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APPLICATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE SPANISH CASE

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TERRITORIAL HERITAGE: A THEORETICAL-CONCEPTUAL REVIEW. APPLICATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES OF THE SPANISH CASE.

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KARINA OROZCO SALINAS

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of *Heritage* has etymologically been defined as “Estate that has been inherited from one’s ancestors”, being associated to the concept of *Inheritance*, “Traits or circumstances of a cultural, social, economic nature, etc., which have an impact on a historic moment coming from other previous moments” (RAE, 2014). In this sense, *Heritage*, contributes to the holistic understanding of the territory as the special entity that houses it and where its historic evolution is recognized. Furthermore, the notion of *Heritage* has been formed by ever more integrating perspectives (Albarrán, 2016a), where the “relationship between territory and heritage is extraordinarily strengthened, making it possible to construct the term Territorial Heritage” (Mulero, 2015, p.70).

The study about the concept of *Territorial Heritage* deserves special attention in the Spanish case, as in this geographical context the term has been the focus of theoretical studies since the end of the 20th century, being built up from diverse scientific contributions. Early on, this notion appears as a construction of the territorial space from its social recognition and valuation (Ortega, 1998). In addition, the concept has been outlined as an integrator of cultural, natural, and scenic properties which are interwoven in a given territory, and that assumes an interdependence in the space (Albarrán, 2016a). This, in such a way that the term *Territorial Heritage* has an integrating nature as a system, on addressing the articulation of resources in the territory as a whole (Gil Guirado, Gil Meseguer & Gómez Espín, 2010; Feria, 2013; Florindo, 2013; Mulero, 2015; Troitiño Vinuesa & Troitiño Torralba, 2018). Therefore, it has been outlined as a notion that aims towards the integrated management of the territorial components.

This same trend towards an integrated interpretation of heritage property has been present during the last three decades in Spain, where an in-depth institutional intervention has taken place, focused on safeguarding a large number of properties considering their heritage interest and value (Mulero, 2015). However, the joint integrated management of heritage property has not

yet been suitably resolved, despite the projects having focused on this goal (Mulero, 2015). The interest arises, under this context, to make a review about the concept of *Territorial Heritage* in the Spanish case, as in this geographic aspect signs have appeared around the application of this notion as an integrating model. Furthermore, the goal of this work is to present the applications, difficulties and criticism there currently is about this term, to contribute in scientific reflection about a dynamic, heterogeneous and multifunctional concept, that covers a broad range of urbanistic and territorial roles (Feria, 2010).

For this, the methodology has been developed through a bibliographical review of studies published online, over a time period between the 1990s and 2020, under the search criteria of “*Territorial Heritage*” in Spanish, to limit the universe of publications, and to look into studies of a diverse nature (scientific journals, books, articles, presentations, seminars, etc.). The results show that the concept of *Territorial Heritage* accommodates different perspectives and a series of territorial applications like the landscape, tourism, sustainable development, territorial organization, IT, management model and design. However, the complexity and broadness it has reached, the lack of determination of applicable scales and regulatory frameworks that allow expressing this, mean that the concept of *Territorial Heritage* remains a theoretical more than practical chimera, showing that there are still questions regarding its development as an integrated management model in territorial planning.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Through a bibliographical review of studies published online about *Territorial Heritage*, related to the Spanish case between the 1990s and 2020, it has been possible to see that the term has been a matter of discussion for over 20 years, appearing at the end of the 20th century having been coined early on by Ortega in 1998. There are also diverse theoretical approaches about the notion of *Territorial Heritage* in Spain, like those of Ortega, 1998; Feria, 2010, 2013; Gil Guirado et al, 2010; Doctor, 2011, Capdepón, 2012; Florindo Trujillo, 2013, among others. From these, three main approaches have been identified: *Territorial Heritage* as social valuation and recognition, *Territorial Heritage* as a system; and *Territorial Heritage* and sustainability.

