out the structural improvements of Colônia Mergulhão since the creation of the Wine Route, such as street paving, lighting, security and marketing support, As indicated by one of the interviewees: "the city hall is always improving the signposting, the access, and promoting walks in a natural setting, which are showcases for the Wine Route." Criticism of the municipal government came mainly from non-ACAVIM members, one of whom pointed out that "the city hall should publicize the route more and give more incentives for the new companies that are investing in the route."

It was observed that there are differences among members, but the spirit of unity and mutual cooperation prevails, since communication between members is effective, through monthly meetings and the use of multiplatform communication mechanisms such as WhatsApp. The Dance group, the Choir, and the events promoted within the Wine Route are also strategic for maintaining close relationships and cooperation among the entrepreneurs. According to the representative of the ACAVIM, the demands of the members, whether concerning structure, training, or legal organization, can be met more easily because we have a relatively cohesive group, and a strategy that is drawn up tends to benefit more than one entrepreneur at the same time.

All the managers, interviewed, evaluated their participation in the ACAVIM as positive, due to the achievements and the promotion of joint strategies in marketing and commercializing

the route. In addition, some entrepreneurs pointed out that today, these strategies have already taken place, with a need for the association to have new actions to support entrepreneurs.

In general, it was observed that the ACAVIM-member interviewees understand the role of the ACAVIM and evaluate its existence as a positive thing. However, they consider it as an external entity to them and their enterprises. On the contrary, only one of the leaders interviewed expressed the view that the association, with its strengths and weaknesses, is their responsibility i.e. that of the members. The majority of the entrepreneurs did not see themselves as responsible for the actions of the ACAVIM, claiming that it is the responsibility of the leaders, in particular, of the presiding person.

It was also verified that most of the business ventures were structured after the creation of the Wine Route, but some wineries have been active for more than 25 years. These, have begun to organize their own legal-issues for the trade of products, especially with regard to the structuring of the route. Based on interviews and field surveys, it was found that companies are undergoing administrative changes. The family model is still the main characteristic in the administration of most of the enterprises, but we can see the expansion and modernization of structures and processes, especially with regard to the use of technological tools for production, marketing, and legal and accounting matters. According to the members, this is due to two main factors: a) The passing on of the management of businesses to new generations (children and grandchildren of the first entrepreneurs), and b) the action of the ACAVIM in providing guidance to its members, in order to monitor the health and legal requirements imposed on the businesses. In relation to the first factor, the passing on of the business to new generations, it was evident that the majority of the leaders are young (aged between 25 and 40 years) and they have received training in courses related to the local business vocation, such as: gastronomy, nutrition, enology, law and business administration.

The structure of the Wine Route has led to economic, social and territorial changes for the Colônia Mergulhão. These have occurred in the areas of infrastructure, safety, economic alternatives for producers, professional qualification, reduction of rural exodus, business and professional qualification, and increased number of jobs. The interviewees then pointed out that there was progress in the quality of life of the residents, while the tourism activity also contributed to the changes in the local way of life, making the Colônia less peaceful, due to the constant presence of visitors and also to the increase in robberies and thefts in the establishments.

Finally, the entrepreneurs were asked about how they see the Wine Route in the future. It was found that all members of the ACAVIM - unlike the non-members - are concerned about the growth of demand, organization capacity to receive and take care of the visitors, and above all, concerns about the maintenance of the typical characteristics of the Colônia. One of the interviewees said "I am concerned about this because to receive more people, we will need more businesses, so my fear is that it will detract from the characteristics of the place" another entrepreneur pointed out that "I am against selling things from other states, because when I go to Minas Gerais, I want to buy something from there, I don't want to buy something from the Wine Route [...] just because we are up there now doesn't mean we couldn't fall." Conversely, in response to this same question, a non-member entrepreneur argued that "everyone sells the same dulce de leite (condensed milk spread), I'll look for another supplier, from another place, to have a different product", revealing that the concern to maintain the local characteristics of the products is not a priority, as for him, it is essential to look for alternatives to diversity the offer, independently of the characteristics of the product.

Brief diagnosis of the Wine Route: Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats

Based on interviews with representatives of the Secretariat of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, of ACAVIM and local entrepreneurs, some findings are organized according to the SWOT Matrix. The evidenced data can serve as the basis for the elaboration of a strategic

planning of the Wine Route, using a participative methodology, in which new criteria can be formulated and the degree of priority given to it must be defined by the actors involved.

Table 1 - SWOT analysis of the Wine Route, Colônia Mergulhão/PR.

Strengths: Competitive Internal Advantages
<p>Autonomy: Today, the tourist activity in the Wine Route is not dependent on public managers (city hall), since most of the basic structures for its operation have already been achieved (courses, incentives, road paving, safety). The constitution of ACAVIM brought autonomy of decisions on local tourism, facilitating even the representation of tourism entrepreneurs along with other instances of governance.</p>
<p>Infrastructure: The infrastructure in the route resembles that of the urban area. The Colônia has electricity, basic sanitation, paved roads and other basic structures for the benefit of the community and visitors. The tourism structure is present, such as signposting and identification of the enterprises.</p>
<p>Attractiveness: The attractiveness of the region is varied, including wineries, restaurants, colonial cafes, leisure and events venues, craft shops. The typical Italian gastronomy, the production of wine, sausages and other local products, handicrafts, architecture, and the production of vegetables form the basis of the local attractions.</p>
<p>Information/disclosure: The destination is organized, with information available on the Wine Route and on the properties, as well as a website with detailed information, and on which most of the properties have their own publicity page. There is also a Tourist Bus Route (figure 3), a Tour Guide, and an organization linked to the ACAVIM.</p>
<p>Italian Culture/Cultural Resources: Italian culture gives identity to the route, whether through the architecture, the wine production and food offered, or the hospitality of owners and their families, who tell stories of the past and still preserve objects and customs typical of the Italian settlers. In addition, there are several annual events where the Italian culture is maintained as a strong identity of the place, for example the Wine Festival, which takes place in August.</p>
<p>Wine production: Although the region does not produce grapes for use in its wine production, there are many wine producers that buy grapes from other regions, producing wine through a combination of traditional family knowledge and modern techniques and equipment that meets the health legislation. The production of wine,</p>

<p>juice and grape derivatives reinforces the identity of the route, providing a source of income for some producers, and even generating jobs.</p>
<p>Gastronomy: The gastronomy, reminiscent of Italian culture but with Brazilian elements, is one of the most evident attractions of the Colônia. Associated with wine and its derivatives, and age-old traditions, it is possible to find restaurants that offer typical Italian food, as well as shops that sell delicatessen meats and products related to the local gastronomic proposal.</p>
<p>Proximity to the consumer market: The Wine Route is only 15 km from Curitiba and forms, along with 28 other municipalities, the Metropolitan Region of Curitiba (RMC) with approximately 3.5 million inhabitants. This proximity to a consumer market is a great force for the Route. Visits by tourists from other Brazilian states are also increasing, especially from the Southeast region of Brazil, and from the states of São Paulo, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro.</p>
<p>Municipal Public Management: The municipal public management has a specific team to plan the tourism affairs, in the form of an Administrative Secretariat, with a specific budget. The actions developed by it end up directly or indirectly influencing the itinerary of the Wine Route, such as: infrastructure improvement, promotion and financial support for events like the Wine Festival. Other leisure and tourism modalities are also in the pipeline, which can directly benefit the Wine Route entrepreneurs. These include nature walks, cycling tours, and other sports activities that attract visitors to the area.</p>
<p>Weaknesses: Internal vulnerabilities</p>
<p>Access and Signposting: Despite its proximity to the sending region (MRC), access is a weaknesses in terms of signposting and the flow of vehicles, especially on weekends (Saturdays and Sundays). There are few signposts on the access roads to the Colônia and tourist signs on the Route itself are still poor.</p>
<p>Tourist Information: There are no specific tourist information points within the Route, but this problem is mitigated by the owners who are part of the Route, who provide information and directions for visitors. But the vast majority of establishments only operate on weekends.</p>
<p>Disruption: Although there is a participatory management of the Wine Route, there are still internal conflicts and disagreements that need to be resolved. There are several producers that do not participate in the ACAVIM association and could add to solving common problems.</p>

<p>Marketing/Publicity: The route is still little publicized in the MRC and other municipalities in Brazil. Although there is the structured website of the ACAVIM Association, commercialization by receptive operators and tourism agencies still needs to be strengthened. This is a question to be analyzed along with the hosting capacity of the destination.</p>
<p>Lack of Strategic Planning: Family administration, internal conflicts, and lack of articulation with the public authorities are some factors that weaken the management of the route as a consolidated destination. Better planned strategies need to be formulated for the maintenance and consolidation of the route. Perhaps this is one of the greatest challenges of the Association: to resolve local conflicts and formulate strategies for competitiveness and positioning of the route in the regional market.</p>
<p>Seasonality: The greatest flow of visitors is on weekends, holidays and also during school holidays (July and December). There is overcrowding in the gastronomic establishments during the weekends and few visitors on other days. Thus, strategies to reduce seasonality should be considered, such as encouraging school groups (pedagogical tourism) and older visitors.</p>
<p>Leisure, Recreation and Lodging Equipment: Gastronomy has been the main attraction of the route, and the offer of leisure and recreation equipment for the visitor can be extended, as well as accommodation. Increasing the offer of these facilities can result in tourists staying longer in the destination, the current stay being four hours, on average.</p>
<p>Qualification of labor: The workforce is still poorly qualified, restricted to family hosting and little specialization of leisure services, accommodation, and guiding visitors. The best specialization is focused on the gastronomic services.</p>
<p>Threat to the essence of Rural Tourism and Family Farming: Due to urban pressures and changing local economic dynamics, basic land-based activities such as family farming are at risk of losing their essence. It is worth remembering that the creation of the wine route was part of a strategy of diversification of the economy for producers located in areas of natural springs.</p>
<p>Opportunities: Favorable External Conditions</p>
<p>Partnerships: The proximity to the RMC favors an approach with institutions and organizations from different fields of activity that can establish partnerships for studies, advice and guidance for entrepreneurs and professionals, especially with regard to strengthening the local governance of the route, Impacts, tourism planning; quality</p>