Territorial Heritage: social valuation and recognition

The evolution of the concept of “Heritage” itself, as well as that of “territory”, have coincided in an identification that leads to talking about “Territorial Heritage” (Ortega, 1998). Thus, the valuation of *Territorial Heritage* requires the acceptance of the community, as according to Ortega, for a territory to be recognized as a cultural resource and space,

will not just depend on its intrinsic value, but on its high degree of social recognition and acceptance (Ortega, 1998). Therefore, the territory as a historic source of societies reflects, in its basic structures, the values that provide signs of collective identity, being capable of bringing together the sense of belonging of a given community and not just the social and economic conditions (Ortega, 1998).

Likewise, *Territorial Heritage* refers to the space where the collective memory has been built, related to the cultural, social and natural legacy, embodying the “space – time” in the territory through the material and immaterial heritage components, that create socio-cultural belonging in a place, with the territory being the basis of identity of the local population (Agrebi-Mehdi, 2015). It is worth saying that the identification of the *Territorial Heritage* by the community means that this gains value as a cultural resource in a place.

Territorial Heritage as a system

For some authors (Feria, 2010; 2013; Gil Guirado et al., 2010; Florindo Trujillo, 2013), the concept of *Territorial Heritage* can be perceptible as a system, as it lies in the joint understanding of its constituent parts. From this perspective, *Territorial Heritage* refers to a set of significant elements that articulate with each other, as a territorial system where each resource obtains sense as a whole, as this has been the result of the historic relationship between the anthropic action and the environment (Feria, 2010; Feria, 2013). In fact, from this perspective, the concept of *Territorial Heritage* tries to be an integrating model of tangible and intangible elements that make up a system in the territory, as it gathers all their singular values, becoming a “living landscape” to be preserved as an ancestral inheritance (Gil Guirado et al, 2010).

Likewise, the concept of *Territorial Heritage* comprises the geographical space that gains a heritage interest based on the permanent interaction between human beings and the environment, whose result presses the joint management of all the components, be these natural, cultural or scenic (Florindo-Trujillo, 2013). Therefore, the enrichment of the concept of heritage leads to a territorial dimension that will be key for its understanding, handling and management (Florindo-Trujillo, 2013).

Territorial Heritage and sustainability

The conception of *Territorial Heritage*, seen from the perspective of sustainability, is based on the principles of the ecology of the landscape, as its methodological nature will serve to recognize and handle the natural and cultural components (Feria, 2013). In addition, the sustainable management of *Territorial Heritage* comprises integrating the diverse heritage resources, through the vision of the territory as a whole (Capdepón, 2012). In this way, the

Territorial Heritage has been incorporating dimensions based on social, economic, and environmental sustainability, which lead it towards a globalizing scenario, based upon the landscape (Doctor, 2011). In other words, we could say that “the territorial heritage is displayed or embodied in the landscape. It is related to the two faces of the same coin” (Doctor, 2011, p.276). In this way, the diverse applications that have related to the concept, aim towards the sustainability of the territory and community over time.

Thus, the notion of *Territorial Heritage* is conceived as an integrating framework to identify and manage heritage elements and, in this way, establish the interrelations that appear in the temporal-social space, from a territorial point of view.

III. METHODOLOGY

The goal of this study is to make a conceptual and theoretical review about the notion of *Territorial Heritage* in Spain, using the following research questions: What are the application aspects of the concept in the territorial dimension? What is the current theoretical and/or practical discussion about *Territorial Heritage*? What are the controversial and undetermined aspects of the concept? A methodology developed in three stages was used to answer these questions. In the first stage, a documentary collection of the free-access studies published online in Google Scholar was made. This is why the scope of this research has excluded publications in subscription-based scientific repositories, whose inclusion could be complementary in further research.

The term “*Territorial Heritage*” was used in the search filters, under the option “*Search pages in Spanish only*”. This criterion was chosen, over the option “Any language”, to limit the universe of publications and scope of this research. In addition, a time filter was set between the 1990s and 2020, covering diverse types of publications: scientific articles, books, book chapters, indexed journals, monographs, theses, acts of congress, presentations, communications and seminars.