<p>management in gastronomy, and assistance for sustainability and rural production issues.</p>
<p>Changes in Tourist Consumption Habits: Tourists have been looking for new forms of tourist practices that increase their experiences and learning (known as experience tourism). This is an advantage for destinations such as the Wine Route with their evident historical-cultural and gastronomic attractions. Consumers have also sought food and beverage products of a more sustainable origin that are produced with greater environmental awareness.</p>
<p>Strong Internal Market: As a result of the current political and economic situation, Brazilians are traveling less to international destinations. Visitors are tending to travel shorter distances and for shorter periods of time, with an average overnight stay of up to three (3) nights. Weekends and long holidays have had a significant demand in tourist regions close to major centers, especially those that combine historical-cultural attractions, nature, leisure and gastronomy.</p>
<p>Integration with other itineraries: The existence of similar itineraries, such as the Italian Circuit in Colombo and the Circuito das Colônias in São José dos Pinhais, have created opportunities to strengthen and consolidate a tourist region, with the same basic attractions: rural and colonial.</p>
<p>THREATS - External Obstacles</p>
<p>Political and Economic Situation: Economic instability has generated some resistance from visitors to invest in leisure travel, which has led to decreased demand in some tourist destinations.</p>
<p>Lack of support from Tourism Bodies: Specific actions of the Ministry of Tourism and the Government of the State of Paraná for tourism have been negatively impacted by lack of investment, support and participation in Brazilian destinations. The National Tourism Plan has triggered little support for projects, and the State Tourism Policy has been insufficient as an institutional arrangement to support destination marketing.</p>
<p>Competition with other routes: Due to a lack of coordination with other local and regional routes, which are not yet integrated, there is competition between routes and itineraries, in destinations in Paraná and those in Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina.</p>
<p>Urban Pressure: The Colônia Mergulhão has suffered a lot of urban pressure, since the area is increasingly urbanized and with structures that can diminish the features of the route with regard to its essence: Rurality and Italian Culture.</p>

Source: The authors (2016)

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Brazilian countryside is vast and dynamic and, in this context, the Colônia Mergulhão is a place with unique historical, social, and economic characteristics, presenting particularities in which Rural Tourism emerged as an alternative to the families of small rural producers and today, emerges as the main activity, influencing the formation of new types of relations in space, building a typical tourist territory. The local strengths, the productive arrangements, the decisions and conflicts in that space, today, are determined, above all, by the tourist activity.

It is necessary for the community of the Colônia Mergulhão to discuss and build its own model of development based on Tourism and associated activities and to strive for participatory forms of management. It is also indispensable that all the entities and actors involved be united around a matrix of responsibilities, according to criteria coordinated by a management group, with defined actions, managers who are aware of the issues involved, deadlines and determined budgets. This management group can be started from the existing association, the ACAVIM.

Based on evidence pointed out by the diagnosis, it is possible to begin a hierarchy of priorities and demands that can give rise to new actions, in the form of plans, programs and projects specific to local development. Complementing this, new studies on the local reality are important, especially those related to the inventory of the supply and knowledge of the current and potential demand of the route. This will only be possible with the strengthening of organizations such as ACAVIM, other associations and the Municipal Council of Tourism of the municipality (COMTUR). Actions such as these tend to fortify relations with other external entities such as universities, professional bodies, and other public bodies such as the Paraná Tourism Company and the Ministry of Tourism.

It is clear that the Wine Route is a consolidated tourist destination, but it presents some indications of problems of cargo capacity and productive arrangements, but it is also evident

that the maintenance of rural/colonial characteristics is still a concern of those involved and, in this way, Italian culture is a strong element for the union and identity of destiny, which can and must be increasingly solidified.

Tourism in the Colônia Mergulhão today must be the main reason for public managers, community, entrepreneurs and professionals to exercise the ability to organize around a common goal: local development. This activity presents itself as an alternative, but does not contain in itself the possibilities for Colônia Mergulhão and the municipality of São José dos Pinhais.

To demonstrate the actions of cultural valorization, incentives for rural tourism and its associated activities, diversifying the productive chain, through a participatory and strategic planning is one of the Routes for the real development of Tourism in the municipality of São José dos Pinhais, especially the Rural and urban zone, where small properties are concentrated.

Finally, this study opens up new possibilities for discussing the future of tourism in communities such as the Colônia Mergulhão, considering its historical and cultural aspects, which are unique in the formation of the identity of the place, including in the organizational and entrepreneurial identity, but must also be respected.

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