In the second stage, the universe and origins of the research found on “*Territorial Heritage*”, following the search criteria, was identified. In addition, after the bibliographic analysis done in this stage, it has been possible to detect the main applications of the concept and a series of common traits in the studies, which provides an approximate idea about the casuistry of the difficulties the concept of *Territorial Heritage* in Spain presents.

In the final stage, the results are visually summarized using a graph, distinguishing the data by year and area of application of the *Territorial Heritage* concept in the bibliography found. Later, the discussion there is about the concept will be presented, before finally drawing general conclusions.

IV. RESULTS

Following the methodology used, a universe of 85 references in Spanish has been found about “*Territorial Heritage*”, 76% of which corresponds to Spanish bibliography, while the remaining 24% corresponds to publications from other countries (Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Portugal, Brazil, Nicaragua and Morocco).

The disciplines the Spanish studies come from refer to the social sciences, mainly from the areas of geography, history, and urbanism, where most of them have been made from academia. In addition, the studies made have a series of similar features that has allowed identifying the main applications of *Territorial Heritage*, namely: landscape, tourism, sustainable development, design and management model, territorial organization, IT and the development of the concept. The summary of the bibliographical results found is presented in the following graph, following the time distribution and by area of application of the concept, which are developed in the following section.

Figure N°1: Publications found about “*Territorial Heritage*”, by year and application of the concept. Source: own preparation.

Application of the “*Territorial Heritage*” concept

The notion of *Territorial Heritage* has been applied in diverse aspects, in fact, an articulating concept between heritage and territory is the cultural landscape (Ojeda, 2014). Indeed, the extension of the heritage consideration of the landscape and territory has increased in recent times (Torrent, 2004), where the concept of *Territorial Heritage* has been linked to the notion of landscape, referring to the holistic management of all constituent elements and their territorial relations. It has also been used as an identification and management tool of the territorial structure that the landscapes historically establish.

There are several works on *Landscape* and *Territorial Heritage* like, for example, the salt landscape (Gil Guirado et al, 2010; Román & González, 2019); winegrowing landscape (Climent López & Rodríguez, 2018); agrarian landscape (Pérez, 2009; Prada, 2012); among many others. In these studies, the characterization of the landscape is presented, seen from the concept of *Territorial Landscape* for its holistic management and valuation.

Regarding the tourism area, there are several studies that connect it to *Territorial Heritage* (Doctor, 2011; Capdepón, 2012; Albarrán, 2016b). An approach of the concept is presented in some of these publications as an object of tourist interest, from a fixation on tourism and leisure of a territory from its joint understanding and valuation. However, the relationship between territorial heritage and tourism is complex, as it sets out diverse challenges related

to urban management, functional balance, the control of flows, and preservation, which lead to considering effective strategies for the processes of change from the sustainability of the territory (Troitiño Vinuesa & Troitiño Torralba, 2018).

The notion of *Territorial Heritage* has also been applied to sustainable development, considering the social cohesion, environmental balance and territorial identity (Feria, 2010). It is precisely from this perspective that the importance of three dimensions has been suggested: the economic, identity and quality of life, as through a local development strategy, not only is an improvement of the economic aspect of the territory achieved, but also the identity of the community is improved, and this contributes, directly or indirectly, to the progress in the quality of life in a given territory (Molina de la Torre & Ruiz Valdepeñas, 2016). On the other hand, the conception of *Territorial Heritage* has been applied to the design and management model (Mulero, 2015; Clavea, 2017), through alignments and strategies that systemically address diverse aspects in the territory. In this sense, the integrated management of the territorial heritage properties is appealed to, where it is necessary to establish a consensus about what must be considered as an integrating element of *Territorial Heritage* (Mulero, 2015).

Likewise, the term *Territorial Heritage* as a management model has been applied to structuring elements of the territory in the urban-territorial dimension. An example of this is the proposal of articulating the heritage system through a road network as a sustainable model of the intermodality and functionality of a territoriality-based system (Clavera, 2017). In this sense, this considers applying the concept of *Territorial Heritage* and its management in the integration of the physical, social, and cultural resources that a territory has in what is the construction of the territory itself (Clavera, 2017).

On the other hand, there are applications about *Territorial Heritage* in territory organization aspects, like that followed by regulatory tools of the Andalusia Territory Organization Plan approved in 2006 (Albarrán, 2016a). The Andalusia Territory Organization Plan (POTA, in Spanish), on this basis, introduces for the first time in the practice of Spanish planning, the figure of the *Andalusia Territorial Heritage System* (SPTA, in Spanish), with the intention of managing and valuing, as a unit, the diverse heritage resources for the development of the region (Florindo-Trujillo, 2013). However, in practice, the Andalusia Territorial Heritage System presents shortfalls in the definition and accuracy of some of its components and also shows deficiencies in its design and in the management tools that ultimately condition its operation (Florindo Trujillo, 2013). Otherwise, the concept of *Territorial Heritage* has been related with information technologies (IT), as for example, in the use of augmented reality to navigate in a territory through the territorial heritage for educational purposes

(Joo & García Bermejo, 2014). In addition, the concept has been associated to the use of geographic information systems (GIS), due to the large amount and volume of information that the handling of territorial heritage entails in different spheres of study (Feria, 2013; Román & González, 2019), so the application of GIS is essential to work with extensive areas (Feria, 2013; Román & González, 2019).

In summary, the areas of application related to the concept of *Territorial Heritage* are varied. They have sought to focus on holistic management and on the compression and interaction of its constituent elements, essentially from the theoretical study over its practical application.

V. DISCUSSIONS

Difficulties and criticism of the concept

Although the concept of *Territorial Heritage* aims at being used as an integrating framework, it continues presenting a series of indeterminations both in the theoretical discussion and in its practical application, in the Spanish case.

The matter of “scale”

One of the limitations of the concept is the indetermination of the “scale” to limit the sector of action and the application of a unitary management of the *Territorial Heritage*. Despite the lack of contributions on this aspect, the study of Feria (2013), called “*Territorial heritage: some contributions towards its understanding and valuation*”, proposes an approach to the concept focused on sustainability, based on the principles of the ecology of the landscape. Therefore, this would allow working with an “intermediate scale (in a range of no less than several hundred km² nor more than 10,000 km²), with a clear personality or geographical singularity- that does not have to be based on internal homogeneity” (Feria, 2010, p.135). In addition, the author suggests the use of the scales,

Where the confluence of the biophysical matrix of the environment and the anthropic action has managed to model relatively individualizable and singular territories. However, this does not mean to say deeply homogeneous spaces, but rather that a necessary degree of heterogeneity, both ecosystemically and of the cultural landscape is required, which shows or makes possible the advantages of the environmental and territorial integration (Feria, 2010, p.135).

Following his suggestion, there must be a clear internal articulating element on these scales, that has the capacity of territorial, physical and functional connection of the territorial heritage, like for example, a hydrographic

network with the capacity to be structured into a territory (Feria, 2010).

Therefore, the expert and technical definition of the scale being used continues to be a task to be outlined, as it requires applying an integrated organization of the *Territorial Heritage* (Mulero, 2015).

Indetermination of a “Legal Framework” in Spain.

Dealing with *Territorial Heritage* from the point of view of a regulatory legal framework continues to be a limiting factor, as the legal regulations of heritage property have not overcome the fragmentation that natural, scenic or cultural resources are managed with, which keeps the generation of sectorized tools and segment-based regulations that, sometimes, are contradictory to each other (Albarrán, 2016a). In fact, the same regulatory diversity and insufficient interweaving of the planning tools fragment it further still.

The complexity of managing *Territorial Heritage*, due to the diversity of heterogeneous components in the multiple spaces and processes this comprises, makes it complicated to embody it in tools for its integrated management. In this way, the formal stipulation of all the elements is required, both those that are protected and those which should be so in the future, as well as those publicly owned or in the public domain which have been inventoried as part of the *Territorial Heritage* of a place (Mulero, 2015).

On the other hand, the planning, during a long period of time, has been considering the territorial aspects that cover the administrative limits and that correspond to their legal approval capacity, leaving the adjoining council aside (Román & Fariña, 2015), a matter that *Territorial Heritage* aims to extend as a concept of valuing the territory, which is still a theoretical chimera.

Thus, the development of tools that allows the integrated management of the *Territorial Heritage* is necessary, concretely in a given legal framework; an evolution not just at a scientific and theoretical level, but also in the administrative area, and at a level that allows integrating criteria in the legal setting (Doctor, 2011). In addition, the discourse of integrated management must be cleared up, since the management and dynamization of the territory has actually turned it into an integrated management of its heritage (Mulero, 2015).

Vagueness of elements

The identification of the integrating elements of the *Territorial Heritage* concept, is still superficial (Mulero, 2015), as this does not try to establish a catalog of heritage resources (Feria, 2013), but rather tries to identify the relations they maintain among them (Feria, 2010), to thus understand the territorial system that they comprise (Feria, 2013).

In this way, the criterion of considering, together with

official properties, many others where their heritage dimension is based on a solid social recognition, is extended (Ortega, 1998; Fera, 2010; Mulero, 2015). Fairly, *Territorial Heritage*, on having a strong social acceptance component (Ortega, 1998), implies considering a socially accepted framework for the components it is made up of. Therefore, an extraordinarily broad and complex approach to the concept shows the conceptual lack of concretion regarding what must be considered as part of the *Territorial Heritage* (Mulero, 2015), which is why it is necessary to reach a better grounded and more accurate definition, to reach a clear consensus about the constituent elements (Mulero, 2015).

The contribution of this research is to present the problem between the different existing applications about the concept of *Territorial Heritage*, facing a series of controversial aspects that complicate its conceptual limitations and concrete application in territorial planning. Therefore, this article contributes to the multidisciplinary scientific debate, in the matter of analysis of a term that is still being questioned. In further studies, it will be necessary to go into greater depth about *Territorial Heritage* in international aspects, as important lines of research are opened about new contributions, conceptual theoretical frameworks, applications and limitations of this concept, to then know the guidelines and implementations of *Territorial Heritage* in the territorial planning of other geographical contexts.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Following the research questions asked about the areas of application and discussion that exist about the "*Territorial Heritage*" concept in Spain, we can conclude that:

- The notion of *Territorial Heritage* remains as a theoretical discussion, finding diverse contributions that are focused mainly on three perspectives: *Territorial Heritage* as social recognition; *Territorial Heritage* as a system; and *Territorial Heritage* and sustainability. Likewise, it has been confirmed that this notion has a dynamic and multifunctional nature that appeals to containing diverse interrelated components of a given place for its integrated management in territorial aspects.
- The applications there are about *Territorial Heritage* have been identified and classified into the categories of landscape, tourism, sustainable development, design and management model, territorial organization, information technologies, and development of the concept. It has been proven that most of these studies are developed in academia, as the practical application of the concept is still at an incipient stage.
- The main difficulties of the concept of *Territorial Heritage* have been recognized, which firstly refer to the complexity and broadness the term has reached, regarding its scope in the territory and its indetermination regarding the elements these comprise. In addition, another of its difficulties is the lack of definition of the scale of action for the unitary management which *Territorial Heritage* aims for. Furthermore, the concept presents limitations regarding the development of tools that regulate its territorial and administrative scope, as its heterogeneity makes the difficulty of incorporating it in territorial planning evident.

Traducido por Kevin Wright/ Translated by Kevin Wright

